

Asociación de Artes This Season

By: Christine Courtright

The 2017-18 season has been a busy one for the Asociación de Artes (AdA). Another great season of the East Capers Magazine featured the literary talents of local authors as well as reports on all of the latest news and events of the area. The AdA also launched its new website which will keep subscribers/readers up to date on the latest news and events of the association.

During the month of October 2017 school supplies were distributed to 19 area schools. On December 2, 2017 the AdA hosted its annual fall baseball camp in Los Barriles and invited all area youth to take part in this event. Because of the baseball camps put on by AdA, Los Barriles has its first own little league team, the *Bandidos*, coached by Oscar, Pako, Earl and Doug. Their season starts in April, so get ready to watch some great little league ball in LB! The following day, the AdA hosted its annual Holiday Art Show at Colina del Sol. Good weather prevailed, many shoppers came out to make holiday purchases and a good time was had by all. Early February was the Art Studio tour that saw attendance increased by 25% largely due to out of area attendees.

All along, the plans were being made for the upcoming 25th Anniversary of Festival de Artes. The event was destined to be a very special extravaganza in large part due to the newly formed team prepared to take on the task. AdA welcomed back Jamie Kepler to help with the artists and planning, Mayor Francis Olachea helped with our arrangements for the entertainment and the AdA was so pleased to with the local school's participation and performances – face it, the kids were so darn cute in their outfits! The dancers of La Paz Ministry of Cultural performed three different dances with full costume changes, each dance representing a different region of Mexico. What a show the crowds were treated to from the Cultural dancers! A special surprise was presented by the 'Monster Kids' from Loreto who entertained the crowds with their show stopping music. Local musicians, Laura and John Benwards' vocal

talent was a welcome addition to the musical ambience which just floated through the festival grounds as a pleasing addition to the atmosphere.



AdA changed up the grounds layout, had some excellent artists many who were first-time participants. Many of our favorite long time supporting artists and a few revendedores returned with their fares. In addition to all of the original art work, a great variety of food and drink was provided by regional restaurants and cafes. Even the weather was perfect, with just enough wind to keep us cool.

Taking place throughout the day were raffles and silent auctions. Volunteer Janet King was instrumental in securing some wonderful treasures for the event. Funds generated from the sales of the tickets and silent auction will provide the much-needed school supplies to finish out the academic year and help support the Semana Santa sports tournaments as well as the Cursos de Verano summer school program.



Los Barriles Elementary School Student Dancers

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In addition to space in the printed version, your color ad appears in the online version at no additional cost. You can download the 2017/18 Advertising Kit by visiting our website at: www.eastcapearts.com

Tax-deductible Contributions to the Asociación de Artes

The Asociación de Artes del Mar de Cortez A.C., Los Barriles, B.C. Sur, Mexico is a legal non-profit Mexican corporation not affiliated with any other organization, association, club or business.

The Asociación is in full compliance with the terms of the NAFTA agreement of January 1, 1994. As such, contributions made to the Asociación de Artes are tax-deductible in the United States, Mexico and Canada. For more information visit: www.eastcapearts.com or the NAFTA Website at: <http://www.ustr.gov/trade-agreements/free-trade-agreements/north-american-free-trade-agreement-nafta>.

Volunteers Needed!

The Asociación de Artes needs volunteers to help support their programs that bring the arts to the local communities and the schools. To learn more about these programs, visit: www.eastcapearts.com. If you would like to volunteer, send an email to: eastcapearts@gmail.com.

Call for Articles

East Capers is looking for fiction and true stories about our region and items that affect our residents. If you are interested in submitting articles, recipes, stories or your personal experiences in Baja, email your 1,000-words or less article to: eastcapersmagazine@gmail.com

Thank You!

This publication is possible with the help of the board members of the Asociación de Artes and members of the community.

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The opinions expressed within the articles in East Capers are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the Asociación de Artes del Mar de Cortez A.C.

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AdA Continued From page 1

This event would never take place if it were not for the many hours spent by the many volunteers who are responsible for the success of the event. Special thanks to Brian Cummings whose untold hours of service have been commendable throughout the history of this event and B Robertson who worked on several aspects of the event. The Festival de Artes could never exist without its many volunteers who give timelessly to make this event the great success that it is. Thank you again!

