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Manzanillo SUN

Manzanillo's Lifestyle E-Magazine

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Tommy Clarkson

Swamp Lily, *Crinum augustum* (Queen Emma)
Family: Amaryllidaceas

(Also known as: Crinum, Crinum Lily, Cape Lily, River Lily, Mangrove Lily, Spider Lily, Milk Lily, Wine Lily or Spider Lily.)

*Is mine, in fact, a *Crinum augustum*? It seems to meet the physical description criteria. The renowned tropical plant authority, W. Arthur Whistler, says it is native to the island*

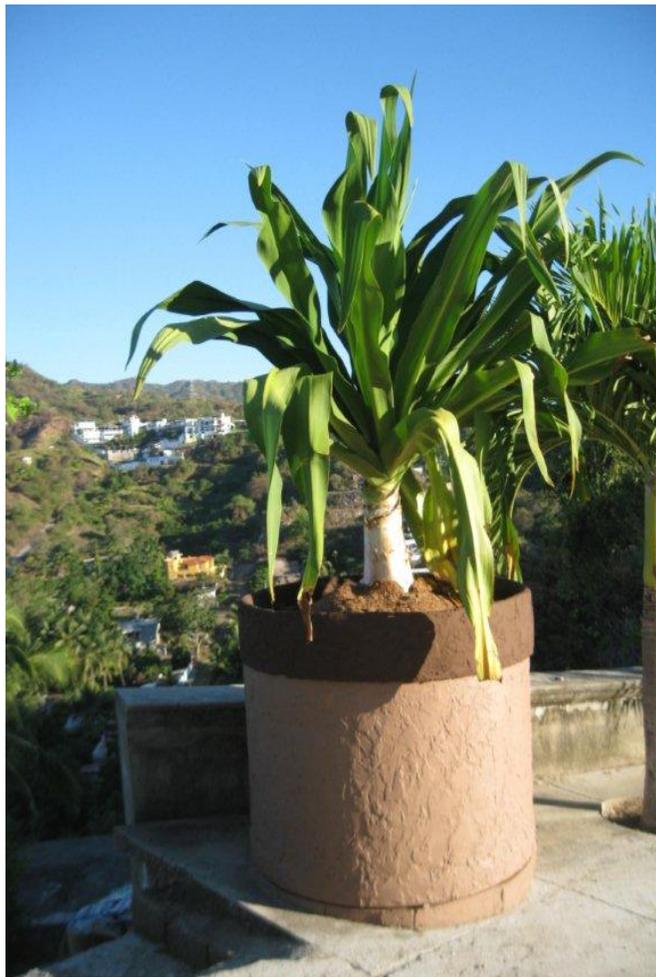
states of Seychelles and Mauritius in the Indian Ocean. However, further research divulged that others believe the "Queen Emma" - named for the wife of Hawaiian King Kamehameha IV - is actually a cultivated variety from - well Duh! - Hawaii.

Regardless of this confusion, the first ones we acquired were found back off the coast several miles in the mountains of the southern part of the State of Jalisco. It happily grew in the front yard of a young Mexican couple with a darling little girl. When he observed me coveting his plant, the gracious young man - though in his Sunday best and getting ready to go to Mass - promptly knelt down and, with his bare hands, started to dig up several of its newly sprouted babies for me!

*Substantive research has borne out that the origin of this outstanding looking lily is simply not clear. . . and I can but only wonder how it found its way up to this rather remote locale in Mexico! In fact, this may lend further credence to the belief by some that this plant is a naturally-occurring hybrid of *Crinum zeylanicum* and some other species. Suffice it to say, confusion is rampant on this plant as the deeper one digs (pun probably intended) several other plants were found that are mistakenly described as *Crinum augustum*.*



These lovely flowers smell slightly of the lilac bushes from my Midwest U.S. youth!



On the northern side of our gardens, showcased in one of several large pots that we have constructed from old *tinacos*, the leaves of this variety droop slightly.

That all aside, let's just go with what we do know of these attractive plants. In the genus *Crinum*, there are around 150 varieties of these tropical and sub-tropical beauties with only a few commercially available. They can be successfully used for borders, bedding plants or as a solitary feature plant. In the wild, Swamp Lilies are often found growing along lakes, in swamps, marshes, and estuaries – but you might've already guessed that from the name, huh?

It is a perennial herb with an onion shaped bulb and erect, strap-like leaves which grow up to three or more feet in length and are three plus inches wide. Their very attractive six-petaled, flowers rise from the bulb on long flower stalks, separate from the leaves. Four of mine are tinged purple and smell like lilac. The other is wholly white. Both remind me of a grouping of Spider Orchids on steroids!

These long living plants can grow up to six to eight feet high in highly structural clumps in well-drained sandy soil. The pride of its existence (depending on the variety you have found) are those 20 to 30 large, lily-like red, white, pink, purple or bi-color flowers at the ends of long, stout stems.

I understand that in the wild, those tiny - but loud mouthed - little green tree frogs find homes in these clumps, and know for a fact that hummingbirds love their blossoms. It can tolerate poor soil as long as it's cool - hence mulching is good - and has plenty of water to drink. For those you have planted, beyond copious *agua*, top dressing of compost or dried cow manure is much appreciated by them.

This *Crinum* Lilies flourishes in sun or partial shade. Ours thrive in full sun in large pots. Fertilize your Swamp Lily weekly during growth.

Lastly, the root a good wound poultice; heated and oiled leaves can be applied to sprains; and Australian aborigines crushed its stems and roots for application to marine, insect and jelly fish stings. A'hhhh, I'm a veritable fount of worthless, if not outright strange, minutia. But, perhaps - ya' never know – the time might arise when you'll need such nifty nuggets of knowledge!



Presently by our pool, this beauty is being moved elsewhere - to a bigger pot - as he's grown so big as to block the view.

Computer Advice from Señor Tech

The other day I was working in my office, when our Canadian phone line rang. The call was coming from a local area code back home and although I didn't recognize the number I answered the call. The caller claimed to be from an organization called ISC, Internet Security Commission, and that my computer was infected with a virus. I was intrigued, as of course I knew my computer was not infected with any virus.

So I decided to play along and hear his story. Playing a under informed computer user I allowed him to lead me through his spiel. Apparently I was one of thousands of Canadians who had a virus that was transmitting over the Internet. He asked me if I was the only computer user in the household. I told him I was the only computer user and there was only one computer. His voice became very serious and informed me that it was my duty to ensure that my computer was free of Internet viruses. I asked him what had to be done to free my computer of the virus. He said he would load a program on my computer to clean the virus off my system.

I asked him to tell me about the organization ISC. The caller implied that ICS was the official Internet security company and their responsibility was to keep viruses off the Internet. He insisted that I allow him to remotely log into my computer and install a program to clean the virus.

I then told him that I knew that there were no viruses on my system and that ISC was not the official Internet company that looks after viruses because there is no such organization. I then told him I was going to contact the RCMP (Royal Canadian Mounted Police) computer crime division and he promptly hung up.

A friend recently told me about his experience where a company had remotely installed a software fix on his computer. After the software had been loaded on his computer he was asked for his credit card to clean the viruses off the system. He refused, and then when the call was over he realized he was no longer able to access his computer. He took his computer to a local repair shop where the cost was over one hundred dollars to get the system back up and running again.

I was not prepared to let the caller access my system. If I had, he would have gone into my system log files were he would have shown me a number of errors. These are

normal in the Windows operating system. Once in my system the caller would be able to load any files or control my system.

