

Manzanillo

June 2014

SUN

Manzanillo's Lifestyle E-Magazine

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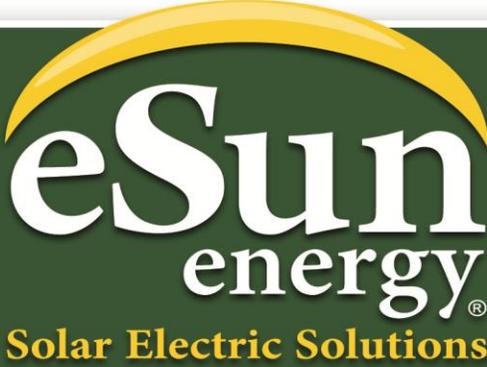
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E-MAGAZINE

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*Comments, brickbats and bouquets
on our featured articles are always
welcome.*

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also be reached via the following:
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Submissions for possible inclusion
in the magazine, please send to the
editor by 20th of each month.

We are always looking for writers
or ideas on what you would like us
to write about in the magazine.

Preferred subjects are concerning
1.) Manzanillo or 2.) Mexico.

All articles should be 1000 words
Or less or may be serialized. 500-
750 words if accompanied by
photos. Pictures appropriate for
the article are welcome.



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Air Root Bromeliads (*Tillandsia*)

Family: Bromeliaceae

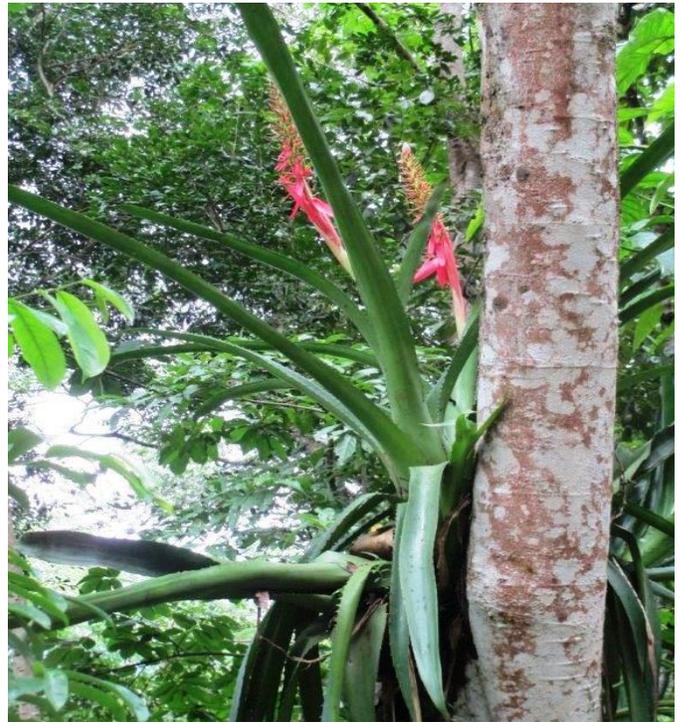
Also known as: Air plants

While in 4-H as a youth in western Kansas, I learned in entomology studies that – technically speaking - all bugs are insects but all insects are not bugs. In the plant world a comparable corollary is that while all *Tillandsias* are Bromeliads not all Bromeliads are *Tillandsias*!

Tillandsia is a genus, of somewhere around 600 species that grow in a tremendous variety of sizes, shapes, and textures, blooming in a delightful array of colors. Suffice it to say, lots is still being learned about them, new varieties are found regularly and identification of specific plants is sometimes difficult. Many are surprised to learn that they are in the same botanical family as pineapples.

Within this genus is an array of epiphytes (air plants) that, generally, grow without soil. (Whereas most other types of Bromeliads prefer their root feet firmly planted in Mother Earth.) Perhaps the best known in this genus is Spanish moss or *Tillandsias usneoides*. The roots of the air plants are mainly used for support and are not parasitic.

Their absorption of water and nutrients occurs through small scales on their leaves which are called trichomes. It is these that give many air plants their basic silver or gray appearance. However, many of these unique plants undergo a dramatic color change as they prepare to bloom. Yet more fun is the fact that some have a luscious fragrance attendant to their magnificent flowers!



This beauty we found out in the Canoas area.

Hundreds of different varieties of these “air plants” proliferate from coastal Virginia in the US to Tierra del Fuego, at the very tip of South America. They range from rain forests to arid desert environments, thriving from sea level to high mountain regions as they make their homes - with those wire-like anchoring roots - on trees, rocks, cliffs, and even various types of cacti. While liking good air circulation, it is through their leaves that they derive their water and nutrient needs



Our specimens blew down from 100' hardwoods "in the wild" and now thrive on the trunk of an African Oil Palm at eye level, in *Ola Brisa Gardens*, for visitors to enjoy.



The blooms are extremely long lasting

One of the most adaptable of plant families, these versatile and tenacious characters have a ferocious desire to survive. Those varieties with the thin-leaves tend to grow where they can receive more rain, whereas the thick-leaf varieties can take more drought.

While, generally speaking, they like bright, indirect light, some varieties do enjoy the early morning sun which allows them to change colors before they bloom.

The growth cycle of the *Tillandsias* start with a singular plant growing to maturity and then blooming. One to two months after that bloom has died, around the base of this "mother plant" new plants will form. In turn, they will mature and complete their respective blooming cycle.

I've read that indoor *Tillandsias* should be sprayed with water two to three times a week, and those outdoors four to five times a week. Ours, having come from "the wild" where they might have not had rainwater for weeks at a time, get a "drink" twice a week – and seem to appreciate it!

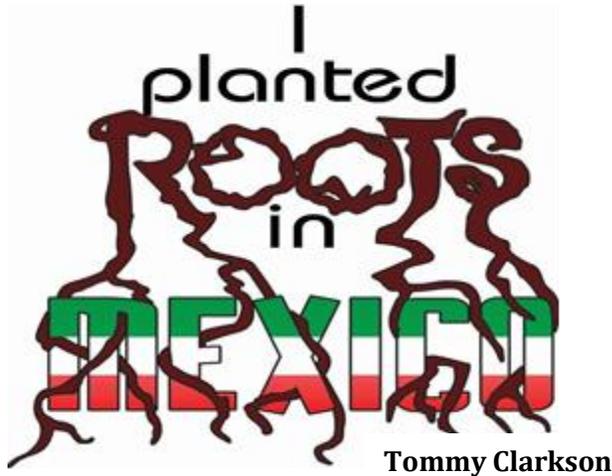
Relative to that, we "harvested" our specimens following a wind storm that blew several down from 100' (app. 30 meters) up in some ancient tropical hardwoods in an area, of about 3,000 foot elevation, we love to explore. We've found that ours bloom much longer than those "in the wild" perhaps of our regular spraying of them with water.

If you can get it, use bromeliad fertilizer (17-8-22) twice a month as it greatly enhances your plants blooming and reproduction. In its absence, other water-soluble fertilizers can be used at 1/4 strength – I use plain old, dependable, Miracle-Grow.

How about those babies (pups) on a mother plant? Leave them alone. *Tillandsias* are a social lot and much heartier if left to form their own colony. However, cutting off flower blooms, when its color dries up, is an altogether different thing. Likewise with the dried up and dead "mother" plant after new plants have formed. If more than one new plant has formed – and you feel the driven compulsion to do so – once they reach the size of the mother plant they can be removed.

Another positive factor regarding species of *Tillandsia* is that these guys are free of pest and disease problems.

And, lastly, since *Tillandsia's* are epiphytes, the mounting medium on which you wish to grow them is, for all intents and purposes, limited only by your imagination. For instance, I've seen some very attractively presented in sea shells, on old pieces of wood, in gravel terrariums or attached to a hunk of cork!



It's obvious why this has become such a popular flowering bush in the semitropical and tropical environs.

Bougainvillea, *Bougainvillea glabra*

Family: *Nyctaginaceae*

(Same type and size as Paper Flower.)

It's said that the highlight of French Navy Admiral Louis de Bougainvillea's 1768 odyssey was his discovery of the Brazilian flowering vine that now bears his name.

And, what a great and colorful one it is! In a rainbow of colors, it thrives from Aruba to Australia, California to Kuwait, Singapore to Switzerland (Lacarno, with its mild Mediterranean climate) Turkey to Texas and a plethora of far out points in between - as exotic as Ethiopia and Sri Lanka.

