

September 2012

Manzanillo **Sun**

Manzanillo's Lifestyle E-Magazine

In this Issue

Health

Are you Toxic? **Karen Trom**

Living in Mexico

Pass the buck **Vivian Molick**
Fogedaboutit **Suzanne Marshall**
Coffee Plantation Tour **Freda Rumford-Kirby Vickery**
Letter to Dan 2 **Kirby Vickery**
Two Minutes **Cheryl Weaver**

NEWS

Eggs, Eggs, Eggs **Freda Rumford**
Westjet
Car Importation update

Nature

Manila Palm **Tommy Clarkson**

Finances

Multi retirement Plan Balances **Yann Kostick**

Jelly Fish
by Anna Lorena



Manila Palm, *Veitchia merrillii*

Family: Arecaceae

(Also known as a Christmas Palm, Adonidia or Dwarf Royal Palm)



Neighbors, Ron and Debi, have these two palms gracing their poolside

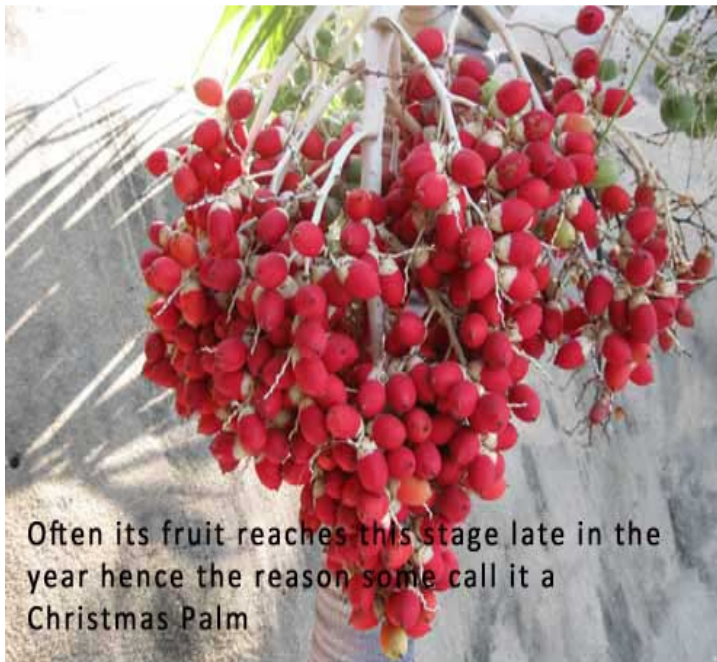
This happy little palm is attractive, well proportioned, neat appearing, and nicely symmetrical. It sports dark green, feather leaved fronds and is a moderately fast grower. It can be planted as a solitary palm or effectively used in doubles or triples.

One of 18 pinnate-leaved palms in this family, it can be found in the area of Vanuatu, Fiji, Tonga, New Caledonia and the Philippines. Growing to five to ten meters – if in well drained soil with average watering - it is an ideal tree for less spacious areas or use in large containers. It is well suited for patios or terraces and is often used to line walkways, driveways or even public boulevards.

It is rather easy to grow, quite trouble free and will tolerate a degree of neglect – but is most appreciative of monthly fertilization. Drought and salt tolerant, it will not, however, survive frost – hence zones 10 B (with temperature not below 35 degrees Fahrenheit) to zone 11. Young plants may prefer slight shade and are susceptible to scale.

As it grows, it prefers mid level to bright sunshine but can be used as a house plant. In these often shadier conditions, its frond crown, seeming to understand the constraints of interior living, will restrain its growth to less than its outside potential. But be advised, if its pot home is of inferior quality, this palm may just crack it apart in its attempt to grow.

Its handsome, closely ringed trunk is slightly swollen at the base. Slender, it can grow to approximately ten inches in diameter, is light to dark grey and smooth to slightly rough. With a nice looking, lime green, two to three foot crown shaft, its canopy consists of around ten to fifteen stiffly arched fronds which are five to six feet long in maturity. These, in turn, consist of 40-60 jagged tipped, two inch wide leaflets, two feet long and two feet wide, that are held on several planes closer to the base. Higher up these are in a striking V pattern. It requires little pruning as dead fronds will fall off as the tree grows.



From small, white, yellow or butter-cream flowers that form below the two to three foot crown shaft, this pretty palm sports clusters of oval shaped, one inch in size, green fruits that, upon maturation, turn a beautiful crimson red color. This change is often around Christmas time, hence, one of the names by which it is known. However, these drupes (one seeded palm fruits, that are fleshy in nature, but do not open once mature) may appear at other times during the fall or winter as well. The bright red seeds can be irritating to the skin, so, as a precaution, it is suggested that gloves be worn when handling.

This tropical tree is rather easily transplantable when young. However, palm purists may prefer to create new life via the seeds which germinate rapidly, in one to three months.

Frustratingly, in areas where it is a problem, one should be aware that this attractive tree is quite susceptible to the incurable disease of lethal yellowing.

And, its seeds may be used as a Betelnut substitute for those with that proclivity!



THE GREAT COMALA COFFEE EXPEDITION

Kirby Vickery and Freda Rumford

Just before we left Manzanillo, Freda and I got a coffee plantation tour deep in the back roads of the state of Colima. We showed up to take the tour so late that the people that set it all up couldn't wait and backed out. I really feel bad about that because we both misjudged the time to get up there. On that note I would like to publically apologize to Fred and Susan Gendler. The world could do a whole lot better if there were more people like them. I hope they would forgive us enough to allow me to take them out for dinner when we get back. Our guide, Jupiter, decided to bring his two little girls with as Freda and I were the only people taking this tour.