If you receive a call from someone claiming to be able to fix viruses on your system, do not give them access to your computer. The caller will try to scare you into giving access but resist. If you are concerned that you do have a virus on your system, take your computer to a reputable repair shop. Then also ensure that you have an up-to-date antivirus program running on your system. If you are running Windows go to www.microsoft.com where you can download a free antivirus program from Microsoft. Microsoft is the company that produces the Windows operating system.

By the way, when I returned the call displayed on my telephone I heard a fax tone. Criminals use programs that allow them to spoof their real phone number with any number they choose.

Señor Tech resides in Manzanillo during the winter, and Canada in the summer and fall.



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Tiny and Amazing

Suzanne A. Marshall

Sitting on my small terrace one morning having coffee, I thought I heard the hum of a bumble bee in my bougainvillea, which were in full bloom with brilliant fuchsia colored flowering branches cascading down over the planter. As a bumble bee lover, I got closer to have a look only to see the tinniest of hummingbirds poking into the blossoms. With a flit and a hum it was gone faster than my eyes could follow.

Now this was a big thrill for me since even at home in Canada, we put out hummingbird feeders and plants that will attract them just to see the little critters in action. I have never had much luck being in a spot to see them when they flutter along. So to see one in Mexico has raised my hopes that maybe they'll be regular visitors.

Since then I've learned a few more things about hummingbirds of which there are 50 species found in Mexico out of 320 different species worldwide. The tiny bird that I spotted for a few moments could have easily been the Calliope hummingbird.

The Calliope is the smallest breeding bird found in the U.S.A. and Canada. Like me, it has the 'smarts' to head down to Mexico for the winter. This little bird was named after the Greek muse Calliope and means 'little star'. The adult male has wine-red streaks on the throat and a dark tail with white tips. He can measure 7 -10cm in length (2.8 -3.9 in.) and weigh 2-3 g (0.071 - 0.11 oz.). They are believed to be the smallest-bodied long distance migrant in the world.



Hummingbirds are amazing stunt flyers. They are able to fly not only forwards, but backwards and even briefly upside down. They can also hover for extended periods of time. Their wings flap rapidly at about 80 times per second which produces the characteristic humming sound. They lead very high pressure lives, with astonishing metabolic rates and huge hearts relative to their size and must pound more than 1200 times a minute when active. To support these extreme energy expenditures, hummers eat about half their own body weight in sugar each day, mostly from flower nectar though they also like small insects and mites. "To put their eating requirements into perspective, a human equivalent would have to eat about 130kg (285 lbs.) of hamburger meat each and every day!"

Nature being the ultimate wonder, the hummers' metabolic rates and body temperatures drop at night, allowing them to sleep without dying from starvation. In extreme circumstances, if resources are scarce, hummers go into torpor (stagnation) for up to 14 hours to conserve their last remaining stores of energy.



Male Calliope Hummingbird



(Female or young Calliope Hummingbird)

Indigenous Mexicans regarded these amazing little friends with awe. "In the Magliabecchiano codex (dating from the mid-sixteenth century and now in Florence, Italy) an Indian artist depicts the god, Quetzalcoatl with a feathered headdress. The Aztecs dedicated one of the

buildings in their ceremonial center at Tenochtitlan (the forerunner of Mexico City) to the "cut-off hummingbirds head". They also believed that the souls of warriors who died in battle, and whose daily task was to transport the sun from the underworld to its mid-day zenith, turned into hummingbirds as they handed over the sun to the Cihuatateo, the souls of women who died in childbirth."

"West of the Aztec empire, the Tarascans named their capital city, "Tzintzuntzan", place of the hummingbird, an onomatopoeic rendering of the sound of their call."

And now, through the research and writing of this article, I've happily added 'hummingbird feeder' to my shopping list in hopes that I might lure more regular sightings of these captivating little creatures.

REFERENCES:

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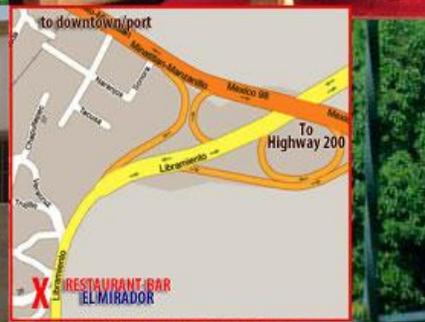


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Acclimating to the Heat? Don't Count On it!

Suzanne A. Marshall

In my opinion, if you think you've acclimated to the heat in Manzanillo it would likely be more psychological than physical. And also, we all learn to go with the flow (pardon the pun), dress more selectively, forego fashion, choose absorbent materials, find shady spots to sit in, relax by the pool or the beach, stay hydrated and worship the breezes.

People keep saying 'you'll get used to it over time' which is absolutely true. But you won't necessarily be perspiring any less. The fact of the matter is that the body was designed for perspiration and that is our cooling system so to speak. Now there are some marginal differences among us humans which I'll share with you a little later. But for now, if you're perspiring a lot, your body is working very efficiently.

As a true confession, I must admit my ignorance. My excuse is that I am a born and raised Canadian girl from the western prairies. Sure, we have nice summers but to compare 30+ degrees daily, high humidity and the rainy seasons is my folly. And also to think that some physical metamorphosis occurs with the extension of time lived in Mexico is also folly.

What we learn to do is live differently. Some people will use a lot more air-conditioning in their homes and cars and simply stay out of the sun. But there are others like myself who don't have a car as yet and air conditioning is provided only in the bedrooms, though ceiling fans are in constant motion. Luckily, we have a pool and the ocean at our doorstep so dips in the water and cooling breezes really are a source of sheer joy. And if you ask me if I'd prefer the cold winters that I grew up with the answer is most definitely not. (Although in my younger days, I skied the Rockies and skated on lakes which I loved).

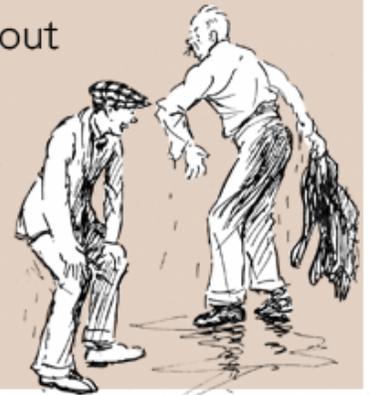
So if you find yourself sweating profusely and cursing your deodorants lack of protection. Forget about it! It can't possibly do the job. Here is why:

Human beings have sweat glands distributed over much of the body. Not just the armpits. So if you notice perspiring down the neck, scalp, chest, back, abdomen, legs and so on, you'd pretty much have to cover yourself in deodorant and I'm pretty sure it couldn't hold the dam back anyway, nor would it be a good thing.

Sweating is primarily a means of thermoregulation which is achieved by the water-rich secretion of the eccrine glands. And would you believe that the maximum sweat rates of an adult can be up to 2-4 liters per hour or 10-14 liters per day!

Men and women have roughly the same number of sweat glands, with a whopping estimate of about 2-5 million over the whole body, or about 150-350 per square centimeter. When the temperature rises, these glands ooze out onto the skin a liquid that is 99% water, the remaining 1% being sodium chloride, other salts, amino acids and a smattering of other chemicals.

My favorite thing about summer is having a valid excuse for my excessive sweating.



