

Manzanillo

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Sun

Manzanillo's Lifestyle E-Magazine

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Cover Photo courtesy of
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Palm Reader

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Golden Trumpet

Not to my taste!

In the words of an experienced wine connoisseur, they might “present well” and have “a subtle, earthy, bouquet” but these are definitely not delights for human consumption. Of what do we speak? Well, interestingly these are well known plants and flowers (as well as fruits and vegetables) of our households and gardens. In this but brief venue – and at the risk of taking on the nickname “Toxicity Tom” – we’ll discuss but a few that are now growing in my gardens!

Starting with the ubiquitous Dieffenbachia, many are surprised to learn that all of its parts are poisonous and can cause intense burning, irritation, and immobility of the tongue, mouth, and throat thwarting the ability to speak - hence its other name “Dumb Cane” - with swelling so severe as to block breathing and even leading to death.

How beautiful are those flowers of the Allamanda or Golden Trumpet, but a salad thereof would not be wise as the milky sap that oozes out when the broken stems can irritate the skin. A clarification.

Cycasin is not “a comment made as a mocking or deriding remark.” It is a substance found in cycads.

The Sago Palm is such a plant. No surprise here but Cycasin is not in any of our major food groups! If you or your pet munches on any part (most specifically the seeds) of this plant can expect vomiting, increased thirst, hemorrhagic gastroenteritis, bruising, melena, icterus, coagulopathy (definitely a trio to avoid), liver damage and/or failure and - perhaps the biggest injury of them all – death!

What of the Desert Rose? Regular readers of my column “Planting Roots in Mexico” will remember that natives from the areas where this plant originated - arid areas of Africa, the Arabian peninsula and Madagascar - sometimes dip their weapons points in its highly toxic sap so as to make fast work of killing their game. Suffice it to say that a lunch of this plant ain’t good for ya’!

Many of we southern ex-pats have at least one Ficus Tree of one kind or another. All of its 800 varieties have a toxic, milky sap in its leaves and stems that makes your skin itch and puff up.

I’ve a number of varieties of Caladium and Elephant Ear plants – two of my favorites. But, every part of all varieties of both of these common tropical plants can cause intense burning and irritation of the mouth and tongue.



Death can occur if the base of the tongue swells enough to block the air passage of the throat.

Lots of folks first came across Anthurium when visiting Hawaii. Though very pretty, ingestion of any part of these unique looking tropical plants could cause a painful burning, swelling and blistering sensation in one's mouth with the voice becoming hoarse and strained with a difficulty in swallowing.

We certainly use it. Many folks do in fact. That would be the natural gel of Aloe for sun or kitchen burns. However, this plant's gel, skin and other inner layers can irritate intestines upon ingestion. (And even for topical use, ensure that the plant's skin and yellow layer are fully cut away before using.)

What about Amaryllis? By now you well know the drilleat 'em and suffer diarrhea, nausea, vomiting – but, actually, large quantities of the bulb must be eaten to fully bring on these symptoms.

Swiss-cheese plant or Split-leaf Philodendron are certainly neat looking tropical plants. Though, interestingly, the ripe fruit is edible, consumption of the leaves is not good! (In fact, laboratory mice died after being fed plant extracts.) Symptoms are immediate with loss of voice, blistering, hoarseness, irritation of the mouth.

By now, probably perceived as a “sour apple” by some, I next address a few of our common fruits and vegetables. Sticking to that just mentioned fruit, I'll be rather “hard core” relating that the seeds of apples actually contain small amounts of cyanide. And while a person won't die from eating the seeds of a single apple, they could certainly kill you if you ate enough of them.

While I appear to be picking on favorites, the pits of cherries are also poisonous and can cause gasping and prostration. However, their hardness make them hard to digest, so if a person accidentally swallows one, it could be found in the individual's stool the next day . . . but I'm not looking for it! The same goes for peaches and plums, though the pits are really too big to make swallowing easy, with a person more apt to choke to death!

Tomatoes. U'mmmmm, I love 'em – ripe red or fried green! But if you've an inclination to eat them raw while still green you are likely to get stomach ache. Particularly poisonous are the leaves. In fact, I've read that in feudal Japan some slipped a tomato leaf into the salad of their enemies as a quick resolution of how to eliminate an enemy.

Another favorite of mine – and yes, I even love it raw – is rhubarb. While the stems area a spectacular core

ingredient in one of the very best of pies, don't try it with he leaves as they contain oxalic acid salts and large amounts of is – consumed either raw or cooked - can lead to kidney problems, convulsions and coma, followed rapidly by death.

We'll leave the negative aspects of Asparagus, Avocado, Black Walnut, Buckwheat, Kidney/ Lima/Butter Beans, Potatoes and several others for another day.

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Black Witch Moth – Butterfly of Death

By Terry Sovil

Multiple sightings of these messengers in Manzanillo!

My sighting of my first one was just prior to a downpour when the thunder had been rolling for 30 minutes and the skies were black. I glimpsed this huge “thing” on the brick wall. Could this be an omen? Perhaps because I saw another, smaller one, in almost the same place two days later.

Tropical in origin, this is the largest moth seen north of Mexico. Its formal name is *Ascalapha odorata* and its wingspan can exceed 7 inches. Not actually black it is more dark brown with zigzag lines. A number “9” or paisley shape on the forewing is a prime indicator. The females have a white stripe midway along the wing and are slighter lighter in color than the males.

The Black Witch moth generally flies only at night. During the day you may see one under eaves, a carport or porch awning. They are attracted to soft overripe fruit. The beginning of the rainy season in Mexico triggers a northern migration where they are often seen in the American southwest. They breed year round and retreat southward in the fall.

They are frequently mistaken for bats as they are large and fly like bats. Because of the similarity there are many superstitions that have evolved around this moth. Black Witch moths have tympanic organs or ears that detect the echolocation signals generated by bats. This hearing helps them avoid real bats when both are flying at night.

The Black Witch moth does not bite, sting, or carry diseases. It has only a straw-like proboscis or tongue to drink flower nectar through. It is perfectly harmless but can cause a reflex jump and perhaps a scream if you happen to flush one out from a daytime hiding spot.

In Mexico they are called the *mariposa de la muerte* (butterfly of death) and were known to the Aztecs. It is said that when a person is sick and this moth enters the house the sick person dies. A variation from southern Texas says that death only occurs if the moth flies in and visits all four corners of the house. In parts of Mexico if one flies over someone's head the person will lose their hair. In Hawaii if a loved one has just died the moth is an embodiment of the person's soul returning to say goodbye.

In some Caribbean populations, the *Sorciere Noire* is



believed to be an actual witch in disguise, and to see it means someone has cast an evil spell on you. In Jamaica it is called a Duppy Bat, and believed to be a lost soul. In parts of the Bahamas, folklore calls them Moneybats, and tells that they bring prosperity. I guess I like the Moneybats superstition the best as we can always use a little prosperity!