Jupiter, of Admire Mexico Tours DMC, was (www.admiremexicotours.blogspot.com or email admiremexicotours@hotmail.com) the quintessential, bilingual guide. His tour was way beyond what we thought we were going to get and his presentation was so full of little facts and figures it kept Freda scribbling in her notebook almost the whole time we were out there. Me, I played photographer on the trip and I've helped a little (very little) in researching to verify the facts and figures about the plantation owners as given to us by our guide. Because I had the camera, Freda was relegated to the back seat of the van while trying to keep up her notes as the guide told us all these marvelous things while traveling down one unpaved/cobblestone paved/ or very religious (holey - as in pot-holed) road after another.

On the way up the side of the volcano we thought this was just going to be a tour of a coffee plantation. My mind ran scenes from America's south land and the anti-bellum cotton plantations of the Deep South. The Big House and the remains of some type of archaic machinery used to either pick or cook the coffee beans. All this with overdressed people bent over in fields singing Mexican songs with a slower beat. But that's not what we were in for.

What we got was geology, topography, botany, natural, social, and economic history not only about coffee but about the volcano and sugar plantation management as well as the wonderful people who spoke their own language while living and working in this beautiful sub-tropical area. You can imagine, Freda's pen hand started its squiggle as soon as she figured out what was going on.

Our guide was serious about what he was doing. The first stop was at a volcanic formed lake. He gave a thirty minute talk on the forming of volcanoes and the different stages they go through while holding up an iPod which he used for a visual reference. We didn't know it right then until he told us, but we were standing in one of the original German planted coffee 'fields' while he was telling us all of this standing in front of Lago Maria. This small alpine lake is a volcanically formed crater approximately 50 meters deep and is loaded with tilapia and bass.

Should anyone ever get lucky enough to fly over the central part of the Mexican State of Colima just a few miles from the city of the same name, you wouldn't be able to see what you were really flying over. Oh sure, the volcano, 'Volcán de Fuego,' and the small villages with their immaculate center town square's all are very apparent nestled in the jungle while surrounded by acres of sugarcane. But this rich mountainous area is also the home to another crop. The original coffee plantations, in all of Mexico, flourish under the shade of the existing canopy of various hard woods and other larger trees such as the fig. This is done to slow the coffee bean ripening process.

This slower ripening process allows for a larger, and a richer bean, which gives a fuller bodied flavor to the coffee. Some of the world's best tasting coffee is grown in these mountains, in beans from plants which average six to eight feet high in the rich volcanic soil. When a new field is to be planted, workers thin out the underbrush from the jungle's

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canopy. They leave the tall shade trees along with various climbing vines to include natural orchids and even some cactus growing from the bowls of larger trees. The net effect is that the coffee fields look like an impenetrable jungle from the air. Arabica and Robusta are the most popular varieties of coffee plant here although others are grown in the Comala region under the shadow and along the slopes of one of Mexico's most active volcanoes.

Volcán de Fuego or "Volcano of Fire" (in English) dominates the Comala area and is the reason for the quality of the coffee grown. This still active volcano provides an abundant supply of mineral rich volcanic soil at an altitude of around 1,000 meters which is perfect for any of the three types of coffee. Its size and some of the topography limit the amount of coffee which can be grown. It has an older twin which is not active and provides a lot of outside recreation from skiing, to two and four wheeling to just plain outdoors camping out.

When I first came to Manzanillo I was unaware that our entire area of Manzanillo was formed instantaneously by Sr. Volcán de Fuego during the late Pleistocene era

(2,588,000 to 11,700 years ago) which is the last time it really let go. I had looked at some really great volcanoes such as Mt. Rainer, St. Helens and Vesuvius near Naples Italy. Freda already knew that Volcán de Fuego is still an active volcano. It is one of the more active volcanoes in the world and is listed as a 'Decade Volcano' by the International Association of Volcanology and Chemistry of the Earth's Interior (IAVCEI) due to its destructive eruptions and proximity to populated areas.

Lago Maria is only seven miles from the summit, and Manzanillo is only 55 miles away. St. Helens destroyed about seven miles of forest and manmade things. Mt. Vesuvius lashed out about the same distance while Krakatoa did most of its damage by tsunamis although it did knock out 165 villages and towns with its blast alone. I was figuring 55 miles isn't a bad distance until Freda reminded me that Manzanillo sits on a juncture of three fault lines.

(TO BE CONTINUED...)

'FOGEDABOUTIT'

Suzanne A. Marshall



In 'mob' language coined in a popular TV series The Sopranos, 'fogedaboutit' or forget about it is probably my best advice for anyone wanting or worse needing to rely on a rental car from any supplier in Manzanillo. Now I can't speak for other locations and I suspect in Guadalajara for example, that probably wouldn't be the case. But in our beloved paradise, Manzanillo, I have to say 'Fogedaboutit' unless something dramatically changes.

We used to say "why bother with the expenses of a car"? We live in Salahuá where darn near everything you want is available within a short walk or sometimes a short bus ride. If we need a car for something special we'll just rent one!

The first few years went by without the necessity for this as we happily played within our great community and hopped a bus or a taxi to 'Thirsty Thursday' events or down to El Centro etc.. But more recently as we acquaint ourselves with the locals and meet more friends we begin to think we'd like to explore beyond our neighborhood borders and plan a few daytrips or weekends for our visiting friends or family.

Three years ago as we readied ourselves to return from Canada to Paradise in early November, we decided to reserve a rental car at the Manzanillo airport. When you first arrive there is usually more running around to do for groceries and such so we thought it would be great to have a car for the week so we could also cruise around and see new developments and changes. So my husband, reserved a car on line with a very well-known reputable company.