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Evaporation of sweat from the skin surface has a cooling effect due to the latent heat of evaporation of water. So, in hot weather, or when our muscles heat up due to exertion, more sweat is produced. Men, on average, start perspiring much more quickly than women (you could have fooled me), then twice as much when they are in the middle of exercising at the same relative intensity. However, when men and women exercise at the same absolute intensity there are no significant differences.

Doesn't all of this give new meaning to 'being cool'? From my own experiences living in this luscious climate, there are a few additional things I have learned from watching the locals and applying this philosophy to much of our activities down here: **MOVE MORE SLOWLY, ALLOW MORE TIME, BE HAPPY, SING!**

Like millions of Canadians and Americans, most of us are in a big rush, task oriented and on a big mission. Well for the

most part that's a good thing, however, if you want to stay cooler, you must slow down. My husband Allan and I found ourselves outpacing other people who were out walking, by miles.

We'd pass people on the sidewalks and pretty much apply a brisk pace to most of our errands. The results were that we found ourselves dripping and hot. It was a pace we'd adopted over the years, always being in a rush. But now that we are mostly retired, what on earth is the rush? We need to decompress a little. So we are constantly reminding ourselves to slow down, relax and walk more slowly. You can chat, observe the people, see the surroundings and still get where you want to go without turning into a sopping mess. Give yourselves five or ten extra minutes to get where you're going and it becomes much more pleasant. (Though you will still perspire, just not open the flood gates).

For the longest time I blamed it on 'hormones'. But it finally occurred to me that it should also be happening when we return to Canada. Now, I've learned to approach a lot of things more slowly and darned if I don't realize it is helping in so many other ways. When you are cooking in the kitchen for example, slow down! You're not serving in a restaurant and if your spouse complains, let them give it a try. Don't be in a hurry to shower before going out. Give yourself more time or you'll be a sopping mess again trying to leave on time and get your hair dried. Honestly, it really works. It's just a frame of mind that needs to be tweaked a little.

Now that I have started to slow down, I am noticing so much more. The bird songs, the ocean surf, the faces of people, the culture and so many of the small things that are different here but kind of the same. I've noticed that a lot of our Manzanillo neighbors are so relaxed. I hear the workers singing or whistling outside in the yard while doing chores, fixing roofs, painting walls, trimming hedges and washing cars. Last year, when construction on a high rise beside us began to evolve, I could hear the steel workers bellowing Spanish serenades between rivets and crane operations and it finally occurred to me that they seem happier with life, more grateful for work and their place in the community. So why not just pace ourselves differently and maybe even sing or hum or whistle. You know, I felt my blood pressure dropping just sharing these feelings. So now I'm going to sit on the terrace, watch the sun go down and count how many ships are in the bay.



(photo by: Allan Yanitiski)



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AN EXPERIENCE WITH MEXICO

Freda Rumford

After having migrated to Canada from England many years ago we found ourselves looking towards an eventual retirement in a warmer climate. We had lived in Calgary for well over thirty years and although a beautiful city we were tired of the bitterly cold winters. Having been many times to Hawaii we really loved it there but after noticing an ad for a reasonably priced time share holiday in Acapulco, Mexico we decided to try somewhere different for a change.

To cut a very long and agonising story short, we went to Acapulco over a New Year. There we had a dreadful time in a filthy but fairly new condominium on a beach out-of-bounds due to pollution and vowed never to go to Mexico again. We would stick to Hawaii for holidays where we had always enjoyed ourselves!! It was clean and the Mai-Tais wonderful. Although for retirement it was an absolute no for Acapulco, what we did eventually find in Mexico grows more appealing each year that we are there.

Twenty five years after the Acapulco disaster, to my amazement, we are living part of the year in Manzanillo, Colima, Mexico. A place that we find absolutely delightful, amongst people who are warm and friendly and where we love both it and the Margaritas.

So what has caused the change? Nothing really! The State of Guerrero in which Acapulco is situated is well known as very bellicose. The people are quite different than those of Colima. People in Guerrero are quick to take offence, quick to do battle for perceived insults and where men don't dare to even look towards another's wife! We found that people there had their hands out all the time for tips whereas in Colima, they will often do or give a person something for nothing but a smile.

When we arrived in Manzanillo, the small port town of Colima, it was surprising to find the atmosphere so totally different. The people have a very keen, ever ready and warm sense of humour and are extremely welcoming. In Guerrero they want the tourist money but not the individual.

The other States of Mexico are as equally diverse as is the North versus South versus West in the U.S. or Quebec versus British Columbia in Canada. So what causes the difference in various parts of each country? Is it purely geographical? Is it the heat, humidity or climate? Is it

because people in the past haven't travelled and are quick to suspect that all people not born in their area are potential thieves or marauders? In all three countries there is a decided difference of manner, speech, habits and reactions to strangers in each and every State or Province.

The United States was initially populated by four distinct flows of indigenous peoples crossing the land bridge from Asia. They were mostly of the hunter-gatherer tribes that extended their populations all the way down the America's to Terra del Fuego in South America. These people settled, created great centers of population, lived and died at the mercy of the climate and weather patterns as well as warring among themselves. This history came to an abrupt end with the advent of the European. A policy of 'Manifest Destiny' drove the Europeans to attempt to obliterate all of the Indian cultures and even each other. Canada and The United States fell to the might of the French, English, Danish, and Spanish. Over the past few centuries Mexico's land has seen French, Spanish, English, American and German rule.



Nowadays, in Manzanillo, people are coming and going constantly with visitors actually being recognised in stores after having been there only a few times. Even more extraordinary, if they haven't returned to Manzanillo for a couple of years, they are still remembered and welcomed back. Not only remembered personally but probably even where they had lived on the previous occasion.

Manzanillo, Colima, is situated on the Costa Alegre. Translated that means the "Happy State". There are generally jobs for anyone who wants one and visibly far fewer beggars than can be found anywhere else in the country. People are content with their lives as well as with the atmospheric and climatic conditions. So long as they have sufficient money to cover daily expenses plus a couple of cervezas or a bottle or two of tequila, all is right with their world. They are content with their lot. That is likely to change with the advent of escalating education and because TV is introducing more "necessities" in the never ending commercials.

An American friend, years ago, predicted that Mexico was on the verge of an economic explosion that it would be powerless to stop. It may not happen in our life time but eventually Mexico will catch up with the rest of the modern world. Currently they are behind just a little as modern technology advances steadily towards them.

They are now participants in the computer age but haven't yet realised that they no longer require the little pieces of recycled paper with scratching on which are "official" documents. Not yet have they got the official government computers in one state or even town, connected to its counterpart in another. Immigration or Health care papers filled out in one city cannot be pulled up and easily changed to another more convenient city. Personally, we have had to travel to and fro from Manzanillo to the city of Colima (in the same state) with results of blood tests which could not be transmitted via computer. But, change is coming as refinements are gradually being made that will make such journeys redundant

In the mean time, we can enjoy the literally old world charm of Manzanillo and all it that it has to offer. Would I go back to Hawaii? Yes in a heart beat, but for a visit! Would I go back to Acapulco? Not under any circumstance! Would I return to Manzanillo? Yes, again and again and again.



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(The following is the eleventh installment of a slightly embellished and bit fictionalized account of an almost real event!)

Tommy Clarkson

We all have met 'em . . .

. . .you know the kind – they're those **"know-it-all"** sort of people who've done everything better than us! Such an individual sat next to me on a long (very) air flight.

"Now nanotechnology is great I admit." Leaning toward me slightly, he whispered in a conspiratorial manner, "In fact I've several classified patents in that very arena. But not enough credit is given to improvisational knowledge, skill and expertise".