They are succinctly described by W. Arthur Whistler as "Distinguishable by the scrambling shrubby habit, shiny green leaves, nasty spines, and clusters of small white flowers, each attached to a typically magenta bract." I believe the most commonly seen, the "Sanderiana" cultivar, is of what he spoke.

Taxonomically this can all get quite confusing very fast! There are numerous lovely cultivars - primarily between *B. glabra* and *B. buttiana* or *B. spectabilis*. All sport long arching branches, with those heart-shaped leaves, in a variety of other colors such as white, pink, red, orange, purple, crimson, burgundy and yellow.

Some cultivars are double flowered, variegated or have multiple colors produced on the same plant. But, don't cloud the issue with the recently identified *Bougainvillea arborea* - the Bougainvillea Tree too late, we're all confused now!



Yep, that small white guy is the actual flower. The pink are bracts.

But let's strive to focus on the large scandent shrub most of us recognize as "Bougainvillea". Today's varieties are, purportedly, the result of crossbreeding between only three out of the eighteen botanically recognized South American species. With that as a base, the total number of varieties growing around the world well exceeds 300 - all thriving in places that are hot and relatively dry

Coldly described by one botanist as a "woody vine with stiff, curved thorns," it can grow anywhere between 3 to 40 feet (roughly one to twelve meters). They are aggressive. With those hooked thorns they'll climb right over the top of anything that get in its way - sorta' reminds me of a rather ambitious woman I used to know!



The simple contrasting beauty of white against green is truly lovely.

Evergreen where rainfall or watering persists year around, they are otherwise deciduous. Interestingly, unlike many other plants, Bougainvillea flower best under stress. Thus, keep them slightly on the dry side and, maybe, a bit root bound.

One of the most important facts is that Bougainvillea love sun of, at the very least, five hours a day. So if planted in partial shade . . . you'll get no flowers!

A prolific grower, its landscape applications are many - such as large topiaries, or pruned into a more formal appearing hedges or simply as a colorful focal plant. In many Hawaiian and Mexican locales they magnificently line the highways.

Its drought tolerance makes it ideal for warm weather use and its high salt tolerance lends itself as a natural for coastal applications.

Fertile, well-draining soil and frequent fertilization are pluses in its successful growth - but remember, not that much water once it is established. They respond best to a balanced, slow-release fertilizer containing nitrogen and iron. But, fertilizing too frequently can cause them to grow too vigorously.

I've not so noticed, but it's said that its sap can cause a skin rash so you may want to wear long sleeves and gloves while pruning.

Around here, with high light and constant feeding, they bloom nearly year around. While some butterfly species use them as food plants, they're relatively pest-free.

Plant your Bougainvillea near the base of the structure you wish it to climb and train it by wrapping it, ever so carefully, around that on which you want it to grow. As a container plant ensure that your pot has multiple drainage holes as these plants detest wet feet!

At *Ola Brisa Gardens* we have three strikingly beautiful specimens. One purplish pink, one white and another variegated leaf variety with purplish-red bracts. The first is affixed to a tall wall and below it are a large variety of caladiums in colorful, matching shades and hues. The second is in a very large stand-alone pot and looks like a massive bowl of pure white popcorn heaped high and rolling down. The latter cascades down a high wall with a backdrop of variegated ficus leaves that are nearly identical in color, shape and size.

Now one last thing - while they are beautiful, they're also quite messy what with windblown bracts. So I encourage you not planting one next to your pool.

For back issues of "Roots", gardening tips, tropical plant book reviews and videos of numerous, highly unique eco/adventure/nature tours, as well as memorable "Ultimate Experiences" such a Tropical Garden Brunches and Spa Services, visit www.olabrisagardens.com."





Monarch Butterfly

“The King of Butterflies”

by Suzanne A. Marshall

Since childhood I have been enthralled with these beautiful fluttering creatures, at that time, completely unaware of how truly remarkable they were. I was simply engaged by their remarkable beauty and flight. We had learned in school about their basic metamorphosis from egg to caterpillar then the chrysalis to butterfly. I even began watching where I was walking to make sure I didn't step on one and would look for the striped caterpillars on the branches of trees. Most commonly I would recognize the Monarchs, with their very recognizable yellowish-orange color with black and white details.

Below is a photo taken of me twenty plus years ago at the Devonian Gardens Butterfly House in central Alberta outside Edmonton. It just felt like 'karma' that something I loved so much would choose to land on my dangly wooden earring!



answered very recently when by chance we tuned in to one of our favorite TV channels (NOVA – The Incredible Journey of the Butterflies). The answers are simply mind-boggling. Shot from a butterfly's point of view using helicopters, ultralights and hot-air balloons for aerial views, I highly recommend this amazing documentary production.



Monarch butterflies arriving in Michoacan

Eventually decades later, I began to hear about the Monarch migrations all the way from Canada into the heart of Mexico. How could such tiny creatures endure the distances of over 2000 miles to winter and begin another journey heading north in the spring? Most intriguing for me was the obvious question of such a fragile species living long enough to survive such a journey and then return. Well, this question was

Leaving Canada and northern US areas in late summer, having feasted on milkweed, the Monarchs take flight triggered by some unknown signal on a two month journey. They fly over the Great Lakes, fields, forests, cities, deserts and mountains to congregate in late October in a high altitude region of Mexico in the state of Michoacan. It is a tremendous spectacle each year when as many as 60 million to one billion Monarch butterflies



Monarchs swarming the trees



Butterflies cluster to stay warm

arrive to cluster in small areas of the Reserve de la Biosfera Mariposa Monarca (Monarch Butterfly Biosphere Reserve) a national protected area and nature preserve that covers more than 200 square miles. No one knows how they all find their way to this exact location. It remains a mystery for now. There are several areas of the reserve that are open to the public November through March.

Making their winter homes on the trunks and tops of trees, the arrival of the Monarchs coincides with one of the most important Mexican holidays named Dia de los Muertos (Day of the Dead). During this annual holiday, feasts, celebrations and elaborate offerings honor a local legend that interprets the arrival of the Monarchs as the souls of the deceased returning to earth.

The butterflies will spend the next five months clustering together covering the trunks and branches of the trees in a glorious blanket of orange and black. The clusters are so voluminous that the branches bend and sometimes snap from the sheer weight. The clustering allows the butterflies to conserve heat and survive the cool nighttime temperatures common at this altitude. In February and March the butterflies begin their mating rituals as they begin to ready for the return migration north. And here is where the story begins to take a remarkable turn.

In answer to my own question, 'how do they live so long?' I have learned that the return to northern areas of the U.S. and Canada takes four generations. Once the Monarchs leave Mexico they begin the journey north where part of the way in March and April they lay their eggs on milkweed plants then die soon thereafter. After about four days the eggs begin to hatch and the new caterpillars munch on the milkweed for a few weeks until maturity at which time they begin the transformation of making a silk chrysalis.

Within the chrysalis a rapid and remarkable change takes place when the body parts of the caterpillar undergo metamorphosis and become the beautiful butterflies that emerge. These butterflies will have a shorter life of two to six weeks. After laying their eggs, 'generation one' will die and their eggs will hatch and now become 'generation two'.

(cont....)



In May and June 'generation two' moves further north and repeats the cycle producing the 'third generation' which is born in July and August. This generation will repeat the same two to six week cycle moving further north again and giving birth to 'generation four'.

'Generation four' of the Monarchs is different. Born in September and October, the reproduction cycle remains the same, however, this generation has reached the northern destinations and will live for six to eight months. They will repeat the same migration that took place four generations ago and be mysteriously called to migrate back to Michoacan, Mexico where another four generations will repeat the same journey back the following year. How spectacular is nature!

This is one of those true stories that helps us all to understand the incredible complexity of life among all species of animals large and small. I have added this destination to my 'bucket list' and because I enjoy fabulous winters in my Mexican 'second' home, that journey will take place sooner than later. I can hardly wait.

(Sources: NOVA- The Incredible Journey of the Butterflies; Wikipedia.org; www.Monarch-Butterfly.com; www.visitmexico.com)

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EDITORIAL
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It was not more than just a few years ago that any information in Manzanillo was difficult to come by. What was happening was never known until after it had happened much to many people's chagrin. Manzamigos A.C. worked hard to set the "information machine" into motion with their monthly newsletter and bi-weekly mini-newsletter during the season, but it still left a huge void to be filled.

Where does one go to get information as to where to find a lawyer or a shoemaker or even a handy- man? Where could we go to get our hair done or buy a piñata? Word of mouth worked extremely well in many instances but what if you were new to town and had a very pressing need to find a notary public? Where could this information be found? Susan Dearing's "Guide to Manzanillo" helped tremendously but still did not meet all requirements.