As the 2017-18 season of the AdA comes to a close and new plans for the next season begin, new volunteers are always needed. The Association has plans to reinstate next season its Saturday Art Program for the local children. The two-hour classes take place once a month October - May and the program depends on volunteers for its success. If interested, please contact the AdA.

For more information on the Asociación de Artes and the volunteer opportunities available, check out the website, www.eastcapearts.com or send email to eastcapearts@gmail.com Area artists are encouraged to become involved with one of our events to showcase and sell their works!



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La Paz Ministry of Cultural Dancers

Baja Shakespeare Thanks You!

By Kim Scholefield

Baja Shakespeare would like to take this opportunity to thank our loyal audiences for enthusiastically cheering us on with your laughter and applause. Thank you to our Friends of Shakespeare for your continued support, to our Playbill Sponsors and to the many volunteers! This show was not possible without the time and effort of so many!

We hope our audiences have had time to reflect and answer the questions posed in THE BAJA SHAKE UP! Is true talent something that can be learned or is it a gift? Do you love the artist or the man/woman? Do artists create their own moral universe? Is your art worth living for? We're not sure we have the answers either, but we sure had fun exploring!

What will next year bring? We are reading scripts and have selected dates for 2019: Opening Friday March 8, Saturday 9, Sunday 10, Wednesday 13, Thursday 14, Friday 15 and Closing Saturday March 16. Stay tuned!

We are always looking for new folks to join our community theatre troupe, talent would be helpful, but not necessary! We will be looking for both on & off stage: lighting technician, costumers, actors, dancers! If you have interest in being a part of Baja Shakespeare, please email Kim: tyfield1@hotmail.com

Whew! I was right! This is a lot more comfortable!



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Monte Carlo Night 2018

By: Jill Borggreve

East Cape Guild held their popular Monte Carlo Night March 23 at Buena Vista Beach Resort. Approximately 150 happy people played blackjack or craps to earn the chance to bid on prizes, many of which were donated by local vendors. Lots of volunteers were required and the community, as usual, came out to help. The event included a wonderful Mexican buffet, raffle gifts and many silent auction gifts as well. Of course, the real winners are the students that will receive scholarships next year. Over \$7500 USD was raised at this event.

The East Cape Guild is a non-profit organization that provides educational scholarships for children of the East Cape region, from south of Caduaño, El Triunfo in the west, and El Cardonal to the north. The Mexican government provides free education only through the 9th grade, any further education becomes the responsibility of the family. It costs approximately \$500 USD per year to support a high school student's tuition and transportation, a cost that is simply out of reach for these families. For many of these children 9th grade is the last they will complete.

The Guild currently has 204 students attending high school with a scholarship. Scholarship applications have just been received for next school year. The applications will be reviewed and scholarships based on merit and financial need

awarded in a ceremony at the cancha in Los Barriles on May 19, 2018. Mark your calendar for this heartwarming event.

Watch the Baja Pony Express for details. The East Cape Guild is an entirely volunteer organization. We welcome new members who want to help these students while having fun and meeting others in the community. Contact Jill Borggreve at b2jborg@gmail.com for more information or to make a donation.





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Mexican General Elections

From Wikipedia

General elections are scheduled to be held in Mexico on 1 July 2018. Voters will elect a new president to serve a six-year term, 500 members of the Chamber of Deputies and 128 members of the Senate. The members of the legislature elected on this date will be the first allowed to run for re-election in subsequent elections.

Incumbent president Enrique Peña Nieto is not eligible for a second term according to Mexico's constitution.

The National Electoral Institute officially declared the process started in September 8, 2017. It is said to be 'the biggest election in Mexican history' because the number of public charges in dispute, and also because the same day of the general elections there is going to be local elections in 30 out of 32 states.

This is one that all expat residents need to watch. Here is the listing of the major candidates listing as running.

Ricardo Anaya Cortés (born 25 February 1979) is a Mexican lawyer and politician, member and former president of the National Action Party. Member of the PAN party.

Andrés Manuel López Obrador (born 13 November 1953), also known as **AMLO**, is a Mexican left-wing politician. He held the position of Head of Government of the Federal District from 2000 to 2005, before resigning in July 2005 to contend the 2006 presidential election, representing the Coalition for the Good of All, a coalition led by the Party of the Democratic Revolution (PRD) that includes the Convergence party and the Labor Party.