While I was still wondering if "improvisational" was really a word, he blazed on, "For example, back in the early 70's I was consulting with the Navy in one of our subs. We were midway down the Marianas Trench at a depth of around 5,000 meters when, somehow, a young seaman inadvertently triggered the firing sequence on one of our warheads."

"Well, wouldn't you know it, I was forced to diffuse an old W-47 600 kiloton thermonuclear, Polaris SLBM TN, light high yield, integral beryllium, warhead with a paper clip, a 1954 Ted Williams Topps bubble gum card and some fish bones."

Wholly stunned by such an assertion, I could only look at him with an expression he took for awe. "Nah, it was nothing. But I can't give you the details as it's still classified."

"But what I actually used, was a bit of a stretch of work even for me," with a feigned sense of self-modesty he continued, "was when George Bush the First (he quietly chortled at his attempt at humor) and I had slipped away from his Texas Whitehouse security detail. We were camping alone together, over a long Labor Day week-end, deep in the SE Oklahoma in the Kiamichis Mountains. 'Lo and behold he suffered a severe allergic reaction to some fresh bear steaks we'd just cooked over our campfire." He turned to explain, "I'd brought one down with the power sling shot I'd made from natural materials in the area earlier that morning."

"His blood pressure had dropped to almost nothing, he was breathing very ragged and his heart rate was about thirty beats per minute. To say the least, he wasn't faring well at all. And, I gotta' tell you it was a

bit of a tense time as we were some fifty miles from even the remotest of small town doctors.

But I remembered what an old Chickamauga Cherokee medicine man – with whom I lived from age three until eight - had once taught me. So I gathered some Hackberry bark and scrapped off the soft inner skin, hand caught a carp in a close by creek and removed its spleen, dug deep in a clay ridge for a seam of copper laced rocks and the boiled them over a campfire. This I sun dried and then ground into a fine powder with the earlier mentioned ingredients which I had him snort – just like a line of coke! Well, within five minutes he was up and challenging me to arm wrestling.

With a rather self satisfied smirl (that would be a combination of a smirk and a smile!) he continued, "Barbara makes way too much of it all as she now invites me over for virtually every Sunday dinner and, of course, all family functions. I try to never hurt her dear feelings but generally decline . . . I've really more important things to do you know!"

I think he really meant he had more tall stories to tell as, without pause he continued, "Speaking of classy women named Barbara. You might get a kick out of this. I've several close "lady friends" all named Barbara. Some you might know are Barbaras Streisand, Eden and Walters." Rolling his eyes he gushed, "A'hhhh, the parties we had 30 -35 years ago!" (He nudged me with his large bulbous elbow and winked in what I surmised to be his version of a wicked conspiratorial gleam).

"Well, for whatever reason – though I really did make the introductions that got all three of them started off into show business – they each seem to simply adore me. So, every Valentine's Days, since 1965, I have them over for a party – just the girls and me – on the yacht. (Which yacht, where, was not explained.). Oh, what fun we always have. . ." He affected an upward glazed stare as though reliving activities of a most salacious nature.

The break from his machine gun stories was deafening. Almost five seconds passed before he continued, "Did I mention the one hundred and sixty three pound pure gold nugget I found in the Gobi Desert?"



The Twisted Way We Speak - IX

By: Tommy Clarkson

but not always is our communications of the sorry nature. In fact, English has such capacity for potential greatness of thought and experience expression. However, all too often it is abused, misused or simply massacred by intellectual laziness!

Recently for my birthday, Patty gave me the E-Book, "The Man Who Saved the Union" by H.W. Brands. Its focus was that of "Ulysses Grant, in war and peace". For one who enjoys both history and the effective use of words, you may rest assured that it was doubly enjoyed!

It is of that latter, "effective use of words" about which we focus herein.

Why, one but can but wonder, have we so "dumbed down" the way we communicate? Why even broadcast "news personalities" have been heard to stumble on-air, "U'hhhh, like, ya' know. ." with the print medium only slightly better in articulation of thought..

What happened to a sense of personal pride in our effective use of the English language? When did we stop using the "correct" word in lieu of vanilla, bland and sometimes patently senseless utterances, acronyms or mere mumbles?

The lexis of our language is packed with potential use but too seldom do we, today, dip into this refreshingly deep well of words. Accordingly, but a few of these have been drawn from this recently savored tome that are derived from an array of individuals in the mid 1800's. I speak of great words, like: *denouement*, *sanguinary*, *celerity*, *extirpation*, *comity*, *excoriated*, *palliated*, *asperities*, *scions* and *wroth*, all regularly and correctly used, during that period.

I recount their use by not only our country's leaders but, often, simple soldiers, laborers or merchants. These were "regular folks" who well used, in their proper context of both written and verbal usage, descriptive and appropriate words.. Sure, you and I may know the meaning and use of some - or all - of these examples, but when last did we effectively employ them (or others of their ilk) in our communications with others?

But beyond that, 150 years ago, it is my contention that entire thoughts were often almost musical in their clarity, beauty and applicable use.

(One has but to re-read Lincoln's, 272 word, Gettysburg Address to well understand.)

Noted early in the book was this brief but superlative example of this economy or words which well states a thought: "Such a great pack of knaves never went unhung." Doesn't that just say it all?

Or then there is the description of one of the most famous infantry attacks of the Civil War that was conducted at the climax of the Battle of Gettysburg in 1863? This is how Union soldier Frank Haskell, of the Second Corps, described General George Edward Pickett's Charge of 12,000 men against General George G. Meade's Union positions on Seminary Ridge: "Every eye could see his legions, an overwhelming, resistless tide of an ocean of armed men, sweeping upon us . . . a sloping forest of flashing steel . . . magnificent, grim, irresistible (while) the jostling, swaying lines on either side boil and roar and dash their flamy spray (like) the

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hostile billows of a fiery ocean. Individuality is drowned in a sea of clamor, and timid men, breathing the sea of the multitude, are brave. The frequent dead and wounded lie where they stagger and fall; there is no humanity for them now, and none can be spared to care for them."

Is that not well described so as to conjure horrid images of battle? When teaching young writers, I encourage them to "paint a picture" with their words. In my opinion, the afore cited well accomplishes that objective!

In yet another example is this direction by a leader on the conduct of their actions, "To you we look . . . in the fullest confidence to curb any reckless disregard of law – to steady passions and evil propensities that foment discord and mischief, and to give peace and prosperity to all portions of our beloved country."

Or this, in description of a particularly offensive person, "He was possessed of irascible temper and was naturally disputatious." That's so much better than simply saying "He's a real jerk!"

But on a more somber side is the recognition of the terrible cost in Americans lives wrought by this war which lead to 620,000, or more, deaths. In 1864, during a period of less than sixty mid-year days - in federal troops alone - 61,315, died. General Sherman sadly lamented with almost calloused candor, "I begin to regard the death and mangling of a couple thousand men as a small affair, a kind of a morning dash and it may be well that we become so hardened." Of this period, another said, "The fright of July segued into the angst of August." Historians and political scientists of intellect have observed that those of our period have not the remotest of concepts of that which consists of the true carnage and horror of war.

No intent to revel in the bloodshed or butchery of conflict is intended by the preceding, but rather a wish to share how eloquently those, of that time, described that which they experienced, lived, and survived.

And in one last observation comes this quote observed of Congress but barely post-bellum, "(Its) measures . . . were politically expedient and fiscally imprudent." Does that remind you of any other – more current - time, period, activity and political body?