The need to fill this huge void was recognized by many and several good hearted and willing ladies formed a group to handle all of the potential problems that people might encounter. A medical list was formed by former professional medical people. Elaine Parker started to write the "Mujeres Amigas" newsletter and Glenna Palidwor organised a "Calendar of Events, Manzanillo." Darcy Reid set to and purloined every possible email of visitors for long and short term stays, then graciously allowed that list to be used by one or two trusted friends to "pass on the word" pertaining to music, special events, dining out etcetera, etcetera, etcetera. She also later prepared and sent out a "Referral list" of all trades and professional people that made sure that those needing help could find recommended assistance.

Good though this was, still it wasn't quite good enough as it left a void in the business aspect of the city. Mexican people generally do not advertise their goods or services and saw no need to change this practice. Ian Rumford, masterminded and spent very many hours forming a web site called "Manzanillo Sun" that advertised businesses both large and small for a very reasonable fee. If persons did not have an advertisement prepared, he would then design one for them that would fit the bill.

Whilst this met with resounding success, he felt that something was still missing. The descriptions on the web

site of various places surrounding the town were good but just didn't portray the warmth and character of Manzanillo that he felt was required by the thousands of people accessing the website almost immediately.

Thus was born the idea of the "Manzanillo Sun E-Magazine." Speaking to Freda Rumford, who had previously written for "The Guadalajara Reporter" (an English speaking newspaper) a few years before, he suggested that she spearhead a magazine with writers of all kinds telling of the glory of living in the Mexican Pacific town of Manzanillo and its surroundings.

To their astonishment, several good writers expressed a willingness to do this and tell of their initial impressions

and eventual happiness in living on the “Costa Alegre” (the happy coast) of Mexico. The initial magazine burst onto the website and the large list of people on Darcy’s super list were mainly delighted to receive the notification that this magazine was now available. The writers who helped so magnificently found an outlet to tell of their hobbies and the pleasures that they were pursuing in this seaside town. Tommy Clarkson, Jim Evans, Mariana Llamas Cendon, Howard Platt, Freda Rumford, Terry Sovil and Diana Stevens all wrote of the likes, delights, fantasies, the history, the people, the plants, the birds and nature of the district as well as gave information on many of the rules, regulations and changing faces of the city. This they did as an original writers group for many issues and then gradually the group began to change as people passed away or moved on to other interests or other towns. We were however graced periodically with both new writers and an occasional guest writer.

Now in its fifth year of publication, the core group continues to turn out amazing information about, and interesting stories of, Mexico. With the addition of some business professionals, Yann Kostic, Suzanne Marshal, Senior Tech, Mark Wright and Kirby Vickery, the magazine continues to please our readers. Over the years there have been well over six million hits on the site, giving the advertiser’s within our pages excellent returns for their investment.

The magazine has had many readers complement its content of writing and photographs, with very few brick bats along the way. Whilst we appreciate all of the congratulatory comments, the need for new and exciting writers for the magazine is a constant need, so that our mainstay does not get over worked or burnt out. You do not have to commit to a lifetime, nor so many articles or series of articles as we appreciate occasional pieces to give our magazine, of which we are justly proud, a breath of fresh air.

So don’t be shy, if you have an idea of a theme or a story, please let us know. We will be most pleased to hear from you.

If you wish to advertise within our pages or on the website, please contact: lan@manzanillosun.com
or Jaime@manzanillosun.com

To write for us contact the editor: freda@manzanillosun.com
or info@manzanillosun.com

Freda Vickery, Editor/Writer, Manzanillo Sun

Shopping List Manzanillo

Our first updated list appeared in last month’s issue of the Sun. It was for Herbs and Spices. The second one follows this month and is on Baking Products. May we suggest that you select and copy each of these pages to make your own dictionary for shopping.

It is intended to eventually have all of the pages together in a single volume for you to have all in one place but what do you do in the meantime? These two lists were chosen to be first due to their complexity. Please let us know if you find it helpful or if we have missed anything.

So far we have received some favorable comments, yours is most welcome.



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Life's simple pleasures found in Manzanillo

Freda Vickery

I was in the cosmetic industry for many years and although I both learnt and taught the basics and foundation of the product lines I represented, never did I ever have the time in my busy, frantic life to find the sheer pleasures of that world. This was not shown to me until I arrived in Manzanillo many years later and found that, although pleasurable, I could not spend the rest of my life just sitting on the beach.

Not that sitting on the beach was any problem because at that time the beach was mostly uninhabited for several kilometers either way and one was allowed total freedom to sit and read, watch the waves and the pelicans diving or chat to the occasional passer-by. Just perfect to reconnect with one's own self and start to smell not only the roses but the inviting scent of the ocean.

So what could be more inviting than that? Have you ever had a real, honest to goodness pedicure? One where a tired and weary foot is first warmed in a foaming delicately scented bath before being tenderly massaged by soft hands to the point that the sensation becomes so pleasurable that you want to just relax all tensions and simply cry?

This happened to me very recently. I had been introduced to the Mexican pedicure many seasons previously and always enjoyed them but this last one, in April of this year, was absolutely the most special I had ever had. The previous year had been a totally traumatic one, full of unexpected and unwanted health complications. They were followed by the decision that I could wait no longer, I had to sell my dream home in my dream town. One thing after another came tumbling down, until my whole psyche felt as though it was crumbling into dust.

Not that the year was a total write off, many good things came my way as I realized what a wonderful world I had discovered in Manzanillo. How many good friends I had who were there cheering me on and wishing me well! I was having get well letters from people I had never really had the opportunity to get to know well, besides the many others that had become good friends over the years. As well as finding a wonderful person to join me for the rest of my life's journey.

As I sat in the easy chair at **Alexandra's Esthetic Salon** in Salagua while her sister Maricela gently worked on my poor, terribly swollen and unhappy feet, all of these emotions came tumbling out and I had the greatest difficulty in keeping myself together. I am quite sure that Maricela would have had the shock of her life if this middle aged lady had suddenly just burst into tears. But this is exactly where I was at that moment in time. All of the hurts of this terrible year came pouring out of my feet as this young woman carefully worked on massaging all of the tensions that were dwelling in these feet which really looked something like swollen pumpkins with toes like fat sausages ready to burst.

On previous occasions when I had a pedicure, my feet were not in this condition but this time my illness had caught up with me and was determined that this part of my body was where it was going to be made obvious! Already I had difficulty in finding suitable shoes and along with my fat feet, had developed a problem with one heel which made it even more difficult to walk.

Those aches were ever so gently massaged away. The tensions of the year started to melt away along with my almost tears as I fully gave myself up to the sheer luxury that I was experiencing.



Of the many pedicures that I have had this one had to be the very top of the scale. Probably because so many tensions were right at the surface and the gentleness was so unexpected. The previous two pedicures I had were by Vietnamese technicians who had been taught the stiff and heavy massage approach. They also had me near to tears but with pain! Eventually I had to ask the last person to stop and just finish with "The polish, now! Please!"

There are many beauty shops in Manzanillo where a person can get a pedicure and manicure for less than half the price at home. Knowledgeable visitors to this part of Mexico make a point of waiting until they arrive on holiday to get all of their cosmetic work done. Haircuts, tints, streaks and perms are also a fraction of the prices in our home towns.