José Antonio Meade Kuribreña (born 27 February 1969) is a Mexican politician, economist, lawyer, and diplomat who has served as Secretary of Foreign Affairs, Secretary of Social Development, Secretary of Energy and twice as Secretary of Finance and Public Credit. On 27 November 2017, he resigned to his post as Secretary of Finance and Public Credit as he will seek the presidency in 2018 with the Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI)

Margarita Zavala de Calderón (born Margarita Ester Zavala Gómez del Campo on 25 July 1967) is a Mexican lawyer and politician. She is the wife of the former President of Mexico Felipe Calderón and served as the First Lady of Mexico during her husband's tenure. She has been registered as an independent candidate for the presidency of Mexico since 12 October 2017



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The History of the Peninsula

From Native Trails

Before the Europeans arrived, many indigenous tribes lived on the desert peninsula of Baja California.

The most important linguistic groups were the Yuman, Guaycura, Huchiti and Pericú. Most of these tribes are today extinct. Artifacts and records show that these groups were hunters and gatherers. A unique testimony of this lost culture are the cave paintings of Sierra San Francisco, which the UNESCO has declared a World Heritage.

After the central mainland of Mexico had been conquered by the conquistadors, new hearsays were spread of unbelievable riches in the West. In 1535, Hernán Cortés therefore sailed from the western coast of Mexico to what is now known as the bay of La Paz, where he founded the first small colony. Due to insufficient supply, it was abandoned in 1537. After many subsequent expeditions, Sebastián Vizcaíno explored the Pacific coast of Baja in 1602 and drew the first detailed map of the desert peninsula. Most of the names shown in that map are still in use today.

Isidro de Atondo y Antillón founded a colony at the site of today La Paz in 1683. Conflicts with the indigenous population forced him to transfer the colony to San Bruno. But this colony, too, had to be abandoned in 1685 due to almost two years of drought. The founder of the San Bruno colony had been accompanied by Father Eusebio Kino, and it was his insistence that caused the Jesuit order to take the decision for the Christianization of the peninsula 12 years later.



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In October 1697, Father Juan María Salvatierra landed on the eastern coast, accompanied by six soldiers and founded the mission of Loreto. This mission was the first Spanish settlement in California and served the Jesuits in the following seven decades as a basis to control Lower California. The undaunted Jesuits founded 23 missions in all, of which 14 were successful. The missionaries taught the Indians religious and agricultural matters. The missions were linked by paths and gathered information on the nature, geography and ethnology of the region.

It was, however, impossible for the priests to stem the "Columbian Exchange". Thousands of people succumbed to imported diseases and epidemics. To boot, revolts broke out so that the Jesuits position was markedly weakened. In the end, political intrigues in Spain resulted in the banning of the order from California in 1768. The Franciscans took over the missions in the same year. A short rebellion, however, made it clear to them that they had their task farther to the north of California. So, the Dominicans took over in 1773 and led the missions successfully. The Mexican government ordered all the missions to be secularized and transformed into communities

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History of Peninsula Continued:

in 1832. Many of the missions exist still today, whereas others are in ruin or under restoration. Being far from the central government in Mexico City, Baja California rapidly became a forgotten desert peninsula – a refuge for criminals, fortune-hunter, pirates, and smugglers.

In the Mexican-American war of 1846-1848, California was separated into Upper (now the US state of California) and Lower California. The separation was to bring about much tension between the USA and Mexico up to the present. The investment of American companies in mines and land greatly worried the Mexicans. The notorious American filibuster William Walker did nothing to dispel Mexican suspicion, when he surprised Baja and proclaimed himself president of a new US state. Although he was quickly removed from office, new rebels rose again and again to use the desert peninsula for their own goals.