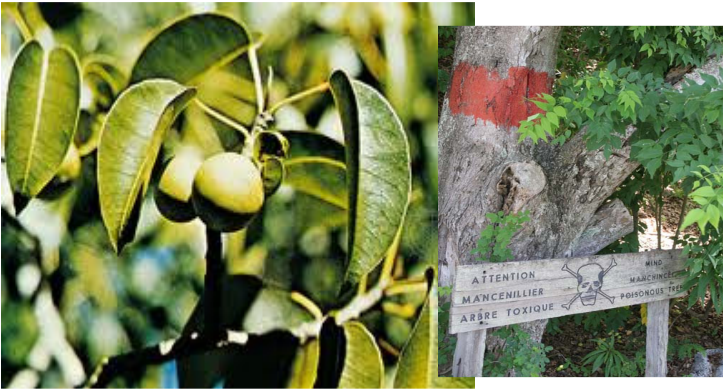
The northward migration of the Black Witch appears to be triggered by the rainy season in Mexico; typically June through October. It appears they are able to migrate great distances even over open water. In September 1998 large nocturnal moth migrations including Black Witches were reported as regular occurrences on several oil platforms off the coast of Louisiana.

How these moths behave in the fall is not well known. In Texas, many tropical butterflies annually stray north from Mexico in September and October. Favorable conditions for Mexican butterfly strays in the fall include milder temperatures, continuing southerly winds, and higher rainfall which induces caterpillar food plants to put on fresh growth.

If you see one of these moths during the daytime you can get very close to grab a picture!

What is that tree? Manzanillo, Manzanilla, Manchineel?

By Terry Sovil



The *Correo de Manzanillo* newspaper ran an article 13/Sep confirming the authenticity of a local tree as a Manzanillo tree. Howard Platt identified it as a potentially interesting article. Recently planted in the main garden in Manzanillo there was great curiosity about **exactly** what kind of tree it was. The task was handed to the mayor. After talking with local city employees and getting an opinion from the University of Costa Rica it appears the tree is a Manzanillo tree of the type that used to be abundant here before the encroachment and supervision of plants by humans..

Not only was Manzanillo a natural harbor but there were hardy trees that grew here providing wood for ship building and repair. The Spanish were quick to use the port as a base to explore farther west - the Philippines - and lumber was plentiful for boat building and repair. There is some speculation that says the name "Manzanillo" didn't come from the tree but most sources seem to support that it did.

The tree has a history of its own. Called Manzanillo, Manzanilla, Manchineel or technically as *Hippomane mancinella*, it is known as the "tree of death" in Central America and was described as "the stick of Manzanillo that is poisonous if ingested" in 1778 by Joseff Juan Morales. In 1868 Mr. Cuevas, on expedition to the Revillagigedo Islands noted the abundance of the tree that occurs in marine and coastal wetlands. It is an excellent natural windbreak and its roots stabilize the sand preventing beach erosion. It can grow to 15 meters (49 feet), has gray colored bark, shiny green leaves and spikes of small greenish flowers. Its fruit resembles an apple and is greenish-yellow when ripe. The name "manchineel" (also written "manchioneel") is from the Spanish "Manzanilla" ("little apple"). In present-day Spanish the name is "manzanilla de la muerte" or "little apple of death".

This is because the manzanilla is one of the most poisonous trees in the world..Some accounts claim that the last Manzanillo tree in Manzanillo was cut down by the governor's order

to protect citizens that may eat the attractive fruit. Others claim one tree was left near

the entrance to the Port. The recent magazine article sites several still near San Pedrito beach. More are being planted to return some of the natural growth that was here before progress arrived.

Some detailed accounts say the entire tree is toxic. It secretes a milky substance during rainfall and standing under the tree during a rain may cause blistering of the skin. Burning the tree may cause blindness if the smoke gets in your eyes. The fruit can be fatal if eaten. The Carib Indians poisoned their blowgun darts with the sap and used the leaves to poison enemy's water supplies. They used to tie victims to the tree as a form of torture. Even Columbus encountered the tree and its poisons after some of his men died after encountering it. No wonder some trees are fenced in or marked with a red "X" on the trunk.

The handling of dry manchineel wood may not be as harmful as the sap dries and cannot penetrate dry skin as easily. There is an English slang term used to describe "manchineel hands", found in the Caribbean region. The term refers to discolored or "tainted" hands. It is thought that hands touching lips or genitals may still cause poisoning.

In Giacomo Meyerbeer's 1865 opera "L'Africaine" the heroine commits suicide by lying down under the tree and breathing the vapors. In the movie "Wind Across the Everglades" in 1956 a mean hombre named "Cottonmouth", Burl Ives, ties a victim to the trunk of a manchineel tree. The victim screams as the sap burns his skin and is found dead the next morning with a horrible expression on his face.



Recap: The tree is usually found near a beach, offers wonderful shade, plentiful golden apples that smell like apple, leaves that are simple and glossy with pointed tips, rounded base and smooth or slightly toothed edges. Each tree carries a male and female flower. **Don't eat under it and don't eat the fruit no matter what Eve says.**



The Travails and Triumphs of Tommy's Tilapia Trek



"A blissful, sun drenched day spent on the water" was my thought when asked by friend Juan if Paco and I would like to go along with him and his wife out on the lagoon not far from the Manzanillo airport. . . that would be the one laden with saltwater crocodiles!

Knowing it would not be too terribly far off of the highway I gave but little worry that "Shane" - my very basic, four cylinder, non-four wheel drive, pick-up - could make the trek. (Tommy, what was it you learned as a young Army Second Lieutenant so very many years ago? "Never Assume!" Well, I seem to have forgotten that sage counsel!)

But less than a quarter of a mile on the (what was to become shortly thereafter) twisting country road out of sight of "civilization" - read "any trace of humanity" - I briefly thought to myself, "Wow, what a wonderfully straight, flat and paved road. "Wrrongo, Burrito Breath Boy!" That was neither concrete nor asphalt. It was a, long stretch of water in one constant overflow of both the abutting ditches and the rise and fall of the country path - the linger results of the earlier morning monsoonesque downpour! Wisely I had let Paco take the wheel as we slowly, carefully, plugged on, plunging, grill first, into pool after pool,

Juan nets another



several times with walls of water splashing high, wafting well over the hood.

Finally we arrived at our destination and I endeavored to unclench my firmly clenched "cheeks." But before embarking onto the water there was the chore of bailing out the gallons of rainwater from our boats. So into the shallow, small cove of the lagoon we waded. Not long thereafter we were off and I fast discerned that these flat bottomed boats were similar to canoes or kayaks – they can easily tip over. Cheeks clenched again!

After but a short distance we encountered a "choke point" of thick, floating water plants and for some time Paco precariously leaned forward in the bow, sweeping aside the aquatic foliage as Antonia laboriously poled from the stern. (What behemoth manner of *cocodrilo* lurked below the verdant, thick green, I wondered?) My job – which I did very well - you may recall, was in charge of "buttocks contraction con consternation!"