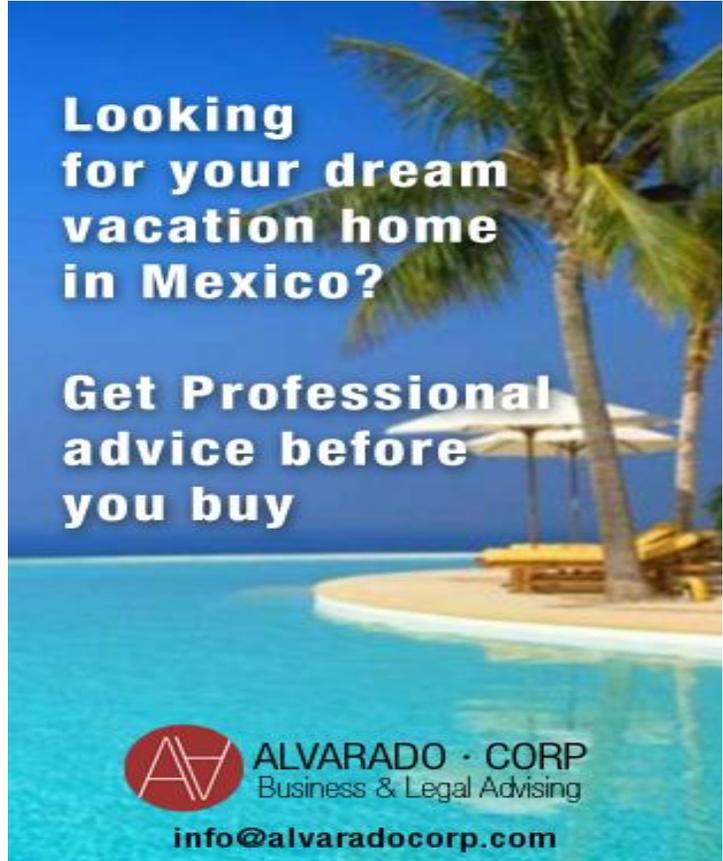
Here it must be confessed that initially one has a real trial and error to find a stylist who knows what to do with our skimpy locks which are so totally different to strong Mexican hair. But they are there and if you ask, other visitors will be pleased to tell you where they go.

There is a reference guide to recommended good businesses and this can be got through the 'Mujeres Amigas' Luncheon group. This group meets ever first Wednesday of the month and there may be perhaps 100 women getting together and making friends.

Manzamigos have a dining out night each week on a Thursday where people gather to exchange information and have a good evening in pleasant company. That is called Thirsty Thursday and a not to be missed event for at least once in a holiday.

Both of these organizations are great ways to have a short cut to the many pleasures to be found in Manzanillo and each month the contact address is to be found in the pages of this magazine.

Next month we will look at other services to be found south of the border. This one just happened to be my favourite.



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Casa Hogar Los Angelitos

Mark Wright

Involvement financially in Casa Hogar Los Angelitos is a great investment in improving lives. Almost everyone of us is suspicious that if we donated to something, our money would not go to the bottom line. That place where our hard earned money makes a difference. We can testify that gifts to CHLA go right to the bottom line! We know that CHLA's administration is minimal because the whole place is run by the 'largest single donors', Nancy Nystrom and her husband David. In addition, tax receipts are available via Rotary International meaning, depending on your taxable income, you could give a gift of \$1000 for a net cost to you of \$600. Not bad!

Two things make CHLA different - different from other facilities (Casa Hogars) that clothe, house, feed and provide safety to children:

First, Casa Hogar Los Angelitos attempts to develop the young person by educating them toward a career, and releasing into the community, a person who has developed skills and is ready to contribute to society in Mexico. This is important in that it breaks the cycle that just repeats itself if children are returned to their native environment at 15 or so years of age. Currently, CHLA has several young men and women in universities and technical schools, all of this sponsored by people like you who with your wise generosity, are making a measurable difference.

Secondly, part of what makes CHLA unique is that the founder, Nancy Nystrom, had the idea that expressive arts may help some of these children deal with their sometimes very difficult pasts. Her idea has gradually progressed to where many of the children in CHLA and even some from surrounding communities, have joined the Ballet Folklorico Casa Hogar Los Angelitos.

According to Professor Don Phelps from Aurora University in Chicago, Casa Hogar Los Angelitos is doing something that is just not accomplished in other orphanages he has visited. Although this link takes some minutes to watch, please take the time to do so: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=f17d7QlhwXk>

Now, if you have taken time to watch the above link (Congratulations!). Then this short link will introduce you to what Albertan's and visitors will enjoy this July:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MFxNjOVXW2I>

Ballet Folklorico Casa Hogar Los Angelitos, known internationally as "**Danzas Folklorica Manzanillo Viva**" will perform July in:

Canmore Collegiate High School Auditorium
1800 8th Ave

July 18, 2014, 7:30 pm

Canmore, Alberta, Canada

Canyon Creek Christian Church
333 MidPark Way SE,

Calgary, Alberta, Canada

Sunday July 20, 2014, 3:00 pm

TransCanada Theatre - Olds College
4500 50th St

Olds, Alberta

July 21, 2014, 7:00 pm

Ticket Info: www.oldskiwanis.org/concert.htm

Wednesday, July 23rd- 7:00 PM

MACLAB Centre for the Performing Arts
4308-50 Street

Leduc, Alberta, Canada

Phone: 780-986-5503 for ticket information

Sponsor-Leduc Rotary Club

Thursday, July 24th-7:00 PM

L'UNI Theatre- la Cite Francophone
8627-91 Street, **Edmonton, Alberta, Canada**

Phone: 780-469-8400 for ticket information

Sponsorship is critical, needed, and appreciated. Some Albertans stepped up last fall, providing funds to cover the costs to acquire Canada's onerous but necessary Visas (some children have no recorded past making acquiring visa information very difficult). Costs for Danza Folklorico are very tightly monitored, and the program's funding is kept totally separate from the needs at CHLA. This program must be self sustaining and has been from its beginning. It functions only because individuals realize the great value being achieved with limited funds, and then step up and give their support. Please, let's get together and make this first Alberta tour a financial success!

All gifts are welcome and gifts of \$500 or more are eligible for a tax receipt. Please send to: **Rotary Club**

of West Winnipeg, 1874 Portage Ave, Unit 201, Winnipeg, MB., OR go to any TD branch and direct deposit to: **TD Canada Trust**, 2030 Corydon Ave, Winnipeg, MB, Bank number 004, Branch number 05127, Charity bank a/c number- 5200603, Swift Code - TDOMCATTOR. *After which*, please send an email to **Dr. Jack Peterson** with your donation information and tax receipt instructions including your return address: jack@cogmation.com

Tax deductible donations received prior to May 20th will be acknowledged in the Dance Program to be printed soon. For more information, donors are most welcome to contact **Sue Jackson**, the volunteer **Coordinator for the Alberta Tour** who can be reached at: firesidesue@aol.com.

This Folkloric Dance experience will open your mind to understanding some of Mexico's cultural history. Hearts will be warmed by these young people who have experienced adversity and trauma but are recovering and bringing their culture to us with pride, self-confidence, and the brightest smiles! It was noted in Iowa, "Words cannot capture the impact of

performances that resulted in standing ovations, tears running down cheeks, or audiences seeking out the performers to have photos taken."

This photo of some of the CHLA dancers was taken at the Casa Hogar Los Angelitos open house, Feb. 1, 2014



Viva Mexico, Viva Canada, Viva Alberta!

See you in July,

Mark & Vicky Wright www.MexicoDream.ca

En "Las Abejas" tenemos la parrilla para ahumar indirecta más grande en Manzanillo. No contamos con el típico menú impreso, pero si con un tablero con el menú del día. Esto nos permite ofrecerle diariamente las carnes más frescas, así como las frutas y verduras más sabrosas de temporada.

At 'Las Abejas' we have the largest indirect heat smoker-grill in all of Manzanillo. We do not have a typical printed menu, but a daily menu board. This will allow us to bring you only the freshest meats available each day along with the most flavorful 'in season fruits and vegetables



Manzanillo Letter

Early May 2014
Mark Wright

Tulips, as this is written, are dealing with spring frosts as they emerge from the still partially frozen ground, while the remainder of winter's snow resists the sun's best efforts of turning it into life giving water. Photos from friends who have made Manzanillo their permanent home, remind us of the perfect warmth offered to those who choose to live at 20 degrees latitude - so pleasant and effortless for humans. During Alberta's spring snow squalls/falls most of this week and the last two, locals pester us with sarcastic questions such as, "What are you doing here?" And with each passing year we do, at times, question our April decision to return north and abandon Manzanillo's perfect climate.

While discussing the sometimes gruesome details of the third world and observing 'the errors in the system,' the sad reality is that there are many who need our help. The kidnapping of school girls in Nigeria (current news story) is a reminder of the long term need for change, and of the short term need for protection. Pointing fingers, weighing in on obvious faults or attempting to solve the world's problems is entertainment; it does nothing to feed and nourish, provide safety and security, or clothe and educate a child in need. For sure no child chooses such a situation; many are just in it with no visible way out (or up).

It's easy to sit back and think we have figured things out. Just ask us! We've worked hard, smart, efficiently, with integrity, etc. We've come a long way, done some amazing things in life, and arrived at our Mexican home for example (or some other location), surrounded by earned luxuries, security, and service. Isn't this what it's about - plenty of everything?

The Good Life for the very fortunate!