Isn't the Internet a great thing! However, when we arrived we were informed there were no cars available. Of course Allan hauls out the reservation slip and confirmation number as proof of the arrangement. It was absolutely meaningless. All cars were rented! So what's the point of a reservation we ask? Our timid and embarrassed booth worker could only shrug. So of course somewhat miffed we stepped to the next vendor only to be told he had no cars either!!! So over the years our assumption seems to be confirmed that there are not enough rental cars in Manzanillo and you cannot count on one when making plans too far ahead. (or with a reservation either)

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A couple of years later, we tried it again. Online reservations, confirmations, assurances from the company that the reservations would be honored; arrived in Manzanillo; still no car! So the notion that it was an isolated incident the first time was lost forever. This time we were even more upset as we had turned down the invitation of friends who keep a car in Manzanillo, to pick us up at the airport. Blast!!

Now, I'm not going to say we haven't been able to rent a car in Manzanillo, we have a few times. But here are a few things to be aware of aside from never reserving at the airport:

1. Most vendors (I can't say we've tried them all) will want to charge you an added exchange rate if you are paying in U.S. dollars. We've argued with them that we've already paid exchange to get the U.S. dollars but they want to charge the highest bank rates again so expect your costs to be as much as 20% higher than advertised. My advice is pay in Pesos.
2. If you have international auto insurance, Fogedaboutit!! No matter what evidence you carry with you as proof you are insured in Mexico (which we were) you've hit a brick wall. Asking to speak to the manager does not work either as you can imagine the desk clerks have no power to break with their process. On this point, my husband dug in. The insurance adds hugely to the cost of rental. So home he came to call the head office in the U.S.A. of this #1 car rental company to get more information. Ah Ha!! They agreed with us. Our insurance was valid in Mexico! Please pay upfront now and claim the receipts for refunds. We did this, but of course the exchange rate worked both ways this time and we only received about 70% of our costs back. This took months to receive. 'Fogedaboutit!'
3. Always check your vehicle over thoroughly. Last year we entertained friends for a few weeks and rented a vehicle to take them to Barra De Navidad and other fun destinations. We actually had to wait a day or two for this one because again, no cars available, underscoring our theory of a small inventory in the city. So when the guys went to pick up the car, they jumped in and headed home only to discover once parked that the tires were so bald you could see yourself in them!! This is not a good thing for highway driving! So back to the rental office who agreed to get it over to one of the tire stores and put on four brand new tires. Yahoo! Later, as we all hit the

road for our adventure we discovered that the air conditioning was not working!!! Did we give up on the trip??? Not a chance. We just, rolled down the windows and took off. Now it had become a very high priority to find parking in the shade wherever we stopped! No shade, no stopping.

Okay, fast forward to present day. We are excitedly making plans for our return to Manzanillo in early November. As a matter of fact we've just had dinner with Canadian friends we met in Manzanillo and spent the entire evening talking about how much we love it there and all of the beautiful areas to see and experience. We're all anticipating our return!! So obviously, car rentals are not going to keep any of us away. However, we found out that they have a car they keep there year round and it's now beginning to sound like a really good idea.

We are planning to drive down this year and potentially leave the car there! That is if we can sort out all the necessities of getting FM3's and whatever else we need to do. So that will be the next challenge. But of course in our minds, we'll pretty much do anything necessary to be in Manzanillo, the place we love and our second home for many years to come. For this, we will not 'fogedaboutit'.



NEWS

WESTJET

Seasonal Service

They will be flying non stop to Manzanillo from Calgary every friday from Nov 2nd to April 26th 2012

Times are: depart YYC 1005
arriving ZLO 1603
depart ZLO 1650
arrive YYC 1906
(yyc-Calgary, ZLO-Manzanillo)

Please check out Westjet.com for availability, flight times and pricing.

They do have some seat sale pricing on select dates starting at \$119 before taxes.

The flight actually originates in Edmonton and connects in Calgary to other flights from across Canada.

This should increase the Canadian traffic in and out of Manzanillo this winter.

CAR IMPORTATION FINALE

The Manzanillo Sun has kept everyone informed on the continuing saga of the new importation rules. But no-one knew what the final outcome would be. Until now!

We have 'First Hand' information for you!

Those people importing cars under the new regulations can now rest assured about what to do when going back across the border into the United States.

They do not have to turn the import decal in to the government so long as the vehicle importation was renewed by Manzanillo customs at the time of renewing the FM3.

The car is completely valid as outlined in the March 2012 issue of The Sun.

There are no more incoming fees or forms to fill out. The car is totally (temporarily) imported and does not have to be checked out upon leaving the country as is the case with vehicles brought into the country under the old rules.

What has happened is that the Mexican government has effectively changed the 'temporary' import fee from \$30 to

as much as \$500 in some cases, but the 'temporary' import is permanent!

This will possibly help those people who are dual citizens and can only bring their car in for 6 months with no second admission allowed. As they don't have an FM3, that may not be the case and it would be nice to hear from someone about that.

EGGS! EGGS! EGGS!

Mexico currently has an egg shortage. Some egg producers have been hoarding eggs to the point that prices have soared. This, in a country which has the highest egg consumers in the world.

There has been a summer epidemic of bird flu in Mexico's egg industry which has doubled the cost of a dozen eggs to more than 40 pesos (\$3). Statistics show that Mexicans eat 350 eggs per person each year. That's 100 more eggs per person than United States.