The promulgation of prohibition in the USA led to an enormous boom in the Mexican border towns, in particular Tijuana. Thousands of Americans came to amuse themselves in a more liberal

environment. It was not before 1938 that Mexican president Cárdenas took action against the gamblers and outlaws in Baja. Agrarian and educational reforms were finally enforced and implemented. Under president Alemán, in 1952, the northern part of Baja became an official state of Mexico – Baja California (now often called Baja California Norte) with Mexicali as its capital. In 1974, the southern part of the peninsula became the 30th state of Mexico – Baja California Sur with La Paz as its capital. Each state



History Continued on page 8

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How to Peel a Mango

From "The Baja Survivor's Guide" 2005

The best way to peel a mango is not the oblivious way. Peeling it like apples leaves you with a slippery, frustrating handful which is apt to jump out of our grasp onto the floor. Nor can you cut a mango in half like a peach, since the flat, fibrous seed does not separate readily from the flesh.

Here is the method:

Take a good sharp knife. Put your mango on a cutting board and appraise it. The seed runs parallel to the flatter sides of the mango. A little practice will teach you to cut both cheeks of the mango off neatly, leaving very little attached to the seed.

Now you have two cheeks and the mango seed with a thin rim of mango left around it. Cut each cheek in two and then score it down to the skin in a tic-tac-toe design. Force the piece of mango flat on a cutting board. It will open up. Run the knife between the flesh and skin. Voila! Perfect mango cubed with a minimum of mess.



History of Peninsula Continued:

consists of several municipios (districts). In accordance with its cities, the state of Baja California, inhabited by almost three million people, is divided in the municipios of Tijuana, Ensenada, Tecate and Mexicali. The state of Baja California Sur with nearly 400,000 people consists of the municipios Mulegé, Loreto, Comondú, La Paz, and Los Cabos. There was much progress in the desert peninsula in the past 35 years. The incredible treasures of the sea and the enormous mineral resources have attracted important industries. The development of agricultural areas strikes the eye in many parts of the peninsula, and government subsidies have allowed many farmers' cooperatives to be established. The completion of the MEX-1 highway has eventually made it possible for travelers to drive through the whole of Baja California and to enjoy spectacular views.



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Joining Forces East Cape Health Center / H+

By: Char Wenger

As the Founder of East Cape Health Center, we are dedicated to improving the health and wellbeing of our community. Our accomplishments are impressive despite facing some of the most difficult conditions imaginable. While struggling to address the many medical needs of rural Mexico, we still manage to provide comprehensive medical and dental care to our local residents, visitors, relatives and new arrivals to the community. Most impressive is our program for children who are given the best medical and dental attention at no cost up to the age of 18. Meeting the basic needs of our small rural Mexican community can be challenging especially with the rapid growth of the East Cape. For generations families have been coming to Los Barriles and have passed down the best kept secrets of Baja to their heirs. Whether economic reasons or seeking a better place to live, a common thread is vocalized about what a unique, affordable place to live where the desert and mountains meet the ocean. As I watch my friends in real estate sell houses, property and second generation lots, I only imagine the medical and dental needs of all those migrating south. To meet the demands of the growth and development, we have formed a partnership with Hospital H+ in San Jose. In order to accommodate the many specialists who will be joining us, an expansion of the clinic is eminent. This will enable us to continue to offer the most comprehensive medical and dental services, with the convenience of receiving this care right here in the East Cape. Please contact Char if interested in making a tax deductible contribution for our growing community clinic that services us all 624-157-0081 charlene.wenger@gmail

The areas of our growth include: **1. Ophthalmology:** offering routine eye exams, testing for glaucoma and other eye disorders our two Board Certified Ophthalmologists - Dra. Isis Pamela Herrera and Dr. Arturo Alejandro Macias, a Retinal specialist are now available. An Optical Center will open to fabricate new glasses and repair your favorite old frames and scratched lenses. Again, with focus on the youth providing eye screening and glasses for children. **2. Cardiology:** Offering screening of new and old issues related to your heart. Dr. Jorge Berzunza has already begun his monthly trips to our clinic for cardiac evaluations and pacemaker checks. **3. OB/GYN Women's Preventative Health Program:** We will integrate pelvic and breast exams into our maternal women/child health program. Dra. Lauren Miranda will become part of our women's wellness program and prenatal care. Her expertise is in working with Ultrasound, one of our best non invasive diagnostic tools. **4. Chiropractic and Naturopathic Care:** Dr. Dennis O'Brien services offer a variety of natural treatment options utilizing our laboratory and X-Ray for accurate diagnosis. Orthopedics: Dr. Tom Vasileff, our visiting Ortho comes every Friday that he is in town, watch the BPE for notifications. He offers evaluations, treatment options and second options. **5. Dental**