Among the simplest ways to live this 'Good Life' is to forget that anyone or anything exists beyond our conclusions, or that we have any responsibility to anyone or anything beyond what we control. Without a doubt we (Vicky and I) were caught up somewhere in this realm of what seemed a reality.

Admitting this now is a little difficult. But, certainly we had, up 'til just a few years ago, allowed ourselves to remain maybe naive by simply not making much of an attempt to become aware of the human need that existed near our tropical paradise. We are now more aware and realize that there are many who are in somewhat desperate situations. Needs are not exclusive to our TV explained sponsorship of World Vision children for example - similar needs are sometimes much closer to us. In this case, right in Manzanillo.

We've been somewhat private about the six children who were introduced to us. Unfortunately their story is not unique and conditions in which they existed are far too common. A clear fact is that most of we Northerners will respond when confronted with the situation of an undernourished or abused child. The way in which we responded to this situation then is probably somewhat predictable, and maybe how you the reader of this would respond as well. The reality is that we experienced a sense of guilt in that these children who existed so close to us, had experienced by our standards a very difficult childhood, and that we could have easily made a difference - sooner. Here is a much abbreviated version of their story.

One of the men on Perla's staff knew of this situation near his meagre home and shared with Omar (Perla's then manager) that the Mom would be interested in work as a maid. The Mom then came to work sometime in early March of 2011 as one of the maids at our Perla Del Mar. Shortly after hiring her, Omar shared with us that she had four children with her and that there were two more from a different father still in Acapulco. As we understood the story, she and Dad II had arrived in Manzanillo on a bus from Acapulco with all six children and had disagreed on something. He hopped back on the bus with the two youngest and returned to that southern city, leaving the five of them pretty much homeless and destitute. This is probably not a situation foreign to them.

We had asked Omar a couple of times if the four children were okay and being fed. The Mom had assured Omar that all was fine. A couple of weeks later Omar heard from others on staff at Perla Del Mar that Perla's staff were in fact helping the Mom with food and household items as they had essentially nothing. We know that salaries in Mexico do not afford supporting others, even though Perla Del Mar pays at the top of the salary range for the type of work done. With this knowledge, we immediately arranged for Omar to take us to where they lived at the end of that workday. Turns out the children just wandered the street near their home during the day, without food or attending school. The Perla employee who lived close to them had told Omar that the neighbours were annoyed with the children because of their constant begging for food, and of course the nuisance they became while the Mom was attempting to find work. The five of them slept on the floor, on two discarded damp mattresses, with no bedding of any sort.

Our response was probably typical. We took the Mom to Wal-Mart and delivered her that same day with purchases to the waiting children in what was then their home. Certainly our response was an understandable

reaction but not necessarily the ideal one. Over time however, we gained some knowledge of the most appropriate way to help, and gradually gained the trust of the Mom and the children. A 'no questions asked, no strings attached approach' with assistance became maybe one of the first constants in their lives.

With this we have shared the beginning of a much longer story. The youngest two children showed up with Dad II in March 2012. After two years of our prodding, the Mom finally relented and allowed the children to enter the orphanage on April 12, 2013. These six children have now spent a full year in Casa Hogar Los Angelitos or "CHLA" (Translated it means, "Foster Home for Little Angels"). They have been cleansed of internal parasites and of course lice, have gained significant weight, and are all in school. Poor nutrition in their early youth means they will never reach average height, but who knows maybe one or more of them will graduate college? Additionally, we have gained significant knowledge concerning the operation of CHLA, what this orphanage does that is unique, and why it works so well.

(To be continued: See Casa Hogar Los Angelitos)



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NEW LOCATION

Travelling the “Wright Way”

Part III

by Mark Wright

Ed: In our previous two sections of Mark's story we have introduced guides Malena and her husband Hector, who took Mark and Vicky on a very special tour of Mexico City. This is the conclusion of that story.

Malena shared that most of the people making the trek to the Basilica and enduring the crowds are the nation's poor. They come to ask for that over which they have no control, and to give thanks. Many walk on their knees (sometimes bloodied) near the end of their journey in humbling themselves before God. Observation by the uniformed such as yours truly suggests that the more well to do in Mexico are not too different from those in our home countries. Maybe we sometimes forget to give thanks for what we have, especially when we have plenty?

Witness this man holding a bible and walking several hundred feet on his knees while approaching the new Basilica.



Next was a short 40 km drive to the northeast of Mexico City - Teotihuacan (tay-o-tea-whaw-'can). Gasps of amazement at the first view of the 'Pyramid of the Sun' must be normal (nearby is a similar smaller structure called the Pyramid of the Moon). This major structure was begun sometime before the birth of Christ and completed in approximately 250 AD.

The civilization that created these worship pyramids lasted into maybe the 7th or 8th century. What remains is well cared for and the most visited archaeological site

in Mexico. Being the largest pyramid in Mexico, the Pyramid of the Sun is part of structural remnants of an ancient civilization that covers an astonishing total area of 32 sq. miles. Not surprisingly, as of 1987, this area became a UNESCO World Heritage Site, guaranteeing it's future enjoyment for many generations.



One of our first questions was, “What's inside?” Turns out the answer is: Everything that could be used to fill up the space – rocks, mud, etc. The structure is near original but did have in addition to what one now sees, a worship temple on top. Bottom line is that this is simply a very big solid pyramid – 438 feet across and almost 250 feet high. It's a major climb, but one which Vicky and Malena (of course) did with ease. Hector and I agreed to stay on the ground as instructed and take pictures of the two of them on top.

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Teotihuacan>





Study suggests the culture that built Teotihuacan began possibly 1500 years prior to the Aztecs (250 BC), peaking at about 450 AD after which there seems to be more speculation than fact concerning its demise and timing.

In trying to understand that the inside is simply fill, Hector explained it this way: “Why would you want to go inside anyway? These people worshiped among their God’s, the Sun and the Moon. These pyramids were erected to the God of the Sun and the God of the Moon, and you can’t see these Gods from inside! In addition, the very temperate climate does not require housing to survive, so most living was probably conducted on the ground and/or within a boundary of what was part of a building or improvement”. Our first reaction was then probably somewhat predictable since we of course spend most of our lives and a substantial portion of our earnings trying to get the exact right house in which to live out the rest of our lives (inside).

One must be inclined to ask, what’s so special about the area that comprises Mexico City that 25 million or more people would choose to live in or near this area now and that its’ history extends back for thousands of years? Don’t have the answer exactly and who could in 6 days? For sure it has an ideal climate; must have had

resources needed during these millenniums of years; had ample water in a lake surrounded by mountains; became a center of culture; and has had unquestionable beauty. It is now simply there, functioning with a predictable rhythm similar to most cities.

We stayed in an upscale area called Polanco. Without a doubt the pace and services in this special part of the city would rival almost any such upscale area in any of the world’s great cities. Several of the foreign embassies are located in Polanco as are many upscale and expensive apartment complexes. The best in food can be found in Polanco with restaurants of every kind and description. While they serve early birds like us at 6-7 pm, but typical in Spanish cultures, reservations are often required to guarantee access after 9 pm in the evening.

The visit to Mexico City was a great experience and gave us new appreciation for our little town of Manzanillo and its quiet, simple, tropical elegance. What a contrast, but then that’s part what makes Mexico so special to those who choose to discover its charm. As always the people are gentle and hospitable. We make new friends with each visit. The list of potential places to visit in Mexico is long, but the time is not – we have to ramp up the pace if we’re going to see all that this beautiful country has to offer.



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MUJERES AMIGAS NEWSLETTER FOR JUNE 2014*Elaine Parker***Happy June Ladies,**

By now you are all enjoying the warm weather where ever you are. Our June luncheon will be held on Wednesday, June 4th. Be at Oasis by 12:30 to socialize and pay for your luncheon and drink choice. The pizza and salad buffet will be served at 1:00. The cost of the luncheon is 100 pesos and includes the tip. Drinks are separate and the cost does not include the tip so remember to tip your server. The Mobil veterinarian is coming to introduce herself. Edgar Lopez, a Spanish teacher recommended by Candy, Sue Ellis and many others will also be at the meeting. His cell phone is 314-133-4017 and e-mail is directenglishforlife@gmail.com

Please respond that you will attend the luncheon by 1:00 p.m. Tuesday, June 3rd to mujeresamigaslunches@gmail.com

SAD TO REPORT

Derek Beattie passed away suddenly on Sunday, April 27th of a heart attack in Manzanillo. Our condolences go out to his wife, Nancy and their family.