Egg prices have spurred Mexico City's mayor to ship tons of second grade eggs to poor neighborhoods and the Federal Government has formed emergency programs to get healthy chickens to farms hit by bird flu. Supermarket shelves now carry eggs imported from the U.S. and Central America, and eggs have disappeared from many street-side food stand menus.

"Eggs, as you know, are one of Mexicans' most important foods and make up a core part of their diet, especially in the poorest regions of the country," President Felipe Calderon said Friday. He also announced that he was allocating about \$227 million in emergency financing for the egg producers of the country and stated that about 3 million hens were being sent to farms affected by the flu outbreak.

The Mexico City mayor has sent a trailer-truck of eggs into working-class neighborhoods over the last three days, selling them for less than half the current market price. Several thousand people lined up for about two hours Friday morning to buy them. From being the cheapest source of protein, they are rapidly becoming the most expensive.

The June detection of bird flu in the western state of Michoacán, became the onset of the crisis. Some 11 million birds were killed to prevent the spread of disease. With

the then obvious shortage of eggs, Government officials blame speculators in the wholesale egg business for hoarding and driving up prices up to this ridiculous cost.

More than 150 tons of eggs had already crossed the border from the U.S. and 100 trailers carrying 500 more tons were expected to arrive over the weekend. It is not yet known how these prices in the capital have affected other states in Mexico.

United States Consulate General Guadalajara

Emergency Message for U.S. Citizens:

Blockades in Guadalajara and State of Jalisco

Date: August 25, 2012

The U.S. Consulate General in Guadalajara has received information about illegal blockades in several areas of Guadalajara, including the Periferico at Tutelar and Periferico at Lopez Mateos, and near the airport. There are reports of blockades in other areas of the state, including along the highway between the airport and Chapala.

If you encounter a blockade, you are advised to divert from the route and drive away from it. The Consulate recommends that all American citizens shelter in place and be vigilant to news reports regarding the situation in the state of Jalisco.

U.S. Consulate General GDL <http://guadalajara.usconsulate.gov>

United States Consulate General Guadalajara

Emergency Message for U.S. Citizens:

Heightened Alert Status in Jalisco and Colima

Date: August 26, 2012

The State of Jalisco continues to maintain a heightened alert status in response to recent illegal blockades. The U.S. Consulate General in Guadalajara has advised its employees to stay close to home, avoid intercity travel, and continue to follow the local media for additional information. At this time, U.S. Government employees have also been advised to take extra precautions when travelling to/from the airport in Guadalajara. The Consulate recommends that all American citizens take similar precautions and be vigilant to news reports regarding events in the states of Jalisco and Colima until the situation returns to normal.

The U.S. Consulate General in Guadalajara is located at 175 Progreso Street, Col. Americana, Guadalajara, Jalisco, Mexico. The U.S. Consulate General in Guadalajara's telephone number is 011 52 33 3268 2100; the fax number is 011 52 33 3825 1951. For after-hours emergencies, please call 011 52 33 3268 2145.

The U.S. Consular Agency in Puerto Vallarta is located at Paseo de los Cocoteros #85; Sur Paradise Plaza, Interior Local L-7, Nuevo Vallarta, Nayarit, C.P. 63732. The U.S. Consular Agency in Puerto Vallarta's telephone numbers are 011 52 322 222 0069 & 011 52 322 223 3301; the fax number is 011 52 322 223 0074. For after-hours emergencies, please call 011 52 33 3268 2145.

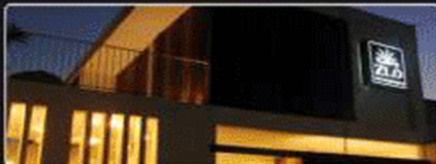
The Consulate office hours are Monday through Friday from 08:00 a.m. to 04:30 p.m. (except for Mexican and U.S. holidays).



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A Letter Home

By Kirby Vickery

Dear Dan,

I hope that you enjoyed my first letter to you. I should have requested an acknowledgement but I realize that I hadn't so I'll not hold your responsible. From this one, however, I would like something from you to indicate you've read it.

A discussion about the food here is as you would imagine inevitable and I suppose I should get to it sooner than later with your love of hot sauce.

As I sit here writing this my host is preparing an American style breakfast although we've been up for hours and have already had a swim. Maybe the term 'American' shouldn't be used here as most restaurants offer bacon and eggs and refried beans instead of hash browns as a standard menu item. The difference is all in the taste of things until or if you get into the use of salsas.

Meat is obtained in the same way it is on Whidbey with the addition of the use of a butcher if you don't find what you're looking for at the supermarket. Manzanillo holds five major supermarkets. So far I've been in two of them but I prefer to purchase all the fresh veggies and fruit from the open market in Santiago, just north of town, which is open at that location on Saturdays. It moves to different locations throughout the week. We also get eggs from there as we've had rather bad luck with our purchases of those little white orbs from the modern supermarkets. I have also found that the market prices are slightly less than what we find in the Air Conditioned, Parking-Lotted, Grocery-Carted, Attendant-bagged by the very elderly or school aged children who work for tips only. I have yet to experience a visit to a butcher but am rather looking forward to that as we purchased all of our meat from one while stationed in Athens, Greece.

They don't sell russet potatoes here. That is with any type of freshness, quantity, or quality. I really think the locals view a russet potato as an exotic food and use it as something to try out on their neighbors, when they don't expect it. The largest seller is a style of potato which reminds me of a new potato. Or those potatoes you see that are like russets only they have smooth, thin, skins. I just went to look them up and found out there is a mild toxin in all potatoes. I may never eat them again.

The eggs are about the same unless you get them from the cheap section in the supermarkets. We did that last week and actually got some rotten eggs. You see, here, they don't refrigerate them. Nope, I'm sticking to market eggs from now on.