Health: Routine annual exams with oral hygiene helps identify dental issues that may not yet be symptomatic. Other services provided by Dr. Sammy Ganelon Manriquez include crown and bridgework, whitening, fillers, and extractions. Dra Veronica Tuchmann brings her new specialty in Orthodontics to round out her whitening and great crown and bridge work. Our new association with Dr. Jose Luis Alonso will allow us to provide oral surgical cases, root canals and implants. The addition of a Digital Panoramic X-Ray is another necessary diagnostic tool, especially when dealing with braces, extractions and oral surgery cases. This almost eliminates the need to go the distance La Paz or Cabo for providers. Again, our children come at no cost. **6. Ambulance Services:** ALWAYS available to transport to the H+ or Salvatierra. **7. Primary and Emergency Care:** 24-hour emergency treatment with Dr. Enrique Toledo and Dr. Daniel Medina provides peace of mind when dealing with injuries and medical emergencies. Daily medical consultations and treatment options are available as well as our Preventive Health Care Program entitled "Passport to Health". This program offers a comprehensive package with extensive Laboratory testing, EKG, Chest X-Ray, Ultrasound, Physical Exam and overview of all the studies. **8. Laboratory:** Fernando Diaz our Chemist is well rounded in lab and biochemistry with his own microbiology room where he identifies bugs living on cultures plates offering the best treatment options. When you need a test for driver's license, Coumadin levels or annual PSA levels we offer immediate results. Cultures and some specialty labs have delays of 1-3-day turnover. His skill in extracting blood is unsurpassed. **9. Pharmacy:** Edgar Lucero, is commander and chief of our well stocked pharmacy, medical and orthopedic supply. We are open 6 days Mon-Sat. We offer specialty orders, mail order, class II narcotics pain medication and sleeping pills for the most stubborn insomnia. No one ever died from lack of sleep but you sure feel like it at times. **10. Dermatology:** Dra. Wong from H+ will also make frequent visits to ensure skin overview and treatments to our sun worshipping residents of East Cape. **11. International Health Insurance:** East Cape Health Care offers International Health Insurance and TravelMedEvac with our office conveniently located within the Dental Clinic. Char and Ruth Ryan have teamed with Katya Berci in San Jose to offer affordable programs with Global Coverage. The companies we represent are backed by United Health Care and Lloyds of London and compete with US pricing by offering plans in Mexico. TravelMedEvac is now part of Nationwide Insurance offering new affordable pricing with guaranteed satisfaction. Their claim is to take you all the way home in emergencies. Drop in or contact us for appointments 624-157-0081 or email eastcapehealth@gmail.com **12.** Please consider East Cape Health Center / H+ of Los Barriles for all your medical and dental needs. If visiting please notify us in advance for appointments for specialists by calling or emailing our clinics. *Medical:* 624-124-8203/ 8214 eastcapemedical@gmail.com *Dental:* 624-141-0375 eastcapedental@gmail.com



Dorado Dilemma

By: Gary Graham

In 2016, most of the tournaments featuring dorado – or had categories including them – were won with “dinks” by most standards.

The popular *Van Wormer Dorado Shootout*, as an example, was won with a 12.6-pound, a 7.1-pound and 6.7-pound dorado respectively in the first three places.