Once through this beautiful but tangled labyrinth of aquatic overgrowth, the search for Tilapia began in earnest! While Lilia, Juan's shy wife with the beautiful smile, carefully poled the boat forward, repeatedly his visual scan of the waters culminated with a graceful sweeping cast of net. Precariously, but confidently, standing in the prow of the tiny, narrow wooden craft, with experienced economy - and poetry - of motion, he made this task appear to be a well choreographed, water top ballet! Beyond the tranquility of the waters and nature's manifold beauty that surrounded us, watching his efforts, alone, made the day well worth the nerve racking sloshing slog of a drive to arrive and return.

With an attentive cognition of the sparsity of space, this narrative herein now ends so that the accompanying pictures might better present this great day spent with good friends.



Butt briefly - (pun intended) - I take a refreshing breather from my "clenching chore"!



Ahead lay the lingering results of the earlier morning monsoonesque downpour!



Paco bails water from our craft prior to embarking.



With experienced economy - and poetry - of motion, Juan's well choreographed, graceful, watertop, netcasting ballet.



Paco precariously leans forward in the bow sweeping aside the aquatic foliage with Juan poling his boat directly ahead.

The Party Bird!

By Howard Platt

Great-Tailed Grackle – (*Quiscalus Mexicanus*)



If you think the West Coast of Mexico is a good place to come for a party, you are joining the experts! Think evening, a busy warm day finally coming to a relaxing close. Except that the trees in the boulevard are suddenly populated by gregarious, noisy birds. It's party time! The trees are full of activity and sound. The grackles have arrived.

These are Great-Tailed Grackles, a large black bird of the icterid family, also referred to simply as "blackbird", and occasionally "crow" or "jackdaw", though it is not a member of the Corvidae or crow family. It is often called "cuervo" in the areas of Mexico where there are no true crows.

These birds like open country with scattered trees and easily available water such as city parks and boulevards. Taking advantage of the effects of urbanization and irrigation, they have been moving northward from their home in Mexico into much of western United States and are now considered a pest because the damage they cause to some crops.

The males have yellow eyes, an iridescent black body with a purple sheen and a conspicuous tail; the females are smaller and more of a dull brown.

They eat almost anything – snails and invertebrates, tadpoles, lizards, insects, frogs, shrimp, small fish and birds, eggs and young of other birds, fruits, berries, seeds and grains.

Like all party animals they like displays. Two typical are the pointing and the spreading. In the pointing display the head is held up and the beak points skywards. It is intended to intimidate other males. Spreading is an attempt to attract female attention – low to the ground the tail is fanned, wings spread and the feathers fluffed up making the bird look much larger. Along with noises some describe as singing!

Their nests are often seen at the base of the fronds of the coconut or other palms. They are carefully woven from dried grasses into bowl shapes. Often the males do little more than offer protection by buzzing threatening intruders, while an extended family of females care for the young.

Grackles seem to love making noises. They have a wide range of loud calls and can even imitate the sound of the city such as car alarms. Party animals, yes, but polite too. Perhaps influenced by English speaking tourists you can hear them call, as they are ready to leave, "Check! check!"



Our Twisted Way Of Speaking - VII

Tommy Clarkson

It's time for another of our etymological sojourns! You know, a discussion about the origin of words and phrases. So with no further ado, let us race pell-mell into such task.

Well, firstly some folks incorrectly think that the expression is "with no further adieu." It is, in fact, "ado" which is an old Norse word meaning "bustling activity; fuss; bother or delay". "Adieu" is actually a complete statement meaning "goodbye."

And what of that phrase, "pell-mell"? With minor variations, it generally means to "run amok, in disorder confusion, or in a 'helter-skelter'" like "chickens with their heads cut off". (An apt, but rather grisly, analogy from my rural youth I'd just as soon forget!)

Its core origin? The expression is a derivation of the French word "*pêle-mêle*." But, I believe the first record we have of it in English would be circa 1594 from Shakespeare's Richard III with "Let us to it pell mell, if not to heaven then hand in hand to hell."

Does anyone besides me remember – or care about – the Sunday newspaper cartoon strip the Katzenjammer Kids? What of that word, *katzenjammer*? It is of Germanic derivation and means "a loud discordant noise, a hangover or state of depression or bewilderment."

We've all been told to "let sleeping dogs lie" which means that the status quo was best left alone and to not stir up a potentially difficult situation and. This phrase originated by Chaucer around 1380 when he wrote, 'It is nought good a slepyng hound to wake'.

Now, being retired Army, let's focus at picking on the Navy!

From whence came the expression "son of a gun?" It seems that in those days of intercontinental tall ship travel some sailors, upon arrival in the West Indies, would take their lustful way with native women on board the ship between the cannons. That left behind came to be called "sons of guns."

We've all been told to "shake a leg." As I understand it, that phrase also originated on board those ships of yore. When, back at home port – and away from those wanton wenches of the Caribbean – sailors' wives or girlfriends sometimes came aboard for the night. As the petty officer made his way through the compartments rousing the men for morning work, a woman could avoid being dumped out of the hammock by "shaking a leg," hence showing that the occupant was able, first class seaman!

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Moctezuma

The last Emperor of the Aztecs

David Fitzpatrick

There is relatively little information available concerning the last Aztec Emperor, and what particulars there are appear sketchy and contradictory. Most of the sources that have come down to us had agendas of their own to forward: the Aztecs saw him first and foremost as the Emperor who lost Mexico and their vision was heavily clouded by this fact. The Spaniards, on the other hand, were almost uniformly apologists for Cortez and the colonization of Mexico. In early sixteenth century Mexico, it would seem, there were no disinterested historians who sought only to uncover the truth

There is even some doubt as to the precise form of his name. The form "Moctezuma" is now generally accepted – derived from "Motek So: ma" meaning "he who shows anger in a noble manner". But several other spellings are also current, including the phonetically curious "Montezuma" – with an "n" - familiar in the English speaking world.

Moctezuma, as we shall call him, was born in Tenochtitlàn (Mexico City), probably in 1466 and he reigned as Emperor from 1502 to 1520. He appears to have been a strong and resourceful ruler who governed wisely and made a number of important conquests, adding greatly to the Aztec Empire which reached its zenith during his reign. (See map of the Aztec Empire showing the various stages of its expansion.)

But the most memorable part of his reign was, of course, the manner of its ending and the loss of the Aztec Empire:

In 1519, the Spanish explorer, Hernàn de Cortez (or Cortès) set out from Veracruz to explore the interior of Mexico (of which he knew almost nothing) and, if possible, establish some sort of authority over the natives that he might find there. En route, he met and formed an alliance with the Tlaxcaltecs, a nation conquered by the Aztecs and deeply resentful of their rule. The Tlaxcaltecs were only too happy to throw in their lot with the curious white-faced strangers who seemed to offer the best chance they might have to liberate themselves from



the Empire. The united Spanish and Tlaxcaltec forces then advanced on Tenochtitlàn.