I don't think you would like the bacon here. Oh you can get it sliced to any thickness you want and it runs the gamut from fully lean to actually no meat at all (similar to English, Yorkshire, bacon - you know - a slab of pure lard!). Where I find differences is in the taste. Either it isn't cured or their curing process is a lot different. As a result, the taste in bacon is totally different. When I can talk my host into letting me do a breakfast, I intend to marinate some in a little Liquid Smoke which is available down here. I tried to make ranch beans the other day and wasn't able to find any ham hocks, smoked or otherwise, with the skin on. So I ordered two joints and did the liquid smoke trick there too. All I can say was that we didn't throw any away and one joint would have been plenty.

In their little 'Kiosko' (convenience store similar to 7-11)



hamburguesas AL CARBON
Todas incluyen papas fritas.
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SKOL Clásica, con queso amarillo Classic cheese burger	\$55
ELVIS PRESLEY Deliciosa agri dulce con jamón, piña y queso amarillo Delicious with ham, american cheese and pineapple	\$65
MARILYN MONROE Jugosita con champiñones, tocino y queso amarillo Juicy with mushrooms, american cheese and bacon	\$65
JAMES DEAN Carne bañada en salsa BBQ y queso blanco. With white cheese and our home made bbq sauce	\$60
FRANK SINATRA Combinación de salami y pimienta verde con queso blanco y aderezo ranch o blue cheese White cheese, salami, green peppers with ranch or blue cheese dressing	\$70
CANTINFLAS Guacamole con tocino y queso blanco. Our mexican combination with gua- camole, white cheese and bacon.	\$70
BB. KING Suprema con doble carne y queso. Supreme with double meat and cheese	\$85

Ingrediente extra: \$5
Extra Ingredient: \$5

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COSTILLITAS BBQ + BBQ RIBS Incluye papas. Juicy pork ribs with our home made BBQ and fries	\$70
ALITAS + WINGS Buffalo, Teriyaki, BBQ o Chipotle 10 15	\$60 \$80
ORDEN DE PAPAS Order of fries	\$30
RAT PACK! 20 alitas + orden de papas 20 wings + order of fries	\$115

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stores they sell packaged, white bread sandwiches which could sell in the U.S. just as easily as here.

Those little stores also have a bread locker and a pair of tongs to grab what you want but with more variety than 7-11 ever heard of. They also sell an overall variety of Mexican take out lunches which is not unlike what you'd find on any road in the U.S. or Canada.

I can break the restaurants down into groups with some of them transcending gastronomic style lines. For instance there are those that are patterned after what you can get in Canada and the States. One American down here runs a successful fried chicken place and it tastes like Pop-Eye's. Another has a hamburger place which is anything but fast food. But, they're good, don't get me wrong. You like fish and chips? We got'em except they offer habanera sauce on the table in both green and red along with the Heinz ketchup. This being a sea coast town you can expect a healthy variety of seafood being available, and it is. There is Chinese, Italian, French, and probably Ghurkha (I'm not really looking. Okay?), as well as any Mexican dish imaginable. This place may not be very large but it is Mexico's primary seaport to the Pacific and as such will cater to

the occupants and sailors of the countries that ply their trade here. And, yes, Dan, there are the tourist boats too but my host knows me too well to let me loose near any of them.

Above are a few examples of the area's budding and struggling middle class. I believe that it is a hard thing to grow in this climate. Above and below this clutter of newness in marketing are the old standbys. They are places to eat which cater to the forever well-being money set. Most of it is good food prepared by this chef or that and served by a familiar waiter whom meets you like a long lost brother. As well they might because during the course of the evening which comes complete with live entertainment, you will drop a healthy roll and crawl away sated with a desire to return and do it again.

As with most people I've met down here, I'm retired so my pockets only run so deep. This brings me to what I consider the best eating experience on the American Continents.

In Greece, I would go into the Plaka (the old center of Athens) where you could almost touch both walls along



Prices start at \$75,000



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the road you were on. We would order two Giros and a Dutch or Greek beer for a buck and sit there on the sidewalk to swoon with the pleasure of the taste and texture of that simple classic meal. In Manzanillo, I have yet to find what I consider a good enchilada dinner. But, I think that might be a frontier food (to be enjoyed along the U.S. Mexican border). That being said, I have discovered what the vast number of people in town do eat and enjoy. I've also discovered why.

Not far from where we live there is a small park where a weary shopper can sit for a bit while waiting for a bus. In the middle of this park is an ice cream stand. In Tijuana it would sell different combinations of fruit bowls. As the sun gets ready to settle into the ocean, food carts appear along with grills and shallow deep fry pans. With them come tables and extra lights with chopped hot things some of which I can't identify to be eaten with your meal. Also with them come the people who live nearby with their appetites, their wives, boyfriends, children, Tio's, and Tia's (aunts and uncles).

Someone had a radio turned up which was playing what I call 'Mexican Country Western' thick with a pleading voice and the sharp tang of extreme and very loud brass. I'm thinking that some ranch hand's horse died but my Spanish isn't that good yet. No, this is a family thing. These people all know each other and greet you with the same smile and sincerity they greet their own families. We went there the other night and I was a little embarrassed when a couple of young gentlemen got up to clear a table for us. And the food? It was small soft tacos with whatever you can find to put on them and not singe your eyebrows along with a handful of salad consisting mostly of cut up tomato and lettuce. I caught them looking. These people have a marvellous sense of humor and the care to let you laugh first after you get your breath from your first bite.

The price is so right some friends of my host who live in that area rarely go to the Market. They just eat out most of the time.