Club Santiago resident Amirlante Salvatore Gomez passed away in early May. Amirlante was a brilliant man, wonderful artist and an incredible woodworker in retirement. Our condolences go out to his family.

FOR YOUR INFORMATION

Those attending the May luncheon enjoyed talking to Lic. Mercedes Nava from Asilo de Ancianos de Manzanillo I.A.P. The Senior Center is a private institution and relies on donations in order to provide a great service to the elder citizens of the area. As always the center is in need of donations to cover the basic expenses which are important for daily care. After the luncheon Lic. Mercedes Nava sent a list of the needed items for now:

1. The center has been unable to pay IMSS, Infonavit and CFR bills since October 2013. The total amount owed up to May 7th was 70,000 pesos.
2. Assistance is needed in paying employee wages totaling 10,000 pesos.
3. For the new Aslio, there are various projects the center needs to work on in order to get ready to move into. There is a group of people working on raising the money to purchase these projects right now. One is the need to purchase a few fire extinguishers and some smoke detectors in order to meet the safety standards.

Lic. Nava respectfully requests that any donation would be helpful to cover some of their expenses. Hopefully the new Asilo de Ancianos will be open soon and the residents can enjoy their long awaited new home.

Another new restaurant, Aroma, has opened in Las Brisas on Av. Lazaro Cardenas. Aroma has a shipping container theme evidenced by the front door and entrance. There are dining rooms of all sizes so one can book a room for a private party. The menu is extensive and the food is excellent. The staff is very attentive. Prices are in the Pergola, Toscana and Freddy's range.

Some good information from Lydia Bevaart. Lydia recently went to Sam's Club to purchase five items. When she arrived home, she only had four items but was charged for the five. Lydia returned to Sam's just in case she might get the one item back, a jar of green olives. Lydia was afraid that she had left the olives in the cart. Well, lo and behold, someone had turned in the green olives to the desk at Sam's. Sam's had attached a note to the olives "left on Monday in the cart at 3:30 p.m.". Who would have thought someone would have turned in the jar of olives and Sam's Club would have taken time to put a note on the jar and kept it safe. Lydia has also been doing some checking around the pharmacies in the area. Lydia found that Sam's Club was over 30 pesos less for the pills she wanted than Guadalajara Pharmacy, even with the senior's discount. Commercial was also more expensive. It pays to check a couple of pharmacies before you purchase your medications or other pills. Thank you Lydia for alerting us to Sams Club's good policies and being a good shopping detective. It pays to shop around.

Don't forget to read the June issue of the Manzanillo Sun e-magazine which should be available soon after the first of the month.

JUNE HAPPENINGS

Sunday, June 1st - Marine's Day, Dia de las Marina celebrates the Mexican Navy

Sunday, June 15th - Father's Day, Dia del Padre honors all the fathers throughout Mexico, Canada and the United States.

The Game

By Kirby Vickery

Some men like to take the family to a Sunday game. If the family doesn't have an interest the guy's friends do and with tickets they all can be entertained for about three hours with some socializing before and after the game. This is the modern man's dream of a Sunday's fun and the experience is expected to last for the entire week. As the seasons change so does the game. Oh, it's fun to watch individual players in a sport and at times, watch individual sports like in the Olympics. But the main draw across the entire year is to root for your team and their individual group components such as the offence or the defensive line. The thing is that idea and search for a good time hasn't changed since just about the dawn of time. Through all of this time it never acquired a name and has always been known as just, "The Game."

The world's first team sport started in Mesoamerica at some time between 200 BCE and 1500 BCE depending on which web site or text book you would like to subscribe to. Two, three man teams met with a referee on an "I" shaped court. Their object was to get a rubber ball through a ring on the side of the court without using their hands. Obviously there were variations as time went by and some of these changes made the game very interesting and dangerous. What we hear from the Aztecs is the leader of the losing team to the entire group could be beheaded. There was one small variant from one of the Aztec codex that the losing team were tied up into balls themselves then rolled down the temple stairs. Clay models of the ball court depict viewers as entire families rather than blood lust warriors. They possibly had sacrifices of the losers late in the pre-Columbian history in the larger cosmopolitan areas but, for the most part, the players were friends and would live to work another week and play again as in most amateur sports today.

I've found two mythological legends concerning The Game. One of them is Aztec and the other is Mayan.

It appears that the Aztec King Motechuhoma (Think of Montezuma and variations of his name.), and the king of Texcoco which is a city on the shores of Lake Texcoco about 25 miles north east of Mexico City had a disagreement about when Motechuhoma's rule would end. They decided to put it to a test in a game of The Game. As the story goes, Motechuhoma lost the game

and as they say in the modern era, the rest is history. Cortez showed up from Spain with less than 1,400 men and just took over (there are good reasons for this happening and some not so good - but, I'm not going to get into that here.)

The story that includes The Game in Mayan mythological history is a lot more convoluted and interesting. It starts with a pair of brothers Hun and Vucub Hunashpu who happened to be very good Game players. They never lost and that ticked off a bunch of the underworld gods. As it happened, these gods set a trap for the brothers. Hun and Vucub were caught in the trap and then descended into the underworld called Xibalba where Hun's head was cut off and hung in a tree. It so happened that there was this princess by the name of Xuicpg walking around down there and Hun's head was able to spit in her eye. This made her pregnant and in that condition she was banned from Xibalba by these dastardly underworld lords, the very same ones that lured Hun and brother Vucub down there to begin with. Time passed, the princess came to term and had a set of twins whom she named Hunahpu and Xbalanque.

Our story doesn't end there. These two guys grew and ended up playing The Game even better than their father and uncle. The same dastardly underworld lords started to set traps for these two brothers as well. But, I suppose second generation trap avoiders are better at it than their father, for some reason, they avoided being caught. Instead they planned and executed a foray back into the underworld and were able to rescue their uncle, their father and his head. As they leave the darkness of that shadowy place Hun became the Sun and the uncle became the Moon.



Tommy's Tummy The Number "Juan" Restaurant in Manzanillo

My wife, Patty, says that a business has "arrived" when folks answer a query for direction with something like this, "The place you are looking for is two blocks south of Juanito's."

Indeed, **Juanito's Restaurant** is such an eatery of renown!

Upon arriving there, chances are that you will be greeted by the large and gregarious Juanito himself - as the family tradition is that he or an immediate family member is on site virtually all of the time that it is open in order to ensure the service and food is perfect. Obviously, he, his wife Esperanza, daughter Susan or nephew Thomas may generally be found at the cash register or walking among the customers making them feel welcome. They are all totally committed to ensuring that their prompt, efficient and friendly service fully complements the restaurant's fine variety of meals offered throughout the day.

Owned and operated by John and Esperanza Corey, their place is the perfect culmination of environment, atmosphere, great service, fair prices and superlative food. And, perhaps better than any other eating establishment in the entirety of Manzanillo, they have effectively captivated the textbook amalgam of locals, tourists, snow birds and full-time ex-pats in their customer base!



Jovial, kind and caring, John - born in Mexico City but returned to *Gringolandia* for education - came back to Manzanillo in 1970. He and Esperanza - she, by the way, is one of the nicest ladies and a most superlative gourmet cooks around - were married in 1972.

Their children Enrique, Carlos and Susan were born in 1973, 1974 and 1977 respectively with all three ultimately "doing their time" in the Corey's first restaurant. La Hamburguesia, and then **Juanitos**, which they started in 1976. (Carlos now has his own "**Juanitos Express**" restaurant near the Holiday Inn in the port area.)

As loyal to their staff as they are their customers, many of their team have worked with them for many years - and it shows in the friendly, personalized service. They, under John's watchful eye, often endeavor to sit gringos/Canadians next to locals thus, inevitably, starting up great cross-cultural conversations.



But what good is a restaurant without good food? Well, there is no lack of that here! An array of excellent choices - both local fare or pure Americana - are available.



For *desayuno* start with, perhaps, the best freshly ground coffee in the city and/or just squeezed fruit juice. Then choose from a variety of fried and scrambled eggs – my favorite is *juevos divorciados* - divorced eggs with green and red sauce, *chilaquiles*, *frijoles* and a toasted *bolillo*. Quadruple Yum! Patty generally enjoys the pancakes with an egg and bacon. But choose for yourself from the over a score and a half of wonderful selections.