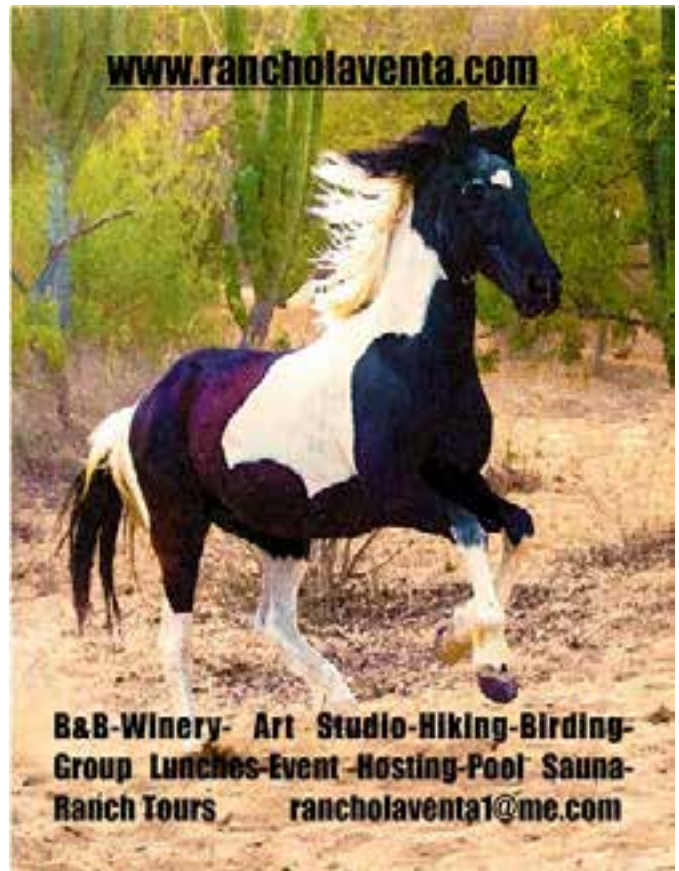
This year was far better, according to Eddie Dalmau of Baja’s Van Wormer Resorts. “When the first dorado I weighed at 1 o’clock this year was over 30-pounds, I thought it would be the winner.”

“However,” he added, “by the end of the day the top three finishers were: **Joe Feeney**, 61.4-pound dorado aboard *Don Julio*; **John Churchill**, 57.3-pound fish on the *El Regalo*; and **Joel Mendoza**, brought in a 52.5-pounder on *Amante*.”

Then, at the *Serial Dos Mares Gran Finale* held last weekend, the dorado were even smaller with the top three not exceeding 16.1 pounds, and with many much smaller ones brought to the scale.

According to the reports, from Bahía de Los Ángeles to the tip of the Baja Peninsula, anglers reported seeing and catching many small dorado which seem to infest the entire Sea of Cortez.

Before my departure from *Serial Dos Mares Gran Finale* tournament, I had a discussion over lunch with local Loreto resident Rene Olinger, owner of “Baja Peninsula Adventure Tours.” We discussed the predominance of dinky dorado everywhere in the Sea of Cortez. “There seems to be plenty of bait around for them to feed on,” she observed. “As quickly as they grow, why aren’t we seeing more large ones?” She questioned. I agreed and I too, was at a loss for an answer to the question.



I recalled that my friend Captain Ray Rosher of Miami had caught a young male dorado weighing approximately 6 pounds, and placed it in captivity in December, 2014. Nine months later the fish weighed in at 56.4 pounds ... a remarkable example of their extraordinary growth rate under ideal conditions! This was just one of the many stories I had both read and written of the rapid growth rate of the dorado.

Continued on Page 12



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Roadtrekker Continued from Page 11

Early the next morning, I fired off an email to my old friend and “go-to” fish expert, Steve Crooke. Before he retired, Steve worked for the California Department of Fish and Game for 38 years and was involved with the live bait fleet, commercial mackerel/sardine fleet, rockfish life history program, Ocean Resources Enhancement and Hatchery Program, recreational angler catch program; and he co-chaired the Highly Migratory Species Plan Development Team for the Pacific Fishery Management Council. Currently, Steve provides biological assistance to Sportfishing Association of California for both state and federally managed fisheries.

I was scheduled to attend a SAC meeting later that same morning and left for the meeting prior to receiving his answer. Crooke happened to be at the meeting as well. Delighted, I cornered him with my “Dorado Dilemma,” asking him about the lack of growth of the dorado. He questioned the size, quantity and type of bait available before he answered my question with still another question.



THE FISH ON the left looks like a Pompano dolphinfish

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How to Cook with Rocks

From “There It Is: Baja” By Mike McMahan

The primitive Indians of Baja ate most of their food raw. In later times, fire entered their lives, either through lightning or by rubbing sticks together. Since they had no pottery, they invented an interesting porridge – strange assortment of wild nuts, weed seeds and acorns, which they cooked on a rock. The secret of this remarkable culinary innovation apparently came from the Indian’s instinctive knowledge of heat conservation. Long before it became an ‘in thing’ in culinary circles, they knew how to cook with rocks. Try it yourself.