Contemporary sources are unanimous in recording that Moctezuma received Cortez with great courtesy and generosity, showering rich gifts upon him. But they diverge in their interpretation of these actions. Some see his very deferential treatment of an aggressive and belligerent visitor as a sign of weakness. Others assert that he was simply trying to bribe the Spanish to leave. Yet others point out that, in Aztec culture, the bestowing of rich gifts was a sign of superiority and a means of asserting domination over the receiver of the gifts. We will never know which, if any, of these interpretations is correct: but anyone who has travelled will recognize that this first encounter between two very different civilizations was surely fraught with endless possibilities for cultural, social, and linguistic misunderstanding.

What seems clear, however, is that Moctezuma made no attempt to drive back the newcomers. This very proficient, war-like conqueror became strangely submissive in the presence of the foreigners and fell into an inexplicable, Hamlet-like passivity, apparently unable to make any firm decisions or adopt any vigorous course of action.

He allowed Cortez and his entourage to set up residence inside his palace, and take charge, one by one, of the levers of power. Soon, he found himself a prisoner in his own residence.

One explanation proposed for this rather startling behavior, is that the religion of the Aztecs preached that Quetzalcoatl, a vengeful, Messiah-like God who had reigned over the Aztecs in the distant past, would return in the form of a pale-faced, bearded man. It was written that the return of Quetzalcoatl would announce the end of the Aztec Empire.



Not surprisingly, Moctezuma saw Cortez as the reincarnation of Quetzalcoatl. One has only to read the Old Testament to gauge the reaction of the devout Emperor in the presence of a supposed divinity.

Moreover, the year 1519 marked the end of a 52-year cycle in the Aztec calendar, a time expected to produce dire events and apocalyptic upheavals.

It is easy, from the vantage point of the 21st century, to look condescendingly on the naïveté of the Aztecs, but in the context of their own experience, it must have seemed obvious that this was the fulfillment of divine prophecy.

Having firmly established his authority in Tenochtitlàn, Cortez set out on new conquests in the vicinity, leaving Pedro de Alvarado in charge in his absence. This officer was a rash, short-tempered administrator who quickly alienated the Aztec nobles whom Cortez had labored so hard to propitiate. Mistaking a particularly spirited festival for a revolt, Alvarado massacred a number of Aztec nobles, opening direct hostilities between the Aztecs and the Spaniards for the first time.

Cortez returned to find the Spanish garrison under siege from the enraged Aztec chiefs. He had no choice but to beat a retreat into the nearby countryside. But there, he decisively defeated Moctezuma's nobles and was able to return to the city as an undisputed conqueror. Moctezuma himself, having been taken hostage by the Spanish, was unable to take any part in these last events. By this time, he had lost all credibility with his own

resolution in people, who reproached him with lack of courage and dealing with the invaders. According to one historian, his spirit was completely broken. Under pressure from Cortez, he accepted Christianity and meekly swore allegiance to the King of Spain.

We have no definite historical evidence regarding the end of Moctezuma, but one probably legendary account records the following:

At one point in their continuing efforts to pacify the rebellious population of Tenochtitlàn, the Spaniards prevailed upon Moctezuma to appear on the balcony of the palace and appeal to his people to lay down their arms. The people, scandalized by their Emperor's abject collaboration with the enemy, pelted him with rocks. Mortally wounded, he was taken to his bedchamber where he died shortly thereafter.

Given the dearth of concrete information and the legendary quality of what does exist, it is difficult to come to any sort of judgment on the reign and the character of Moctezuma. It is not easy to reconcile the image of the strong, aggressive conqueror who brought the Aztec Empire to its maximum breadth and power with the hesitant, almost timid ruler who surrendered his realm to foreign invaders without a fight.

Some historians talk of his weak and vacillating nature, comparing him to Hamlet in his indecision or to the unfortunate Louis XVI in his elemental weakness. But it is also possible to see a man of his own time and civilization, a man possessing strengths and weaknesses, who was simply unable to fathom, and hence unable to react to an unfamiliar culture and a technology beyond his experience.





Come on Down, its clean and Warm !

by Freda Rumford

Recently there has been a glut of bad press about the happenings in Mexico, the fights between the police or army and the various gangs. The death threats (sometimes carried out) against prominent politicians, reporters and high ranking officials and the death threats against poorly paid local policemen and their families if they don't turn a blind eye. We have been flooded with questions from worried friends up north, who have seasonal homes in Manzanillo, and wonder whether it is safe to come here any more and even more about whether it is advisable to drive down as usual.

In turn, we, who spend more time in Mexico look at the horror stories of gang wars and deaths of innocent bystanders in Toronto, Vancouver, Calgary, L.A, and San Francisco and "Littletown" USA or Canada let alone what is happening in Indonesia, Iraq and Afghanistan and thank our lucky stars that we live where we feel safe. That's right folks, where we feel safe!!!!

Let's put everything into perspective here! How are you impacted in your home life by the drive by shootings and posturing for supremacy by the Asian gangs who roam the streets in cities up north? Does it alarm you in Vancouver that there is a drive by shooting in Winnipeg or for Pete's sake in Saskatoon? Do you stay home and not go grocery shopping because although you live in Little Rock, Arkansas, there is trouble in Miami? I don't think so, they are thousands of miles apart. You go about your daily business as usual and there are places where you won't go after dark as well as some you wouldn't venture near even in the daytime but you carry on with your normal day to day life of work, play and home. The children go to school or to baseball practices where parents can get ugly with the coach or children but it does not impact your own life or make you feel unsafe. Even at school the children are subjected nowadays to dangers unheard of in years gone by. You lock doors at night often with several locks and deadbolts and don't answer the door after England. 8 p.m. if you live in sleepy old Colchester,

In Manzanillo, there are few places we cannot walk at night, even a lone woman.

Seldom do we feel threatened by other people and if we actually were, the local Mexican people would come to our side and help more times than not. Nowhere in the press is this mentioned. No where in the press does it say that people stop to help if you have difficulty understanding Spanish in a hospital and that total strangers will come forward to explain what required. No where does it say that when a member of the foreign community needing urgent medical service or blood transfusions, within hours there are sufficient volunteers both foreign and Mexican to fill that need.

Such was the case recently when a local Canadian needed many blood transfusions of a rare type, inside hours more than 5000 people had been contacted for help and a goodly amount of those had responded and the situation eventually taken care of. It did not make the International Press because it wasn't violent. This was people coming together for a good cause and to help someone in desperate trouble. This is not to say the person was miraculously cured but the desperation level was attended to, his wife assured that many caring friends were pulling with her in an attempt to save his life. The miracle here was that in very little time thousands of people were contacted and responded. The community came together in a way none of us had experienced before!!

Here, in Mexico, we feel far less threatened by things which are totally different to those we have grown up with and are in many cases not only seem very foreign but very safe. We do not feel alarmed because someone is a little later in coming home than anticipated and expect that they have got into serious difficulties as is often the case in our hometowns up north. We do not have wholesale muggings and attacks on women, children and the elderly as is the case up north or people bursting into our homes as a general rule. It is obviously advisable to always be aware of ones surroundings regardless of where one might be, at home or away, but there are few people living in Manzanillo, in the State of Colima, Mexico who say they do not feel safe here. There are various unpleasant incidents which occur but they are rare. There have also been many incidents of violence here in the past few

weeks but they, in general, are not at times when ordinary citizens are about and continuing on there daily work. And each time the general public is not the target but someone wearing a "black hat" is.