I close with three words taken from this reading of "The Man Who Saved the Union". The experience "conduces to confirm" my long held belief that we do not write nor speak nearly as well as we are capable. We need to work on that!



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At the Movies - Suzanne A. Marshall

Life of Pi – *Una Aventura Extraordinario*

What can I say? my husband Allan and I are movie goers! We just love them and it kind of feels like a good old fashion date to go to a movie with your honey and eat caramel popcorn (our addiction and preference) in an air conditioned theatre.

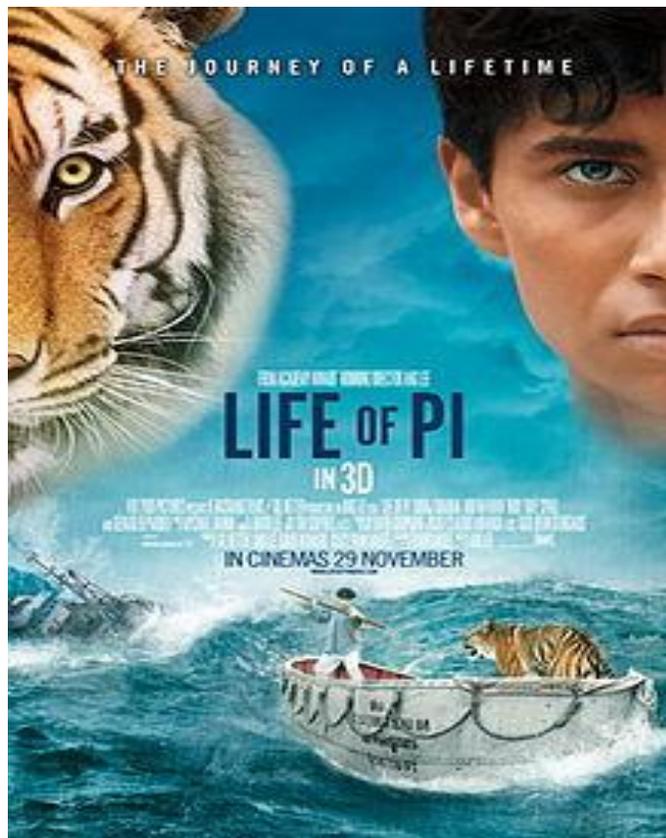
When first arriving in Manzanillo and seeing the large and relatively new Cinepolis Theatre complex we got very excited. Then of course we assumed that all movies would be in Spanish. Ours is not so good though improving each year as we throw away our egos and plunge into our Spanglish and work with our Spanish friends to help us say things correctly.

But once we stopped in and looked at the schedules and checked everything out on the internet, we were delighted to find many films in English with Spanish subtitles. So we see movies regularly and slowly begin to pick up on some of the translation (via sub-titles) though much of it is far too advanced for us at the moment.

The movie that I would most highly recommend of late is the 'Life of Pi' or as posted on the Spanish billboards: "Una Aventura Extraordinario". Of course movies are a very subjective thing. I personally don't enjoy a lot of unnecessary violence, (though I love a good thriller/caper genre such as James Bond), I won't see vampire or horror movies. Other than that I'm pretty open.

Life of Pi is one of the most artistic, cinematically sumptuous movies I have ever laid eyes on. Not only is the cinematography amazing, but the special effects are incredibly real and given the added element of 3D you might have well been in the boat with our young heroine.

When I first realized that Ang Lee was directing this film (Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon; Sense and Sensibility; Brokeback Mountain) I was quite excited as his interpretations and direction are so evident in his engrossing story telling rhythms, with the ability to have his audience relate to the characters and hold them. When the movie ended, I couldn't believe that 2 hours and 6 minutes had spun by.



Written by the Man Booker Prize award winning novelist for Life of Pi, Yann Martel and interpreted for screen by screenwriter David Magee, this story of a young man who survives a disaster at sea as a cast away with a Bengal tiger, does not take you to a point where all lived happily thereafter but instead brings a poignant story of a young man who learns to cope with a tragic and heart breaking catastrophe.

This movie has been rated as 4 out of 5 stars on various ratings services and has been nominated for a number of Golden Globe awards and 11 Academy Awards, second only to the new movie release still to come in Manzanillo 'Lincoln'.

For current movies playing at the Manzanillo Cinepolis go to:

<http://www.cartelerasdecine.info/mexico/cinopolis-salagua/>



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A Thick Fuzzy Gray Line

Kirby Vickery

"How old are you?" She asked one evening while we were standing in a line waiting to purchase our tickets to a movie.

The question opened a variety of avenues from which I could pick from and then travel. I could get smart, or cute, or just be snide. I could ignore the question or I could smile and hold up some fingers, stomp my little hooper foot, or just answer the question before I forgot what it was. She knew better than I did how old I am because I don't really care that much to try to remember. Besides that, we have a bunch of people that tell us every year anyway, our children, their children, and those with whom we work, and play. All these people delight in repeating our new age every year while we cringe while wishing for a pistol or a dull knife to put a sudden stop to all that drivel. Discretion being the better part of valor, I figured I'd best answer the question with complete honesty.

"Well, this week I'm either 55 or 66." I answered, completely dead pan. "Why do you ask?" . . . as if I didn't know.

"At this theater, if you're fifty-six, you get the SENIOR DISCOUNT." She said with a great flourish of her arms which added depth, drama and much feeling. "At fifty-five you don't," came unbidden with a forefinger held up in admonishment.

"How much is the discount?" I asked loudly making sure the people around us wouldn't have to bend over very far to find out where this conversation was going.

"We get ten percent off at this theater. At the Ajax, the SENIOR DISCOUNT is fifteen percent." She answered equally loud, to the smiles of those around us.

"Wow!" I exclaimed while remembering that this is one of the theaters I don't like to go to in the first place, and this SENIOR DISCOUNT is one of the reasons why. "That's really great! Shoot, I ought to buy two tickets and get a double savings of a whole seventy cents just for me."

She really had no idea what the discount was at the other theater, but was hoping someone inside the booth would hear and up the anti. It's a game we play and sometimes



it works; not often, but sometimes. When we first got married she wouldn't even participate. So I've corrupted her. But, that's what she gets for taking me to these movie theaters that condescendingly degrade the *growing older* set.

Now that I'm on the cusp of old age, I've discovered that growing older is not as easy as it appears. Problems develop on all sorts of different levels which are always unexpected. Different people identify different parts of a person that start to unravel first. Some say that it's the mind. Bill Cosby poked a lot of fun at the befuddlement of his mind as he turned fifty in one of his books but most believe it's in the physical parts. Phyllis Diller lamented that there are some tell-tale physical signs of advancing age: "Friends talk louder to you." "You get winded gumming a mint." and "You are suddenly receiving more 'get well' cards than junk mail." My hero's in life are stand-up comedians because theirs' is the only group that is blatantly honest when speaking publicly. I suppose that I will have to contend with a failing body, figuring out the requirements for my retirement income (should I live that long), a failing mind (Wut?), and a slightly growing negative attitude for those who aren't or don't have too. Gasp!