Take a plat-sized flat rock, heated in a small fire and the rock will pass its heat back slowly for a pancake – whether made from nuts and acorns or Betty Crocker’s mix. A large flat rock can also cook fish or game.

If you want hot soup, droop your hot rock in the pot. Wash sand off the rock first. Also a large flat, warm rock near your cooking fire makes a handy place to heat up plates, keep coffee and second help-ings warm.



Presidente Josefina Ruiz Tamayo Club Rotario Los Barriles

By: Steve Reed

Every once in a while, someone special steps into our lives. Every once in a while, someone makes an impact far greater than the simple sum of her efforts and creates a concussion that sends ripples far and wide that will continue for generations.

On July 1st, 2017 Josefina Ruiz Tamayo took the President's seat for Club Rotario Los Barriles. It was a peaceful transition. Our previous President, Mike Koehn, had led the club exceptionally well, and had accomplished much good for the community during his tenure. At Josefina's first meeting as President, she announced her Officers and Board, and brought a list of Committees and their Chairs, and assignments to go with them. She was wise to arrive so organized. Tropical Storm Lidia struck in September as if to test the new President's metal. Club Rotario responded by raising \$10,000 USD to fund home repairs and provide emergency food and supplies for 250 stranded residents of Santa Catarina and Nueva España, small pueblos outside Cabo San Lucas.

Josefina Ruiz Tamayo is the first Mexican female president of Club Los Barriles. She is also the youngest, but she brings a maturity to the office known to few more than twice her age. Her greatest contribution to her community, and to Rotary, may be the recent creation of the first Interact Club in Los Barriles. An Interact Club is a Rotary Club for teenagers, ages 12 – 18. "We have to let kids try what excites them, so they can learn what they can do," Josefina explains.

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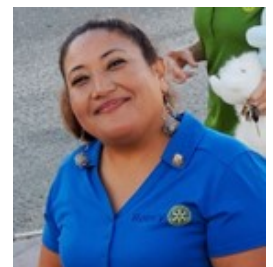
This season thirty-five Interact high school students from three clubs in the States will be arriving the end of March. They will be volunteering for several projects during their week here, from painting the school at El Campamento to assisting with diabetes screening at the health clinic.

"It's more important to listen to the kids, than to tell them what they should do," Josefina said recently. "I listen to the kids. They don't just want to go play, they have ideas about how to improve life, and they know the key is to learn from each other. They have the passion and the ideas, all they need is a little leadership." Before taking office, Josefina attended the Rotary International Convention in Atlanta, GA in 2017. She is taking five of our Rotary members to this year's Rotary International Convention in Toronto, Canada. Under her leadership, our club is reaching out beyond borders once considered too far, and erasing borders closest to us.

"We are not a Mexican / American community," Josefina says. "We are just a community. Of family, friends and neighbors. Working shoulder to shoulder for a better life together."

While in Oaxaca for the annual Mexico National Rotary Convention this past February, Josefina was taken by surprise, and brought near to tears when the Presidente, after a dramatic pause, announced a special recognition for high achievement to a small Club in Baja, Club Rotario Los Barriles.

"Never forget," Josefina reminds us, "we are not just a social club. We are Rotarians, and Rotarians make changes in the world."



Recycle and share with a friend or return to East Capers Rack!

Baja California, the cactus garden of Mexico - Cardon, cholla, pitaya, cochal, senita – cacti of all forms and sizes

From Native Trails

Whether columnar or spherical, whether having disk-like or cylindrical shoots, cacti dominate the vegetation, and those growing down to the coast form a unique, fascinating contrast with the azure of the sea. Cacti are common throughout the New World. They grow from Canada to Patagonia, from the Pacific to the Atlantic, from sea level to 14,500 ft (4,500 m), in the jungle and the desert, on the ground or as epiphytes on other plants. The greatest diversity of species is, however, found in the Southwest of North America. In northern Mexico alone, there are 1,000 species, and in Baja California 120. A good half of them is endemic.

As they have adapted to dry zones, cacti are masters in saving and efficiently using water. All parts of the plant serve this purpose. The roots form a wide-spreading system near the surface, the stem consists of succulent, i.e. water-retaining tissue. Parallel ribs allow for an increase in volume similar to the principle used in accordions so that some cacti may double their weight by absorbing water! Up to 95% of the total volume can then be water! No leaves are visible. They were transformed into spines of different lengths, forms and hardness, photosynthesis is done in the green cortex of the stem. A dense covering with spines also protects the cacti against feeding damage and insulates them against heat and cold alike. Sclerenchyma, a waxy coat or cuticle and light-colored hairs reduce evaporation and reflect the radiation of the sun.