I have to close for now Dan, but know that tonight while you're probably enjoying your sit down dinner to meat loaf, corn, and mashed potatoes, I'm going to be in gourmet delight watching a whole bunch of people having a good time with life and me as I try not to react to whatever ground up stuff I added to my whatever-it-was food.

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THIS 'N' THAT

by Vivian Molick

"Pass the Buck"

Do you ever wonder where or how these types of phrases originated? I do, so I went to check it out.

Today the meaning has come to mean "trying to avoid blame or responsibility by passing it on to someone else". But, of course, that is not the origin of how or where it was used.

If you look up '**buck**' in the dictionary you will find quite a few assorted nouns, verbs and adjectives listed. The most common use of the word these days is as the slang term for the American dollar. But, that is not what was meant by 'buck' here though. If you look a little further down the list you will find the definition '*buck: an article used in a game of poker*'... and that's the buck that was first passed.

Poker became very popular in America during the second half of the 19th century. Players were highly suspicious of cheating or any form of favoritism, and there's significant folklore depicting gunslingers in shoot-outs based on accusations of dirty dealing. In order to avoid unfairness, the deal would change hands during sessions. The person who was next in line to deal would be given a marker. This marker was often a knife, and knives often had handles made of buck's horn – thus, the marker became known as a 'buck'. When the dealer's turn was finished he 'passed the buck'.

Later in history, silver dollars were used as markers and this is probably the origin of the use of 'buck' as a slang term for dollar.

The earliest mention that could be found of the literal use of the phrase in print was from the *Weekly New Mexican*, July 1865: "They draw at the commissary and at poker after they have passed the *buck*". This seems to be around the time the phrase was coined and there are several such printed notations in the following years.

The figurative version of the phrase (a usage where no actual buck is present) begins around the start of the 20th century. For example, this article in the California newspaper *The Oakland Tribune*, from May, 1902: [Oakland City Attorney] Dow – 'When the public or the Council "pass the buck" up to me I am going to act.' The writer's use of quotations marks around *pass the buck* is an indication of its recent coinage as a figurative phrase, or at least one that the paper's readers might not have been expected to be familiar with.

Probably the best known use of *buck* in this context is 'the buck stops here', which was the promise made by US president Harry S. Truman, and in which he kept prominent in his own (and his elector's) mind by putting it on a sign he placed on his desk.

Thus, the term... "pass the buck".



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TWO MINUTES AT THE STOP LIGHT

By Cheryl Weaver

Yesterday, I took the bus for an appointment that was a long way from where I live. It was the usual scenery I have seen dozens of times going to Valle Las Garzas until we came to a stop light, and those couple minutes clarified something profound I had suspected for a long, long time.

Like many of us, I have multitudes of friends and family in the States that are suffering from the economic disaster that seems to spread like Cancer and go on and on with no relief in sight. Professionals unemployed, beloved homes snatched away by foreclosure, mal-treatment of those working so replaceable are they, college graduates vying for jobs at the local drive-thru, and families moving in together, desperate to make basic ends meet. You no longer hear the economists talking about a temporary "recession". At the core of the deterioration of spirit and pocketbook, hundreds of wise and prominent people in-the-know write books, hold interviews, publish statistics, prophet the future, and offer cause and effect theories as to how it all began, whose fault it is, and where and when it will end – stubbornly stating *it will end*, refusing even the slightest consideration that perhaps things have changed forever, and stubbornly cling to the insistence of the American Dream at any price is their due while they wait and suffer.

Let me preface my view by admitting I am not politically savvy. In fact, I rather detest the whole left wing/right wing Democrat/Republican foundation of American politics. It has a choke hold on the System, designed hundreds of years ago when population was all but incommunicable, spread out thousands of miles from one another. I fail to understand why, in this day and age of telephones and computers, voting for representation can't be done by registering on-line or calling some automated computer (to which we are subjected contacting most any agency these days) and pressing buttons, allowing the majority to elect their Head Honchos. But I am straying from my point and, like I said, I am not politically savvy anyway. So for those of you with furrowed brow at this moment, I apologize.

At one time, America aspired the world as the ideal standard by which "the Good Life" was measured, admired, and emulated. For hundreds of years, Immigrants came in droves with stars in their eyes, willing to brave the direst of circumstances to mainstream with great difficulty into a culture so different from their own – for their children, for

opportunity, for freedom, for education, for a better quality of life (eventually). Quietly, through the generations, they succeeded in obtaining the "American Dream" and were both proud and patriotic to have achieved it. My own Mother was one – who refused to speak Spanish in our home beyond "Callate" and told me in no uncertain terms that if I wanted to learn a foreign language, take a class in school. No matter that she struggled with the pronunciation, reading, and writing of a language not her native tongue. She was proud to have become an American Citizen.

When did it change to a mainstream generation presumptive and entitled of everything America had to offer? Did it start with the Hippies, the Yuppies, or Generation X, Y or Z? When did the knee-jerk reaction begin to dispose of things rather than restore? When did image become more important than character? When did students begin to view education as a pain in the ass and teachers in jeopardy the nature of their jobs? When did the majority of the employees begin to jump from job to job and be considered "stale" if they didn't?



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When did loyal friends and beloved family disappear with the click of the "Delete" button? Social activities become the primary basis for Church membership? Marriage and family optional? Children and love disposable?

Which brings me back to my two minutes at the stop light?