For me, now that I have more memories than time remaining to create new ones, things seem to crowd up on me. It feels almost as if I'm not going to be around long enough to do all that I want to do. A modern philosopher, Nancy S. Jecker, states: "There are three boxes of life (Education, work, and retirement)". This statement echoes that of Euripides: "Whoso [sic] neglects learning in his youth loses the past and is dead for the future". There are issues of life that are encountered while it runs. Issues dealing with the quality of life become paramount especially in America where we preach our freedom to ourselves and all the other

peoples of the world (That's something else I've noticed as I've grown older: Most Anglos are proud, arrogant and very loud about it). Love, health, peace of mind, and the basic enjoyments of life are all just as important as the means by which people use to obtain them. So is respect.

Our governing society thinks they are finally getting a handle on health benefits for the old (*Ahem: Aging*). Sadly, it depends on your government and who's running it. They (and you never know who *they* really are) are providing the basic enjoyments of life to us *older growing* types in the form of parks, old age centers, government lobbyist, modeling clay, art and weaving studio's social clubs, nursing homes, adequate numbers of boy scouts to help us get across busy streets even though we may have been standing on the street corner looking for the keys to the car that we had dropped, etc.

"Oh look, Marge! A couple of *gray hairs* (or blue depending on the speaking generation) are taking advantage of their discount. Isn't that cute?"
AAARRRgghh!!

My mother is 88, and looks like what we would call an elderly person. She is as sharp as a tack. She told me that her IQ went down several points with each gray hair she sprouted and with each line she developed on her face. Having been a real estate broker specializing in commercial properties in four states she can still calculate a mortgage and closing costs faster than most computers. She told me she just wanted to scream when her real estate agent started explaining to her what a mortgage was when she recently moved into her new condo (It wasn't in Manzanillo). That's tantamount to saying that a beautiful young lady loses intelligence every time she takes her glasses off. (I wonder if that's really true.)

In this aspect, we, the *growing older* set loose our individualism as we meld into a gray and wrinkled homogenous soup. I've decided the cure for old age is a lot of Botox a hair coloring job and a double dose of pain meds after your Pabulum. HmMMMM!

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The Most Dangerous Cake in the World

By Terry Sovil

This recipe came to me in an email via the internet. It included photos. I was fascinated by the concept of a cake that could be made quickly and baked in a microwave. At the time I didn't have a microwave to test it. I did more internet research and found many naysayers. A few had tried it and claimed it be "rubbery". They gave up. When I got a small microwave (700 watts) I found this size perfect, for making this cake. So I explored ways to correct it and found the biggest cause of "rubbery" cake is cooking it too long. Why is it the most dangerous cake in the world? The only thing separating you from a warm chocolate cake is 5 minutes and some basic ingredients. Are you ready for this?

Ingredients:

- 4 tablespoons flour
- 4 tablespoons sugar
- 2 tablespoons cocoa
- In Mexico, where flour is flour, a good dose of ROYAL baking powder
- 1 egg
- 3 tablespoons milk
- 3 tablespoons oil
- Small splash of vanilla extract (this is Mexico and it's cheap, use a capful)
- 1 large coffee mug or measuring cup (Microwave Safe) to microwave it

Options:

- Capful of Almond extract (*optional but I add every time WITH the vanilla*)
- A circle of Hershey's syrup on the plate (*optional but I do this often, you could probably eat an actual rubber circle with chocolate syrup*)
- 3 tablespoons chocolate chips (*optional*)
- Simple frosting (*optional*)
- Powdered Sugar sprinkle (*optional*)
- Fruit, like raspberries (*optional*)
- Whipped Cream (*optional*)
- Ice Cream (*optional*)
- Coconut (*optional*)
- Coffee or other flavoring (*optional*)

Do This:

- Add dry ingredients to the measuring cup/mug, and mix well.
- Add the egg and mix thoroughly.
- Pour in the milk and oil and mix well.
- Add the chocolate chips (if using) and extracts, and mix again.
- Put your mug/cup in the microwave and cook for 3 minutes at 1000 watts (**see note next page!**).
- The cake may rise over the top of the mug, but don't be alarmed!
- Allow to cool a little, and tip out onto a plate if desired. **EAT!!!!**

This could serve 2 if you want to feel slightly more virtuous. But why should you feel virtuous when chocolate is involved? This is also the kind of cake that you don't make a day ahead. **Eat it NOW!**



The dry ingredients



The wet ingredients



Mixed dry ingredients



Dry mixed with egg

Notes:

It is critical that you follow the directions exactly as written. When it says "Add dry ingredients and mix well" that is exactly what you need to do. Put in the flour, sugar, cocoa, Royal and mix them well. Then put in the egg and mix it well. All dry ingredients must get wet. It will be a big ball. Then add the milk, oil and again mix it well. It becomes more like typical cake batter.

Note the bolded line "Put your mug/cup in the microwave and cook for 3 minutes at 1000 watts". Don't take this to be the same for every microwave! The power of the microwave is as important as the time. My little 700 watt unit does an adequate job at 2 minutes and 30 seconds. No more. I think this is the problem most people have when making this cake. This isn't a conventional cake in a conventional oven. The wattage of your microwave makes a big difference and 3 minutes at 1000 watts is probably too much! What you should do the first time you make it is to cook for 2 minutes and then stop and check. When it appears cake like and still has some wet areas it is probably done. If you cook until it is dry rather than slightly wet and gooey around the edges it will probably be overdone and rubbery. Understand this still is not going to be exactly like a traditional cake. But it is pretty good and easy to make!

Observations:

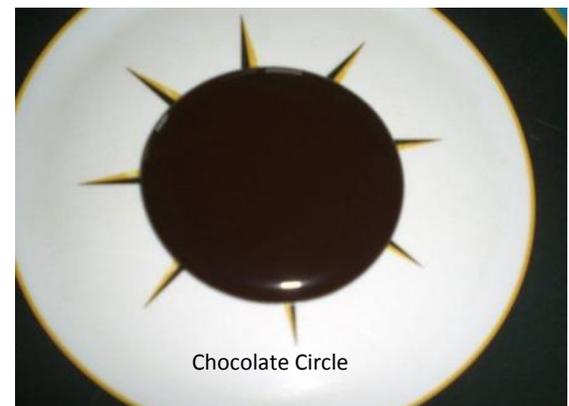
- Self rising flour/cake flour is better than all-purpose but just use ROYAL baking powder to offset the lack of a self rising flour.
- Use a smaller egg as the egg helps make it dry
- You could try no egg, just more oil and perhaps an olive oil instead of a canola or vegetable oil.
- This does rise, especially if you have self-rising flour, so use something big enough.
- I used a Pyrex measuring cup to start so I could see what was going on. A big coffee mug should also work fine but a clear cup may help you the first few times you try this. I use a 4-cup measuring cup and it helps in dividing the cake into two portions.
- Don't give up after a first attempt! You will figure out the ideal cook time for your microwave.
- If the cake comes out rubbery just supplement with Hershey's syrup, whipped cream or fruit.



After adding wet ingredients



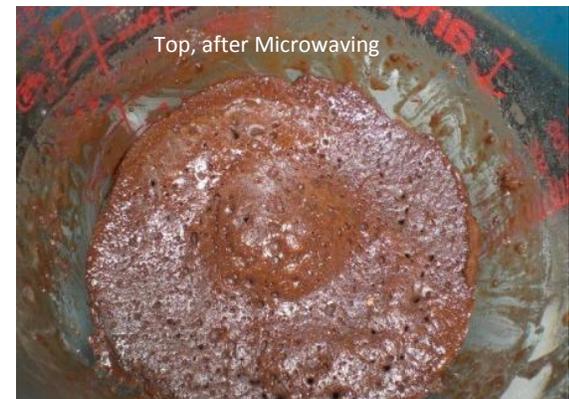
Chocolate



Chocolate Circle



FINISHED....EAT ME!!!