It is always possible to be in the wrong place at the wrong time or see something that one shouldn't and pay the price but that can happen anywhere. But thank goodness we live in Mexico where hospitality, nice, honest people and safety abounds.

Obey the 10 Commandments:

- 1) Don't drive out of town in the hours of darkness (even dawn or dusk) be aware of your surroundings and who surrounds you.
- 2) Be aware that the principal places that might possibly be unsafe to drive are the border states, make sure that you get through those states as quickly as possible and plan your route to use both the toll roads and find a hotel room by 4 in the afternoon if you have to overnight in those states.
- 3) Don't wear flashy or expensive jewellery that can catch the attention of the wrong person.
- 4) If lodging on a main street, draw curtains before putting on the light so that strangers cannot see your belongings.
- 5) Don't leave valuables or purchases inside the car but in the trunk.
- 6) Don't leave money, wallets or purses lying around and
- 7) Don't invite strangers into your home.
- 8) If something seems wrong, trust your instincts and get elsewhere quickly.
- 9) If a stranger tells you solicitously that a bird has messed your clothes, call a friend to check, and watch your pocket. These are thieves and pickpockets.
- 10) Generally Mexicans do not expect rides, they walk everywhere, do not pick up hitchhikers, **ANYWHERE**.

Are these any different to the rules used in places where we grew up (apart from driving in the dark)?

Finally, have a good journey, drive carefully enjoy the countryside and come home soon.





Comings and Goings.....

Linda Breun

This is the start of a new column for Manzanillo Sun. It is my hope that we have many more arrivals to report to you than we have departures.

Arrivals

Golussi Gelato & Cafe

Plaza Los Gaviotas Local 1

Across from Soriana near the tiangis they sell Italian gelato in cones or as sundaes with your choice of toppings. This writer has sampled and was very satisfied.

Inside Soriana

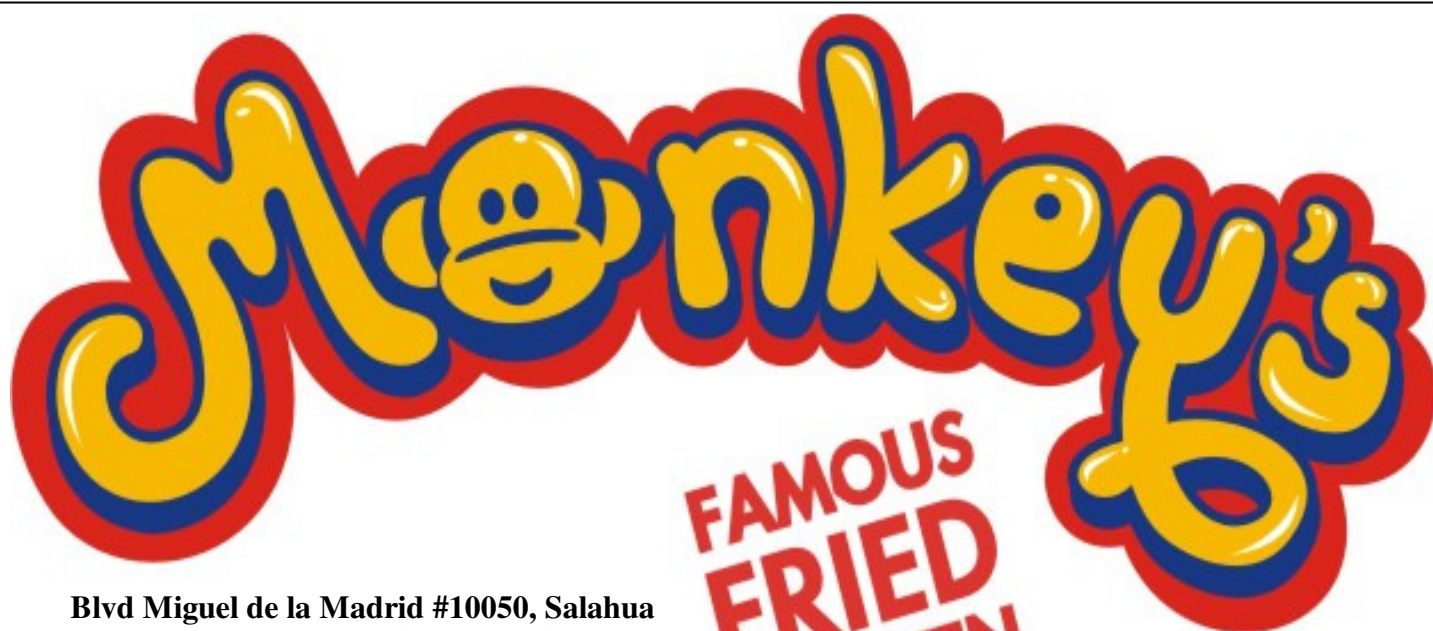
In front of the registers is now a kiosk for **Bing Ice Cream**, probably the best in Manzanillo. This must be the replacement for the ice cream counter in Subway that is now gone.

Also there is a new **Salad Kiosk** where they make salads with ingredients of your choosing.

Sally Beauty Supply is also just inside the south entrance by the bank machines. For all you ladies who like to shop for beauty products, they have a full line of nail and hair supplies plus other miscellaneous items that will fill all of

There are still rumblings of a Sam's Club coming to town but no one seems to know exactly where. I have driven around and can see no sign of any big construction.

If anyone hears of any new restaurants, shops or services etc. Please email this writer at lbgringa@gmail.com.



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Terry Sovil

Obregon Villa Pershing Patton

Villa counted on support from the USA but they



supported the Carranza government. He felt USA involvement would discredit Carranza helping him regain popularity. He vowed revenge and with his "pistoleros" launched raids along the USA-Mexico border frightening residents living in Texas, New Mexico and Arizona border towns. USA President Wilson ordered troops deployed to Texas and New Mexico. General John J. Pershing led the mission along with a young lieutenant George S. Patton.



Troops along the border deterred Villa's attacks but Villa continued to murder USA citizens in Mexico. One of the worst incidents occurred on January 11, 1916 when they attacked a train at Santa Ysabel and removed 17 Texas mining engineers invited by the Mexican government to reopen mines near Chihuahua City. They were executed and the bodies stripped and mutilated. One feigned death and was able to roll into brush and escape. When the people of El Paso learned of the incident the city was placed under martial law to prevent residents crossing into Juarez for revenge on innocent Mexicans.

At 2:30am on March 9, 1916 Villa and 500 "Villistas" attacked the 13th U.S. Cavalry near Columbus, New Mexico. The cavalry, caught by surprise, their rifles chained and locked in gun racks, mounted a response. During Villas retreat he stopped in Columbus and for three hours there was fighting and mayhem. President Wilson organized a force under Pershing to enter Mexico and stop Pancho Villa. Carranza reluctantly agreed with the stipulation that USA troops would not engage regular Mexican troops. This stipulation hampered the effort which failed to catch Villa after more than a year.