Now for *Comida* one perhaps you might wish to go traditional with a Tampico style beef filet with enchilada or have one of those famous **Juanitos Especial** Burgers *con papas* (French fries). They also offer a variety of other delicious entrees ranging from a club sandwich or Cuban torta, through red or green enchiladas with chicken or cheese, jerked beef with eggs, Bar B Q pork ribs, tostados with chicken or pork, and fresh shrimp in any manner you choose to crispy chicken tacos – and a wide range of selections in between!

I am thoroughly sated just writing about and remembering the many fine meals I have had there!

Juanitos Restaurant – “The number “Juan” restaurant in town!”

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Manzanillo, Colima**

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BAKING INGREDIENTS INGREDIENTES DE LA HORNADA

English

Cereal

Bran
Oatmeal
Wheat germ

Cream

Cream
Half & Half
Light Cream
Sour Cream
Whipping Cream

Eggs

Hardboiled Egg
Raw Egg
Egg Yolk
Egg White

Fat

Butter
Lard
Margarine

Flours

Flour
Cornstarch
Rice Flour
Rye Flour
White Flour
Whole Wheat

Milk

Milk
Buttermilk
Condensed (sweetened)

Evaporated Milk
Homogenized (whole)
Low Fat Milk
Skim Milk

Oils

Oil
Corn Oil
Olive Oil

Español

Cereales

Salvado
Avena
El germen de trigo

Crema

Crema
Media Crema
Crema Ligera
Crema Agria (ácida)
Crema para batir o pastelera

Huevos

Huevo Cocidos
Huevo Crudo
Yema de Huevo
Blanca de Huevo

Manteca

Mantequilla
Manteca de cerdo
Margarina

Harina

Harina
Maizena
Harina de Arroz
Harina de Centeno
Harina Blanca
Harina de Trigo o Integral

Leche

Leche
Jocoque, Suero de Leche
Leche Condensada
Azucarada
Leche Evaporada
Leche Pasteurizada
Leche Descremada
Leche Desnatada
Leche Light
Leche descremada

Aceites

Aceite
Aceite de Maíz
Aceite de Oliva

English

Oils

Virgin Olive Oil
Extra Virgin Olive Oil
Peanut Oil
Safflower oil
Sunflower Oil
Vegetable Oil

Raising Agents

Baking Powder
Baking Soda
Yeast

Sugars

Sugar
Light Brown Sugar
Dark Brown Sugar

Icing Sugar
Brick of Dark Sugar
Molasses/Treacle
Syrup

Sugar substitutes

Aspartame
Saccharine
Sucralose
Glucose

Español

Aceite

Aceite de Oliva Virgen
Aceite de Oliva Virgen Extra
Aceite de cacahuete
Aceite de Cártamo
Aceite de Girasol
Aceite Vegetal

Gasificantes

Polvo para Hornear
Bicarbonato de Sodio
Levadura

Azúcares

Azúcar
Azúcar Clara
Azúcar Oscura
Azúcar Morena
Azúcar Glaseado
Piloncillo o Panocha
Melaza
Jarabe

Sustitutos del Azúcar

Aspartamo
Sacarina
Sucralosa
Glucosa



CONDIMENTS

English

- Honey
- Jam
- Jelly
- Kitchen Bouquet
- Mayonnaise
- Mustard
- Dijon Mustard
- Red Chile Sauce
- Green Chile Sauce
 - Hot
 - Medium
 - Mild
- Peanut Butter
- Pepper
- Salt
- Sea Salt
- Salsa Mexican

Soy Sauce

Syrups

- Maple Syrup
- Pancake Syrup

Vinegars

- Apple Vinegar
- Balsamic Vinegar
- Malt Vinegar
- Pineapple Vinegar
- White Vinegar
- Wine Vinegar
- Worcestershire Sauce

CONDIMENTOS

Español

- Miel de Abeja
- Mermelada de *****
- Jalea
- Salsa de Carne
- Mayonesa
- Mostaza
- Mostaza Dijon
- Salsa de chile colorado
- Salsa de chile verde
 - Caliente/ Picante
 - Fuego Media
 - Suave
- Crema de cacahuete
- Pimienta
- Sal
- Sal del Mar
- Combination of tomatoes, onions, chiles, cilantro & limes
- Salsa de Soya

Jarabes

- Miel de mais con sabor de maple
- Jarabe para hot cakes

Vinagre

- Vinagre de Manzana
- Vinagre de Balsamico
- Vinagre de Malta
- Vinagre de Pina
- Vinagre Blanco
- Vinagre deVino
- Salsa Ingles



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The following is seventeenth installment of a slightly embellished and bit fictionalized account of an almost real event!

We all have met 'em. . . Tommy Clarkson

(Most everyone knows someone like this. He is the individual who has done it all. Everything you've experienced, he's done better. Recently while flying home, trapped at an altitude of 39,000 feet, one such individual sat next to me. The following is a continuation of this, seemingly, unending experience.)

"You know," he continued the unending monologue, "I've a bit of an international renown for my discoveries in the field of entomology."

As in the, now normal, monosyllabic response I'd been hence far allowed, I said, "Oh?"

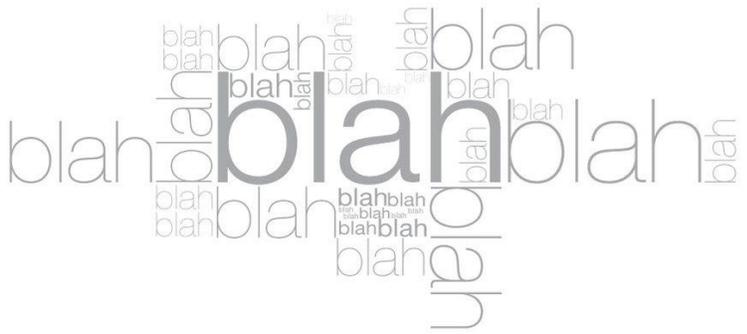
"Why yes, in fact in the *Lepidoptera* family, it was I that discovered – and ultimately had to destroy – what the South American newspapers were calling the "Parasitic Plague of Paraguay", the Vampire Viceroy or, using its Latin name, *Vespertilio-Papilio bloodsuckerous*."

My mouth agape, I had no response to such an assertion.

Once again taking my silence for interest, he continued. "Yes, in all reality they were no longer pure and simple butterflies. In fact, it seems these were a result of accelerated genetic mutation spawned from industrial pollutants from a large yo-yo factory in the region coupled with some rather bizarre species cross breeding between smaller flesh eating jungle bats and a rather rare and elusive, but highly aggressive and large, night flight butterfly species."

"So hearty and vicious were they that they could easily tear their way through a conventional nylon butterfly – or even finely woven high tensile strength fishing – net. I had to use a specially made titanium mesh that I dropped from the second canopy of the hardwood jungle upon them as they fed on stacked sides of beef we'd pinned to jungle floor to keep them from flying off with them."

He paused, longer than usual – causing me to jerk my head his direction as silence, heretofore, had not his forte – but identification of these creatures was only one-half of this story, continuing, "To avert an international blood bath I was contracted by the World



Health Organization to eradicate them. It's too gruesome to go into but, suffice it to say it entailed a herd of 250 water buffalo, thirteen tons of TNT, 185 fifty-five gallon barrels of double aught buckshot, a Peruvian blow gun and a pack of Fleers baseball card bubble gum.

He sighed deeply – somewhat theatrically – and muttered, heavy with what seemed to me to be a bit of feigned emotion, "Perhaps someday I will be better able to tell you about it."

Another pause followed. This was certainly a change of pace from the last non-stop two hours of verbal onslaught from him. But then reality returned.

"In the *Coleoptera* side of the insect world, I also discovered the thirteen inch long – but less than 1/16 of an inch wide – Siberian Fetal Needle Beetle. These unique guys annually burrow deep below, under and across the Arctic Ocean floor commencing their journey in northeastern Siberian so that it can ultimately lay their eggs deep below the Northern Alaska permafrost before returning to their desolate home environs, deep-down in Siberia. Interestingly, at birth the newborns unfurl themselves from the egg in the tightest of fetal knots to ultimately realizing their full, over a foot long, size."

With pontifical tone he stated, "Indeed, a most interesting insect I found."

Then as if in an afterthought, he added, "Also, unique to them is the fact that they only emerge above ground for less than five minutes after hatching to shed their membranous skin from the eggs in which they developed. So to capture a specimen one has to be at the right



place and the right time . . . and, normally, in -40°F to -60°F temperatures. “Twas the very sort of challenge I so enjoy!”

Seeming to fairly wallow in smug, self-importance he straightened his large haughty self yet taller in the seat that he more than filled, exclaiming, “But perhaps my foremost ‘captures began in the Odonata order or what you lay people would call Dragonflies.”