Top, after Microwaving

Stacked Tortilla Pie

Ingredients:

- 1 pound ground beef
- 1 medium chopped onion
- 1 can (8 oz.) tomato sauce
- 1 garlic glove minced
- 1 Tbs. chili powder
- ½ teaspoon salt
- ¼ teaspoon pepper
- 1 can (2 ¼ oz.) drained and sliced black olives
- 1 Tbs. butter
- 6 corn tortillas (6 inches)
- 2 cups shredded cheese (cheddar or white)
- ¼ cup water

Preparation:

In a large skillet, cook beef and onions until the meat is no longer pink; drain.
Add the tomato sauce, garlic, chili powder, salt, pepper and olives.
Bring to a boil then reduce heat and simmer for five minutes or until thickened.
Lightly butter the bottoms of the tortillas (one side).
In a round casserole (2qt) place one tortilla butter side down and top with about ½ cup of the mixture and 1/3 cup of the cheese.
Repeat the layers ending with the cheese.
Pour the water around the sides of the casserole not on the stack.
Cover and bake at 400 F for 20 minutes or until heated through.
Let stand for 5 minutes to firm before slicing.





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The Greatest Investment Risk: Doing Nothing

Some people believe they risk losing some or all of their money by investing. But did you know that not investing could be even riskier?

Let's say a 35-year-old has decided to invest for her retirement and is putting \$750 a month (a total of \$9,000 a year) in a tax-deferred account such as a 401(k). She's convinced the bull market will halt suddenly, so she's invested her money in a low-risk investment vehicle earning 6% a year.

Flash forward 25 years. This investor is about to retire and has accumulated roughly \$523,000. Will it last another 20 years or so? Perhaps not. After 25 years, \$523,000 is equivalent to \$244,000 (assuming 3% annual inflation). And when you take out what is owed in taxes, the total dwindles even more. It may not be enough to live on for 20 years.

The moral of the story: Don't let all your savings sit in a checking or savings account because you fear risk.

To build a diversified portfolio, you should consider investing in individual stocks and bonds as well as cash or in mutual funds that hold these asset classes.

Of course, investing more aggressively isn't an appropriate strategy for all investors. Returns are not guaranteed. But it is an option to consider.

Also, remember, diversification doesn't end at having a mix of stocks, bonds and cash. There are many types of equity investments: growth, value, large-cap, small-cap, international, domestic.

There are also many types of bond investments, from municipal to high yield. And at any given time, one type tends to outperform the others. So be sure to consider all your options.

One option you may not want to consider is letting your money languish because you are afraid of risk. Your financial advisor can help you compare options to get the most from your hard-earned savings.

Yann Kotic is a Money Manager and Financial Advisor (RIA) with Atlantis Wealth Management specializing in retirees (or soon to be), self-reliant women and Expats in Mexico. Yann works with TD Ameritrade Institutional as the custodian of client's assets. He splits his time between Central Florida and the Central Pacific Coast of Mexico. Comments, questions or to request his Newsletter "News You Can Use" Contact him at Yannk@AtlantisWealth.com, in Mexico: (314) 333-1295 or in the US: (321) 574-1529.

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OFFICE BYTES

“Alphabetizing Favorites”

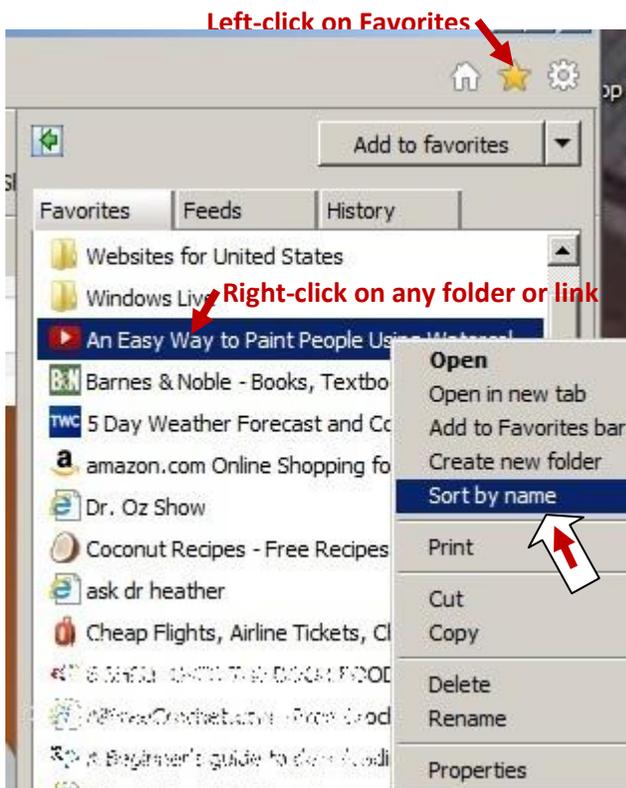
By Vivian Molick

Do you have a lot of favorites (bookmarks etc) in your Internet browser? I sure do and they can become quite a mess, looking through it all every time you want to go to that favorite site again. A really good way to remedy that is to alphabetize it. I don't know if you're like me, but before I knew this information, I would 'click & drag' each title trying to get them all in order... whewww! I would get frustrated trying to keep track of what I was doing. I was so glad to learn about this time-saving setting, that I just had to share my discovery.

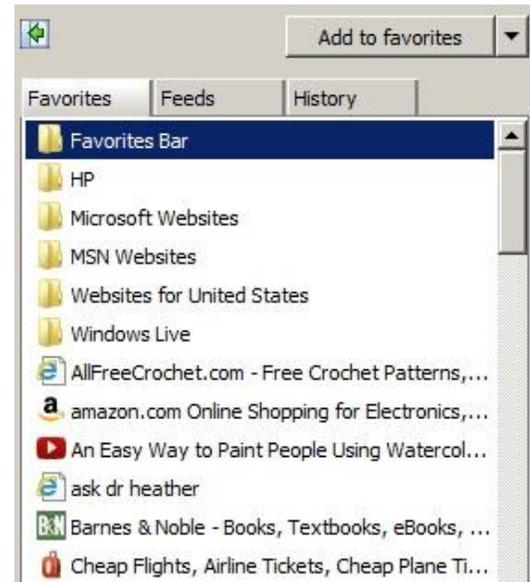
I'm going to show you three different browsers: Internet Explorer, Mozilla Firefox and Google Chrome. The pictures I'm using are from the versions I have, so yours might be slightly different, but hopefully the directions will be close enough that you will be able to follow along.

For Internet Explorer:

1. Open Internet Explorer
2. Click on **Favorites**.
3. **Right-click** on *any* folder or link.



4. After you right-click, left-click on **Sort by name**.



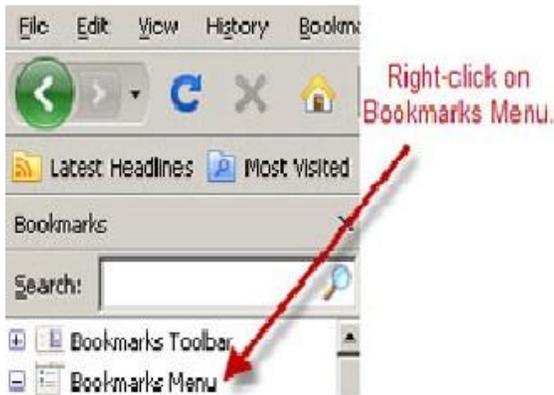
5. Your Favorites are now alphabetized!