Carranza was assassinated on May 20, 1920 and Huerta became the interim president of Mexico. Huerta negotiated



Pancho Villa's bullet-ridden Dodge in the Pancho Villa Museum in Chihuahua, Chihuahua, Mexico

retirement with Villa giving him a hacienda in Chihuahua.

His retirement was short. Villa was gunned down on July 20, 1923 in Parral in his 1919 Dodge roadster by seven gunmen that fired 150 shots in two minutes. 16 bullets struck Villa's body and 4 hit his head. The shooters were given light sentences and speculation is that someone in the Mexican government had him shot because he had become an "embarrassment".

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The Port of Manzanillo

Part 3

Terry Sovil

As you have seen, running a port is a complex job. Pursuing a degree in Port Management would find you taking courses in: Maritime Transport and Trade, Maritime Economics and Business, Shipping Law, Transport Operations, Research Methods and Maritime Logistics. Shipping logistics is the new key to success!

Many do not realize that the current Port was dredged and an opening to the sea was dug close to the La Posada hotel in Las Brisas. *Bart Varelman* writes about this in his book, *The Innkeeper*. What is now the Cruise Ship dock was the only dock in early years. Now we are near completion of a dedicated cruise ship terminal. The Port currently covers a total area of 437 hectares (1,079.8 acres) with 13 port terminals handling a variety of cargo.

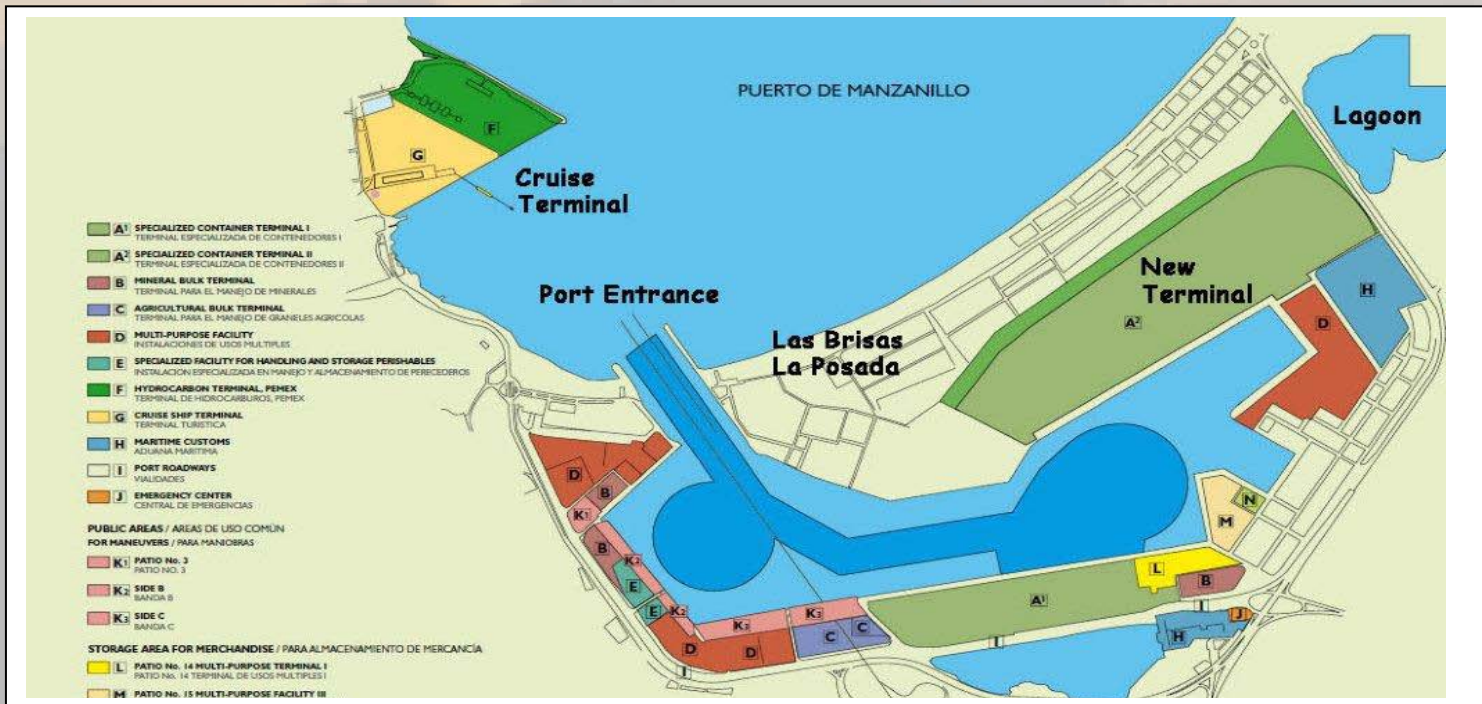
[Terms from previous articles re-used here!] Concession holders for terminal and berth space include SSA Mexico (USA) with two quays, 25 hectare storage yard, 9 gantry cranes, 26 rubber tire gantries and 324 reefer plugs. TIMSA, Terminal Internacional de Manzanillo, S.A. de C.V. is a multipurpose terminal and handles containers, agricultural products, cement and sheet steel. OCUPA,

Operadora de la Cuenca del Pacifico S.A. de C.V. is a 100% Mexican private company and embraces customs, shipping agents, importers and towage companies.

Port Operators need constant awareness of changes in the local environment and the industry. Container size increases and container ships grow for larger capacity. Ports must grow to handle larger ships. New gantry cranes to lift cargo? Expand the number of berths? Is your computerized yard management system able to scale? New equipment and systems means training new personnel.

A high priority for Felipe Calderón is making Mexico a world-class logistics platform leveraging its geographic location. Currently, Manzanillo handles 46% of all containerized cargo arriving in Mexico and 68% of all cargo from the Pacific. Francisco Llamas González of API, Port Administration of *Manzanillo*, described how they have worked to forge international alliances with: The Port of Shanghai, The People's Republic of China and the cities of Dallas and Houston, TX for NAFTA corridor points of entry into the USA.

The high visibility construction is a new Port Terminal for containers. The Port is surrounded by the community making expansion difficult. The Specialized Container Terminal II, or "Northern Region project", should begin operation in 2012. This terminal will **double** the port's operating capacity! This expansion is anticipated to make Manzanillo Mexico's #1



Port and improve international ranking. It will allow the Port to handle vessels up to 8,000 TEUs where currently it can handle ships of only 5,800 TEUs. It should create 1,500 jobs directly tied to the Port and 4,500 indirectly.

Manzanillo and the Port have a 90 year history of cooperation with no social discord. The expansion was approved and the Port makes every effort to remain a good neighbor. Mangrove trees that protect habitat and shoreline are being grown in a special greenhouse to replace many that were removed. The bridge work by the Auditorium on Madrid Blvd will result in new, improved driving surfaces and create a link from the stagnant lagoon to the ocean to improve the lagoon.