In the mid-day sun, a man in a wheelchair appearing to be in his 60's or 70's holds a broom aloft. A plastic shopping bag hangs from the back of his chair. He has no feet. He expertly navigates within the curbed U-turn access bordered by a landscaped island in the middle of the street with plants, trees, and grass. It appears he has been doing this a long time. There are no orange cones, safety vests in neon colors, traffic monitors, flashing light barricades. Slowly, he sweeps up the leaves and debris that have accumulated along the curb into a mound I assume is destined for the plastic bag. I wonder how he will manage this but am sure he will. He is almost finished on one side of the island, a good enough distance, without accolades except for his continued failure to be hit by a car.



I am in awe of the simple determination to retain his dignity and value to society, his community, his family. To work – not primarily for the rate of pay or the power or recognition but because to have work is what Mexican people see as an honor and a blessing, no matter what type of job it is. He does what he can, does a good job at it, and has not drowned in a pity-pot of how life is unfair, his disability and inabilities, or the abandonment of plans and dreams he must have had; his quiet acceptance of things beyond his control and insistence on doing something productive for the good of all. But most admirably, his willingness to find a reason to get up every morning and look to the day and see his destiny as living a different way of life, not the end of his life, nor pine away with stubborn insistence that he regain what was – and probably never have again.

So much, this seemingly poor, incapacitated human being, could teach the lofty foreigner who cries in his beer. So much the foreigner needs to learn. So much we all could practice and teach our children to right what's wrong.




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Manzanillo's Lifestyle E-Magazine **FITNESS and HEALTH**



Are you Toxic?

*Do you clean, bathe, breathe, and eat?
Then the answer is probably yes.*



Pretty much everything is our life from our food, our lawns, our house and personal hygiene exposes us to chemicals. Some of these have immediate toxic effects but others are slower, staying in our bodies and becoming toxic after many years of exposure.

Studies now show that this long term exposure is the culprit behind many cancers, allergies, and other human (and pet) health concerns. I'm not talking big time pesticides and other scary stuff; I'm talking simple things like household cleaners, air fresheners, and beauty products. A quick look at the labels will show all the toxins you breathe, touch, and eat all day every day. Will everything harm you? Maybe not, but a lot of it will so why not make some changes?

The internet is full of ideas for reducing and eliminating chemicals, an excellent place to start is <http://www.pca.state.mn.us/index.php/view-document.html?gid=11366>. You can also find many

websites and blogs dedicated to cleaner and healthier living. As a disclaimer, I am a normal person.

There is a perception that if you use homemade or natural products you are a bit goofy. My house was just like yours, full of 409, Drano, Windex, Plug-ins, etc. I have gradually been switching off chemicals and find that not only are the alternatives healthier, they are a lot cheaper and that's not nutty!



I made my own homemade laundry soap just to see if it would work. And, yes, it does.

More info here:

<http://changeyourchoices.wordpress.com/2012/07/26/i-feel-like-laura-ingalls/>

Really, there are a few items that will take care of everything in your life! White vinegar, Lemon juice, baking soda, vegetable oil, borax, and few other items are cheap but I did have some trouble finding some of them in Manzanillo. Let me know where to find big bottles of Vinagre blanco and the elusive lemon juice. I can find plenty of lime juice but not lemon! I haven't looked for Borax or washing soda yet so I might bring my own mixture when we drive down in November. Do you think bringing an unlabeled container of white powder into the country will be a problem?

Chemical Free Cleaners

Vinegar is an excellent household cleaner and can be used on most surfaces (except marble) and many fabrics. Vinegar can:

- > Kill most molds and mildews if used full strength and allowed to dry, I used it on some moldy patio chairs and it worked like a charm.
- > Clean windows – Mix 1 ¼ tablespoons of vinegar to a cup of water and add a couple of drops of liquid detergent.

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Window cleaner does not need to be blue or purple to work!

> Clean ceramic and tile floors – add $\frac{1}{4}$ cup of vinegar to one gallon of water and watch grease and dirt wash away!

No more Cloro on my refinished tile floors. My house keeper loves to use Cloro on everything so it will take some convincing!

> **To clean toxins and pesticides off fruit and vegetables soak them in one part white vinegar to 4 parts water for up to an hour, longer for nonorganic apples.** (After the bath, take a look at the water. All that cloudy “stuff” would have ended up inside you).

There are entire websites dedicated to the wonders of **Baking Soda**, here are a few suggestions:

> Baking soda is excellent for deodorizing and neutralizing odors. Use a bowl of baking soda instead of plug-in type air fresheners or sprays.

> Applied directly to a most surfaces, it can be used rather than a scrubbing cleanser.

> Removes odors from rugs and carpets. Let it sit on the rug for a little while to give it time to work before you vacuum it up.

> Make it into a paste and try it on stains

Here is a general cleaner using baking soda to clean most surfaces. Seriously, this is all you need to clean the bathroom and kitchen. Yes, 2 ingredients will do it all.

- 1 quart water
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup baking soda

I just used this on a clogged drain and it worked! (Yes, I am still amazed that these recipes really do work with NO chemicals)

Pretty much all you need to clean anything!
(and- it unclogs drains)



Homemade Drain Cleaner

1. Remove all water from the sink or tub and pour about **1 cup of baking soda** down the drain. Make sure that baking soda makes it down the drain.
2. Next, pour about **2 Cups of boiling water** down the drain. The baking soda mixed with boiling water dissolves the sludge and gunk in the pipe, even if you don't see it happening. Wait a few minutes.
3. Now, pour another **cup baking soda** down the drain then add **1 cup of white vinegar** and plug the drain immediately. If you're unclogging a double sink, plug both drains. You'll hear sizzling coming up from the drain and see bubbles foaming up.
4. When the bubbles have died down, add **the remaining boiling water** down the drain.
5. Repeat this process if necessary.
6. This works on hair and grease clogs but won't do anything for tree roots!