For Mozilla Firefox:

1. Open Firefox.
2. Left-click on **View**, then **Sidebar**, then **Bookmarks**.



3. Now, in your Sidebar, you'll see (along with other items) the 'Bookmarks Menu'. Right-click on that and another menu will pop up with a list of tasks. Pick the one named 'Sort by Name'. Left-click on it.



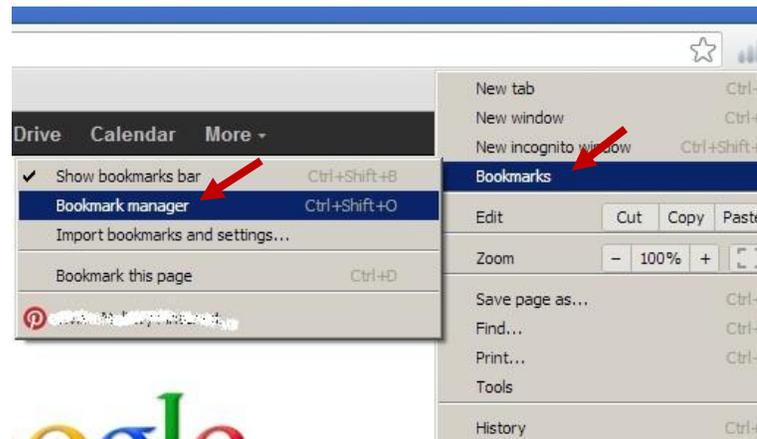
4. Now, expand the Bookmarks Menu (click on the + sign to the left of it). Your bookmarks are now sorted alphabetically!

For Google Chrome:

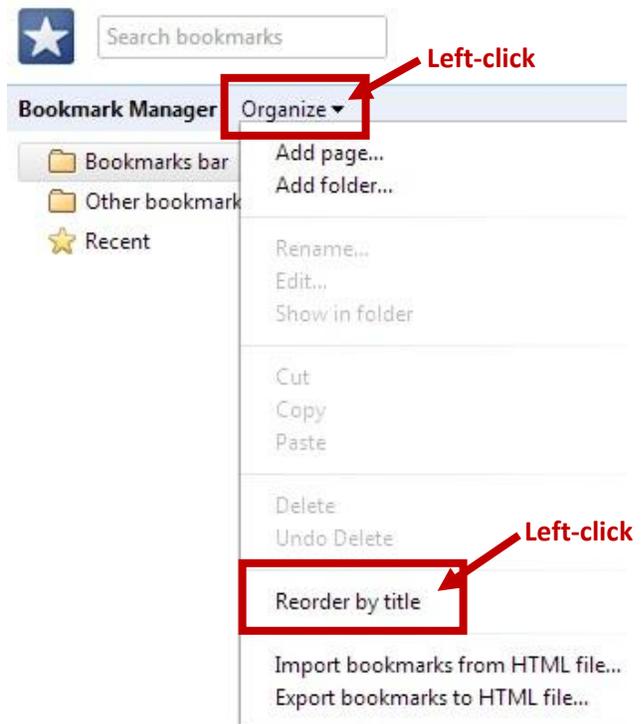
It is a little different for Chrome, but the principle idea/process is the same.

1. Open Chrome.
2. At the very right top part of your page is a little icon that looks like a 'page with lines on it' (or if you have a different version, you might have an icon of a wrench). Left-click on that and then left-click on **Bookmarks** and then **Bookmark Manager**.

(google chrome cont..)



3. When the next window opens, left-click on the down arrow next to 'Organize' (in another version you will have to right-click on 'Bookmark Manager') to get the drop-down menu needed. Now left-click on 'Reorder by title'.



Your bookmarks are now alphabetized!

Happy alphabetizing!

FEBRUARY 2013
CALENDAR OF EVENTS
MANZANILLO

February 5-8 – Tuesday-Friday

EFREN GONZALEZ OIL PAINTING WORKSHOP

Where: Las Brisas – exact location to follow later
Time: 9:00 am to 4:00 pm each of 4 days
Cost: \$3,800.00 pesos (all painting supplies included)
Contact: brigitteyc@aol.com
Facebook Event Page

<https://www.facebook.com/events/450982368294610>
Space is limited. Reservations accepted immediately.

February 8 – 10 – Friday to Sunday

57TH NATIONAL FISHING TOURNAMENT

Where: Playa San Pedrito
Time:
Cost:
Contact: 314-332-7399 or info@torneopescamanzanillo.com
See website for more information
www.torneopescamanzanillo.com

February 10 - |Sunday

EFREN GONZALEZ ART EXHIBIT & DEMONSTATION

Where: Home of Candy King & Dan Allnoch, Las Brisas
Time: 5:00 – 7:30 pm
Cost: \$300 pesos
Contact: brigitteyc@aol.com
Space is limited. Reserve tickets at email address above.
Cost includes 2 cocktails, appetizers & complimentary raffle ticket.
Benefit for PATA.

February 12 - Tuesday

SANTIAGO FOUNDATION 30TH ANNIVERSARY AUCTION & DINNER

Where: Tesoro Hotel
Time: 6:00 pm – Silent Auction
7:00 pm – Dinner & Live Auction
Cost:
Contact: Jeanne Bradner for tickets 335-0875

February 24 - |Sunday

VIDA ART SHOW

Where: Vida Del Mar
Time: 2:00 – 4:00 pm
12 artists painting, sculpture, ceramics

February 25-26th - Monday/Tuesday

The Vida Players will be presenting their "Really Big Shew" on February 25 and February 26 at El Oasis. Cash Bar and live music at 5:30, Dinner at 6:30 and Showtime at 8:00.

Tickets are \$30 US or 350 Pesos. Tickets go on sale at the Vida Del Mar Office - 9:00-Noon or call 335-0831 or 335-1786.

MARCH

March 7-11 – Friday to Tuesday

2013 MARCH PATA STERILIZATION CLINIC

Where: Casa Ejidal, Salagua (4 blks NE of jardin)
Time: 8:00 am daily
Contact: stan@patamanzanillo.com
Facebook Event Page
<https://www.facebook.com/events/186843094787824/>
Donations needed: medical supplies, towels, sheets, drinks/snacks/full meals for veterinarians and volunteers.
For further information – stan@patamanzanillo.com

CALENDAR ADMINISTRATOR

calendarofevents.zlo@gmail.com

Please contact Glenna at the above email address for all questions concerning the Calendar of Events.

If you have an event to place on the calendar, please get the information to Glenna by the 25th of each month.



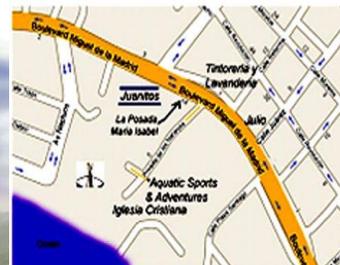
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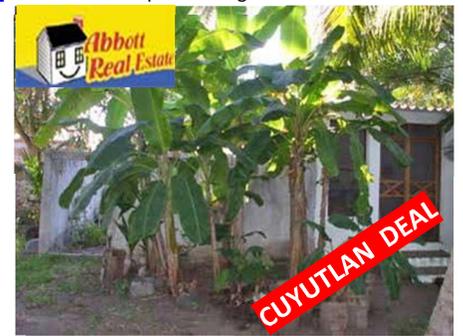
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