The Port of Manzanillo has been recognized for contributions to foreign trade, environmental concerns and transparency in its actions. The Chilean Association of Exporters gave recognition for services rendered to Mexico's horticultural sector. API was commended by the Federal Institute of Public Information Access. API was given a commendation by the Ocean Conservancy for work in the 2004 Campaign for Clean Coasts.

With other amenities available in Manzanillo it pairs well with the Port. The airport is only 45 minutes from the city center and it handles 3,700 flights per year (43,000 international passengers, 64,000 domestic passengers and 22,000 charter passengers). Manzanillo has first rate hotels (88 hotels, 4,424 beds). We have a pleasant climate and tax incentives from the State of Colima for new businesses.

The federal government helps assure the Port of Manzanillo will keep pace with international demands in the years ahead. Many experts regard our Port as the "principal port" by virtue of location for imports from Asia and proximity to the key industrial markets of Mexico.



Francisco Llamas Gonzalez API





Only in Mexico!!

Tommy Clarkson

all in the same week might you experience . . .

. . . while waiting for your muffler to get fixed, ending up playing with your mechanic's children and a baby *Tejón*.

. . . seeing a guy trimming his toenails with a foot and a half long machete.

. . . while enjoying a drink on a beach seeing a stampede of cattle race past pursued by men on horseback.

. . . dogs welcomed with their owners in most restaurants and certainly those that are on the beach.

. . . might you use the three words "burritos," "banos" and "baracho" all in the same place - possibly in the same sentence.

. . . could three guys named Jesus cut your hair, water your plants and clean your pool.

. . . your doctor spending the first half an hour talking about your family, your tropical garden and mutually appreciated eating establishments before inquiring of your health.

. . . the realization that you should - at no time - expect any particular product to be at any specific store at any given time.

. . . a car coming toward you on a one way street racing pell mell in reverse.

. . . it not being considered abnormal conduct for someone sitting next to you in an outdoor beach palapa restaurant to pull a snake out of his knapsack and start playing with it.

. . . can you drive down the road, note a *Topas* Sign, carefully slow down, only to find out none exists in the area marked, hence re-accelerating to cruising speed just in time to hit one

larger than a '49 Hudson that's not marked nor painted yellow.

. . . it not surprising to walk into your bathroom and find it already occupied by a large green iguana.

. . . total entertainment, during the red stop light, in the middle of town, by a juggler, fire eater or clown.

. . . is any prominently placed clock on the wall in a bank or hospital not necessary expected to be working.

. . . might one set but a few feet outside of an immaculately clean, surgically sanitized, hospital operating room putting on repellent and swatting mosquitoes because a few feet away there is no roof in that part of the hospital.

. . . can you expect to find in the grocery store two distinct types of shoppers: Those who slowly stroll - and often simply stop to talk - in the middle of the aisle thwarting traffic or those who race amuck and who will run you down like a lame dog in the street.

. . . is it possible to walk into a store and buy two tampons, two diapers and two aspirins and, if you wanted, only one cigarette and a shot of home brew tequila.

. . . will a gecko fall from the ceiling onto your computer keyboard and you pause only long enough to watch him scurry off.

. . . might you engage in a delightful, fully animated, conversation with whomever happens to be in their vehicle next to you at a stop light.

. . . is it perfectly normal to grow - within a few feet of your kitchen - one's own pineapples, coconuts, bananas, grape-fruit, papayas, mangos, limes, lemon grass and cilantro.

. . . could you shake a scorpion out of the same shoe early in the morning that you will use twenty seconds later to kill a

cockroach the size of a Volkswagen in your bathroom.

. . . can every crevice of your heart warm to the wonderful smile of recognition when the short, stout, almost completely white haired, 80-something lady named Carmen who bags groceries for tips recognizes you at the market.

. . . is a half way acceptable excuse to the policeman stopping you for driving on the wrong side of the road the fact that while coming home from Puerto Vallarta you'd swerved to the left in order to avoid running over an Iguana, while - at the same time rubbing your eyes with the hand that you'd been dipping into the Habanera snack chips, hence painfully blurring your eyesight causing you to not see the pothole which caused a major crotch slosh of the beer and Clamato michelada (he didn't need to know you'd prepared - squeezed lime and all - while driving) that you'd been holding between your legs.



"Any who wish to share their personal 'Only in Mexico' stories may submit them to Tommy for possible inclusion in ensuing columns on this topic by e-mailing him at olabrisa@gmail.com."

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by Vivian Molick

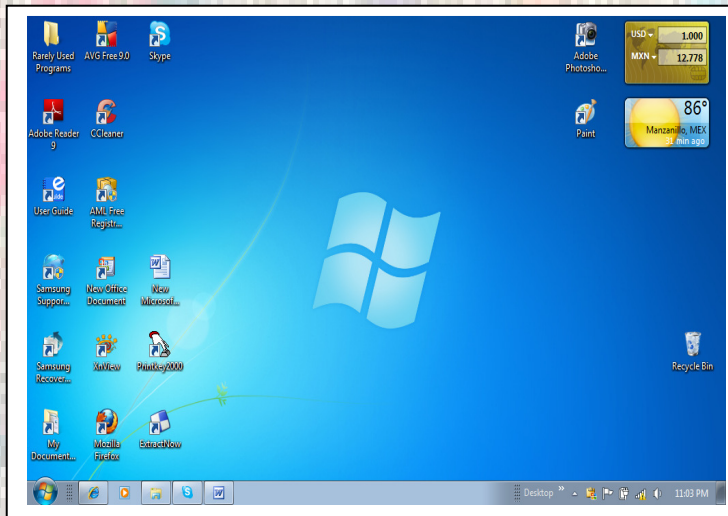
Computer Terms....

I came across a web site the other day that had a list of computer terms. I thought there may be a lot of you that would like to know the definition of these terms so when your computer geek (or geeky friend) talks to you about computers you will have some idea of what they are talking about. Here are some terms you may hear listed in alphabetical order:

Boot: This means to start up your computer.

Browser: A browser is a program that you use to "browse" the web. If you're at your computer and you get on the internet, you are using a browser. You cannot go to any web sites on the internet without a browser. Some examples of browsers are Internet Explorer, Firefox, Opera, Google Chrome, and Avant.

Desktop: The desktop on your computer is the screen (monitor) that contains folders, icons, files, etc. It's like a file system. You can arrange them any way you like or even get rid of them by 'throwing' them in the Recycle Bin (like a garbage can). Here's a picture of my desktop... of course, yours will probably not look exactly like mine.



Download: When you download something, you are transferring data from another computer to yours, usually over the internet. You are going to *receive* the data.

Font: A font is the style of lettering used for text. For example, if you want to compose a letter that looks like it has been written in calligraphy, you might want to use a

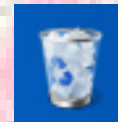
font like Monotype Corsiva instead of the one I'm using here, called Times New Roman. Also, there's a huge selection of fonts that you can download for free off of the internet.