Attaining a professorial demeanor he went on, “But first, let us discuss that which ultimately led to so much, much more. As you may know, Dragonflies go back over 250 million years ago and Griffenflies - their great-great-grandparents - had a 28 inch wing span.”

He paused, looked at me and then totally surprised me by remembering one of the few things I’d had opportunity to share with him earlier, “In fact as I recall, you mentioned that you are a Jayhawk and your wife grew up a Sooner. Well fossils of this giant invertebrate predator have been discovered in Elmo, Kansas and Midco, Oklahoma!”

“But that all having been noted, let me tell you about the crème de la crème of beauties that I found - or should I say that found me which led me to find so very much more!

With a somewhat wistful look in his eyes, he went on, “It was on the archipelago of Tristan de Cunha in the South Atlantic approximately 1,700 miles from South Africa. In that it is only accessible by boat - and those very few and far between - with hardly 250 residents, I often go there for solitary Zen introspection living off olives, figs and water for a couple of months.”

“At any rate there I was deep inside of a cave, in a state of full meditation, several hundred feet up the harsh rocky mountainside when this enormous dragonfly - reminiscent of, but slightly smaller than, those Griffenflies I mentioned a moment ago - landed on my head. Now one would never expect any manner of such insects on this island in the middle of nowhere, let alone at this altitude . . . to say nothing of one of this specimen’s immensity!”

“Come to find out it had actually flown from deep within the bowels of the cave which, I ultimately learned through exploration, lead to a mammoth - theretofore unknown - tropical subterranean cavern

perhaps twenty miles by fifteen, deep below the mountain.”

“And, my new found insect friend was but the tip of a prehistoric life form iceberg - so to speak! For, within this steamy environ I found a multitude of amazing flora, fauna and insects unknown to contemporary humanity.”

“Why have I not shared this - perhaps most amazing find in the history of mankind - with the world’s general populous or at least the scientific community you might ask? Well, simply, I fear that humanity is not as humane as we might wish and that in its zeal to explore, identify and catalog it may well kill all of these many, long living and probably last surviving, living entities.”

I was speechless. For all his bombastic rhetoric (if I were to believe him) I caught a glimpse of a truly caring, sensitive and thoughtful individual.

Perhaps, and but so very briefly, as then he said, “Did I tell you about how I single-handedly kept a re-emergence of the Black Plague a couple of years ago?”

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Should You Wait Until 70 to Take Social Security?

by Yann Kostic

Most Americans consider 65 the traditional age to take Social Security benefits, but there are other options. You can take them early, at age 62, or late, up to age 70.

If you start collecting Social Security benefits in the first year of eligibility - at 62 - you'll receive a smaller monthly payment, but you could, theoretically, receive benefits for a longer period of time and maximize your total gain.

On the other hand, you could wait until age 70 to start collecting Social Security benefits, at which time you could qualify for the maximum possible payment.

There are pros and cons to taking Social Security early, late, or on time, but here we'll discuss the argument for waiting. The main reason to delay taking benefits until you reach age 70 is that you'll receive an additional 8 percent of income per year for every year past your full retirement age; this depends on the year in which you were born, but it is currently 66 or 67.

As well, your annual cost-of-living increase will be based on this higher amount, which is a significant return in today's market environment.

Of course, in this case, you'll need another source of income until you're 70, which means you'll either have to keep working or live off other investments. There also may be some concern that Social Security won't be around if you wait the additional five years.

This option isn't for everyone, but if you can plan ahead, it might be a compelling alternative.

Yann Kostic is a Financial Advisor (RIA) and Money Manager with Atlantis Wealth Management, specializing in retirees (or soon to be), self-reliant women and Expats in Mexico. Yann works with TD Ameritrade Institutional (custodian). He splits his time between Florida and Ajijic/Manzanillo in Mexico. Comments, questions or to request his Newsletter "News You Can Use". Contact him at Yannk@AtlantisWealth.com, in Mexico: (376) 106-1613 or in the US: (321) 574-1529

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AT THE MOVIES

Suzanne A. Marshall

Million Dollar Arm

Director: Craig Gillespie
Cast: Jon Hamm, Pit Obash, Suraj Sharma, Madhur Mittal, Lake Bell (with: Alan Arkin, Bill Paxton)

I looked forward to this movie because I find "true" sports stories very uplifting. You know it's going to be a story of struggle ending in success. And why not? Who wants to watch the good guys fail? Nonetheless, I got what I wanted, a really enjoyable 'true' story; really terrific scenes in India; engaging characters, current fusion music sound track; topped off by a little bit of romance; and of course breaking down barriers to success.

A couple of sports promoters down on their luck, decide to find a financial investor and head to India, believing this untapped country will produce potential talent for baseball. The 'Million Dollar Arm' becomes a sports competition in various cities in India and many try-outs take place as young men hope to win the one million dollars at stake for winning the competition and finding a new life in America.

Produced by Disney Films, IMDB rates the film thus far at 7.6/10.



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Señior Tech

This past year I had to replace my computer hardware. My trusty PC, which I built 8 years ago, developed a problem with the voltage regulator chip on the motherboard (the main circuit board on a computer that controls the hard drives, and houses the main processor and memory). The problem also damaged my power supply.

Since I was going to have to essentially replace 80% of the components to get that computer repaired; I decided to replace the PC with Apple's MAC Mini. I checked the prices online at the Apple Store (www.apple.ca) and decided to also check the same configuration in the refurbished products area of the store (<http://store.apple.com/ca/browse/home/specialdeals/mac>).

The computer in the refurbished area was \$275.00 cheaper than in the main store. So after reading about their process of refurbishment, I decided to order a refurbished Mac Mini Computer. Delivery was free and was delivered from California to my door a week later. If Apple sells a computer and the person takes it home and has buyers remorse, and returns it the next day; the returned computer cannot be sold as new. So it goes through their test processes and is repackaged as refurbished.

The computer I received was wrapped and packaged as if it was new. On inspection there were no signs of wear, scratches or defects, and if anyone else were there to witness the unwrapping they would not know the computer was a refurbished machine. A few months after purchase, I did a system report and was delighted to discover that the computer processor I had ordered which was supposed to be an Intel I7 Quad Core with a processor speed of 2.3 Ghz was actually a 2.6 Ghz processor (this was an additional \$100 value).

So if you ask me if I would recommend this as a way to get a quality Apple computer at a more reasonable cost? I would have to say yes. In fact, in March of this year, I was sad to have to sell my first MacBook (which I purchased in 2007). One of our readers needed a



laptop and since my new Mac Mini allowed me to compute albeit in a stationary location, I reluctantly sold my MacBook.

When I returned home, I started to research a replacement laptop and decided on a 15" MacBook Pro with Retina screen. I was so happy with my previous purchase that I decided to once again purchase a refurbished model. This time the saving was over \$500.00. When the computer arrived, I was once again impressed with the packaging. There were no flaws or scratches, and it had that new showroom smell. There was no indication that this computer was ever used at all.

I decided to purchase a refurbished Samsung Color Laser Printer with Automatic Document feeder. The unit is an all-in-one printer, copier, scanner, and FAX machine. The New price was \$630.00 but they had a few returns available for \$248.00. The technician at the store informed me that their policy on printer returns was to send the printer back to the manufacturer for refurbishment.

On inspection, the printer did not have cables or a power cord, but since I was saving close to \$400.00, I wasn't going to get picky. The box was the original, not a new one like an Apple refurb, but did I mention, I



was saving close to \$400.00. I had a spare power cord from my now defunct PC, and a \$4.00 network cable was all that was required to connect the printer to my system. Printer drivers are available at no charge from Samsung's website. The printer diagnostics did not display any mechanical problems and all ink colours were at 100%.

When purchasing a refurbished item, be sure to see what warranties are available. Also ask what their return policy is if you are unhappy with the product. Apple offers the same warranty as if the refurbished unit was new. In the case of the Samsung Printer, the warranty is 90 days.

Refurbished items are not always in stock, so you may have to keep checking the website. If you see what you want, you should act quickly to insure you get the item you want. I have every confidence recommending Apple's refurbished products; from iPods, iPads, to their numerous computer models. If you deal with other companies, please check online to see what other users say about them. The savings on these products are not worth the grief if you are not satisfied.

I would like to thank Freda Vickery for writing the tech article last month. Between our return to Canada and a commitment to another project, I was unable to submit my article on time.

monkey's

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