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Manzanillo's Lifestyle E-Magazine **FITNESS and HEALTH**



Need to clean and polish your woodwork and furniture?
Vegetable oil mixed 2 parts to 1 part **lemon juice** in a spray bottle works great! For wood floors use 1 tsp. vegetable oil, 1 tsp. vinegar, 1 quart water-Mop and rinse.



<-not me, but I do smile when I think how cheaply I can clean my house without breathing in nasty chemicals.

What about the yard?

Have you read the warning label on Roundup? Yes, we've all used it but that doesn't mean it's good for us, our kids, and our pets.

Try this instead:

Non-Toxic Weed Killer

There are variations but this worked for me.



Vinegar, salt, dish soap. Fill your spray container (32-24 oz) almost to the top with vinegar, add ½ cup salt and a squirt of dish soap. Shake it up. Spray it on any unwanted grasses or weeds and let the sun bake it for a few hours. The sun speeds the process but you can do this on a cloudy day as well. Just be careful, it will kill anything so avoid plants that you want to keep alive! The good news? It won't kill your kids or pets!

I'm going to experiment with some chemical free bug repellent, it has been hot and dry in Wisconsin so we haven't had many mosquitos (yay!) but the recent rains might give me a chance to test it before heading south. Do you have any recipes for homemade beauty, cleaning, or other household items? Pass them along and I'll share next month: karzlo@hotmail.com.

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How to Work With Multiple Retirement Plan Balances

Are you getting close to retirement or have you already retired? If so, it is likely you have more than one retirement plan.

You're not alone. Many investors have multiple retirement plans; unfortunately they believe that having several plans makes it difficult to calculate required minimum distributions (RMDs). That need not be the case.

Say that in addition to several Individual Retirement Accounts (IRAs) you have a 401(k) plan and a 403(b) plan, all of which are still with the firms that initially handled the investments for your employers.

In this situation, you would be required to take three RMDs at age 70½: one RMD from each of your three separate pools of money. The first pool would be your 401(k) money; the second, your 403(b) money and the third your IRA money.

If you have multiple IRAs, once you have determined your total IRA RMD you can choose to withdraw the total IRA RMD from one or any combination of your IRAs. Similarly, if you have multiple 403(b) accounts, once you have determined your total 403(b) RMD you can choose to withdraw the total 403(b) RMD from one or any combination of your 403(b) accounts.

While it is OK to have multiple accounts, the reason for consolidating is not the RMD it is generally a good idea to rollover your 401(k) and/or 403(b) into a Rollover IRA, since you almost always have much better investments choices and flexibility with an IRA. Another good idea is to consolidate all your IRAs into one, even if you have multiple beneficiaries living in multiple countries: it is somewhat easier to manage and reduces paperwork (or internet accounts).

I should mention that Canadians who have worked and have retirement accounts in the US should also consider a rollover into a Roth IRA: this year is most likely the last year to do so, while locking in a lower tax rate.

These points may need clarification, and tax laws are always changing; consult your advisor before taking RMDs from your retirement account. Remember first that whatever you do, do it well before December 31st, and second that no one is ever too careful with RMDs as that the cost of procrastination is prohibitive: the IRS penalty for not taking your RMD out before the deadline is a very stiff 50%.

This article is not intended to provide tax or legal advice and should not be relied upon as such. Any specific tax or legal questions concerning the matters described in this article should be discussed with your tax or legal advisor.

Yann Kostic is a Money Manager and Financial Advisor (RIA) with Atlantis Wealth Management specializing in retirees (or soon to be), self-reliant women as well as 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, or locally: (314) 333-1295 or in the US: (321) 574-1529



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RECIPE

Classic Lemonade

Beat the heat with this refreshing "ade"
From Real Simple
James Wojcik

Serves 4 (makes 4 cups)
Hands-On Time: 10 minutes.
Total Time: 10 minutes

Ingredients

1/2 cup sugar
1 cup fresh lemon juice (from about 6 lemons)
(Limes can be substitute)

Directions

1. In a small saucepan, combine the sugar and ½ cup water.
2. Bring to a boil, stirring occasionally, until the sugar is dissolved; let cool.
3. In a pitcher, combine the syrup with the lemon juice and 2½ to 3 cups water.
4. Serve over ice.

Tip

One lemon will yield 3 to 4 tablespoons of juice.

Nutritional Information

Calories 112; Fat 0g; Sat Fat 0g; Cholesterol 0mg;
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PHOTO COMPETITION

ANY Mexico Theme



YO QUIERO MANZANILLO

Mexico has become the country we have grown to love. The people, the quirkiness, its lack of authority, the countryside, the natural beauty. We like to make fun of items that...well tickle our funnybone, or make us go WOW, or awww how sweet!

TAKE YOUR BEST SHOT!! Send it in, and WIN!

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Monkey's FAMOUS FRIED CHICKEN

ZONA GRAFICA X-TREMA

send all entries to: info@manzanillosun.com

All photos submitted will become the property of Manzanillo Sun, solely for its use on its website, magazine. Photos of an adult nature or of a demeaning nature, will not be eligible. Judging will be done by Zona Grafica, Manzanillo Sun SA de CV, or Monkey's Chicken. We will endeavor to post all photos on April 5 Magazine.

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Bahia de Manzanillo by Anna Lorena



Gourmet Meal by Greg Bates



Salt water Croc by Greg Bates



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Dave Boroughs



Dave has won a coveted "Yo Quiero Manzanillo"
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Dinner for two at Monkey's chicken
Playera from Zona Grafica for Big Dicks Halfway Inn



SEPTEMBER THEME

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