Hard Drive: A hard drive is where all of your files, pictures, videos, programs, etc. are stored. (Think about it like a CD/DVD-RW that is a permanent piece of equipment inside your computer and can hold enormous amounts of information... it's not exactly, but similar). The amount of how much stuff you want to store on your computer will determine how big the size your hard drive will need to be. For example, if you are a video editor, you need a very large hard drive (videos can be very big files). If you are only using your computer for; the internet, email, and do your taxes, you don't need a very big hard drive. When you hear about people "losing their hard drive" it means that they have lost all of the data that was stored on their computer.

Icon: An icon on your computer screen is a very small image that represents an object or program that you have on your computer. Examples of icons...



Internet Explorer



Recycle Bin

Link: When you click on <http://www.microsoft.com>, you have clicked on a link.

A link is the address of wherever you want to go. The link can be to a file, an image, or a video as well as a website.

Operating System or O/S: An operating system (O/S) is the main program (software) that manages the hardware and software of the computer which allows you to use it. Operating systems you may have could include Windows 95, Windows 98, Windows XP, Linux, Windows Vista, and the new Windows 7.

PC: It's your computer! The abbreviation stands for 'personal computer'.

Reboot: This means to *restart* your computer

Search Engine: If someone tells you to "Google" it, they are telling you to go look it up on a search engine (in this

Manzanillo's Lifestyle E-Magazine

case, it's Google). A search engine is a program you use while on the internet that searches for documents with information based on the criteria it is given and returns

the results. For instance, if I wanted to find some good recipes for making taco casserole, I would type 'taco casserole recipes' in the space provided and the search engine will return pages of web sites I can choose to go to check out recipes. Some other search engines you can use are: Yahoo, AskJeeves, or Altavista. If you want a list of *search engines*, you can go "Google" it!

Upload: When you upload something, you are going to transfer it from your computer to someone else's, usually over the internet. You are going to *give* it to someone else.

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Letters to the Editor

Fantasy, Magic, Tall Tales and Titillation

How about a monthly short section that deals with the rumors that always seem to be circulating when we are down there. I'm sure many of us "snowbirds" are interested in some hard info about them. Possible subjects:

- Many of us have heard about a drug related shooting in Manzanillo where (2) policemen were killed. Do you have any details on it?

- Is the Puerto Santiago project (La Boquita) on or off? We've heard rumors both ways.

- There was a rumor that a McDonalds was going to be built in the large empty lot (formerly a nursery) across from Marta's Deposito. Any truth to that one?

- What about the rumor that a Sam's Warehouse is coming to the area?

Thanks,
Mike Cain

Hello Mike, Thank you for your suggestions.

- We too have heard all the rumours and also have been told that sod has already been turned for the Sam's Club. Unfortunately nobody can decide which piece of sod on which street.

- The Santiago project is still a go today. Tomorrow, who knows?? This is a land of "Fantasy" & "Magic". It is fantasy in the initial stages when plans are being drawn, enthusiasm high and magic if it happens!!

- We have not heard of a Macdonald's yet but the land has been cleared at the nursery in preparation for what? The land and large lot next to the ruined hospital on Blvd. M de la Madrid has also been cleared.

Is the bank finally going to release the hospital plot and the city forgive 15 years of taxes as well making a huge plot of land available? The plot (no pun intended) thickens!!

- On a serious note, the chief of police and one of his aides were shot to death one morning at the Police precinct at Las Garzas. Other policemen have also been killed recently when a grenade was thrown at a police station in the early morning hours. The army has now come into the picture in hunting the criminals down. The area by the "Cinco de Mayo" park in Las Garzas is

still cordoned off and it is difficult to even get to the Motor Vehicles area behind the police station. Police trucks drive around constantly in twos and threes. With the riders in the back wearing bullet proof vests and face helmets and guns at the ready. We have also heard that 20 policemen in Manzanillo have given in their notices. This, we do not know for sure.

The difficulties at Tenacatita with the land grab including not only ejido land but that also that in a Bank trust is well covered in the Guadalajara Reporter and with an article in the Vancouver Sun. It is true; it did happen and will take years to sort out with possibly no happy ending for the foreign purchasers.

You are right, it is Rumour Ville here and I will bring these subjects and your suggestion up at our next writers meeting. Thank you again for offering them.

Freda



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CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Compiled by Darcy Reed

MONTHLY THROUGHOUT THE YEAR

Mujeres Amigas Luncheons

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

WEEKLY THROUGHOUT THE YEAR

Thirsty Thursdays – Manzamigos

When: To be announced each week
When: 6.00 p.m.
Contact: Jack Akers: manzamigos@gmail.com
To join Manzamigos: Nathan Peach: manzmbr@gmail.com

MONTHLY THROUGHOUT THE YEAR

ARA meetings

When: 3rd Wednesday of each month at 11:30am
Where: Hotel Playa de Santiago
Contact: Debi Teter 044-314-376-5974 ara.mzlo@yahoo.com

October 2010

October 11 – Monday - CANADIAN THANKSGIVING

(Traditionally, the 2nd Monday of October)

Oct. 11 - World Day of Hunger, the Manzanillo food bank is having a collection until Oct, 16 - kick off at 10:30 downtown. The goal is 10 tons of food.

October 31 – Sunday - Daylight Savings Time ENDS;
“fall back” one hour

Classified Ads

Household Items for sale. Refrigerator and stove for sale, \$1800 each. 2 individual mattresses and bases in very good shape, mattresses have been covered with plastic, about 1 yr. old. Bases are 500 pesos each, mattresses 1,000 pesos each. 1 King sized mattress in very good shape, for \$1,800 pesos
Call or e-mail Bev or Don if interested.
don_roth@sil.org or 314 336 4627

Known as....KITTEN SEASON. Buzz came home with a very cute, perky and friendly little female black and white kitten this morning, about 8 weeks old or so. Needs a home. ARA will sterilize it for free when its 12 weeks old.

We have 6 already, plus Sunshine the neighbor kitty who desperately wants to live here too, but belongs to my neighbors and works in their store as mascot and mouser. We REALLY cannot have another cat so please contact me if you can adopt her or know somebody looking who might.

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T'S GALLEY

AT SCHONERS RESTAURANT

FRESH ENSALADA DE PASTA

It has been a long hot and muggy summer so with one more month to go so something easy, fresh and yummy is just what the Doctor ordered to combat the rest of this very typical rainy season.

INGREDIENTS

- 1 package (16 ounces) penne, rotini or fusilli pasta.
- 5 cups assorted vegetables, such as broccoli florets, sliced carrots, bell pepper strips, cherry tomato halves and red onion slices
- 1 bottle (8 ounces) Italian or ranch salad dressing
- 1/4 cup mayonese

DIRECTIONS

1. Cook pasta as directed on package. Rinse under cold water; drain well.
2. Place pasta and vegetables in large salad bowl. Add dressing and seasoning; toss gently to coat. Cover.
3. Refrigerate at least 4 hours or until ready to serve. Toss before serving.

Makes 10 (1-cup) servings.
 Prep Time: 15 minutes
 Cook Time: 15 minutes
 Refrigerate: 4 hours
 Enjoy with baked corn tostadas



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