And the blossoms? Cacti mostly bloom only for some days in beautiful colors ranging from white to yellow and red to lilac.

Some cacti open their blossoms only at night. Unlike the day-blooming species – which are attractive for birds and butterflies –, these are pollinated by bats and night-flying insects.

In Baja California, cacti play an extremely important part in the ecosystem and provide food and the necessities of life for many animals. A good example of this is the cardón, the largest cactus in the world, which can be up to 60 ft (20 m) tall and about 15 ft (5 m) round. Such a colossus may weigh up to 12 tons and even twice that after copious rains. And as it grows very slowly, it may reach an age of much more than 200 years.

Cardons are especially important for birds, who use them as multi-story apartment houses to raise their young. Gila woodpeckers hammer new nest holes into the stems each spring. Apart from the woodpeckers, a good dozen other bird species uses the holes, e.g. owls, cowbirds and cactus wrens. Sometimes even an iguana lives in them. Other birds, e.g. white-winged doves or red-tailed hawks, use the axils for breeding or, like turkey vultures, sit on top of the cardon to have a look-out.

Cactus fruits are an important source of food in the dry environment, where water is scarce. The pulp contains nutritious seeds, which in cardons, for instance, number up to 2,000. The fruits are favorites of coyotes, wild boars, foxes, rodents, birds and insects.

And people, too, do not dislike them at all. The Indians have used them for a long time to prepare preserves, syrup and wine. In particular demand were the juicy and sweet fruits of the organ pipe cactus (Pitaya dulce), which reach the size of a tennis ball. The time when they were ripe, was a period of feasts and social events for the Pericú Indians in the Cape region. They adjusted their calendar to it and organized nothing short of fruit orgies. This was the so-called first harvest. After the Indians had excreted the seeds undigested at certain places and allowed them to lie there for some time, the fruits were recollected, ground and mashed to a dough, from which the rich pozole was prepared (second harvest).

Characteristic of Baja California are the bushy opuntias, including the prickly pears, Indian figs and chollas, of which several species exist.

They grow in two different forms: with disk-like oval stems (prickly pears) or with cylindrical stems (chollas). The pulp of young opuntia shoots, the popular nopalitos, can be boiled and eaten like green asparagus.

Cactus Continued on page 15



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Continued from Page 14

Opuntias are grown in fields for this purpose. The fruits (tunas) of some opuntia species are eaten raw or processed to obtain syrup or jelly. But cacti are more than only food. Planted close to one another, some are suitable to make living fences, against unwanted animals or as an enclosure of pasture-grounds. The lignified ribs of the big species such as cardons or organ pipes were used by the early settlers as building material or fuel.

Spines were tools or fish-hooks, e.g. the particularly long and stable spines of barrel cacti. They are massive plants about as high as a man's leg. Some cacti are popular in the cosmetics industry, because they contain refreshing substances that have an invigorating effect on the skin. And they are appreciated by the medical science as well: mescaline, for instance, a substance used to raise the blood pressure, is obtained from the peyote.

Besides the big, conspicuous cacti of Baja, there are still many others in hidden places. The small spherical mammilarias, for instance, grow under shrubs. Or the *Echinocereus engelmannii* / strawberry hedgehog cactus, in spring one of the first species to bloom.

Something very particular among the cacti of Baja is the creeping devil cactus, which occurs only in the Magdalena plain. In the form of "wandering sprouts", it slowly migrates over the desert ground and even climbs over obstacles. It

migrates by growing at its top, taking root in the ground and dying at its end. After the parent plant has died, the offsets live on their own. Regrettably, the narrowing of its habitat because of irrigated cultivation has made the creeping devil cactus rare, just as many other cactus species that are a hindrance to agriculture. Their popularity as collector's items or for decoration likewise contributes to the great decline. All cacti are today mentioned in the list of endangered plants of the Washington Species Protection Convention and therefore may not be removed from the place where they grow even in Mexico.



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Club Rotario Los Barriles 2018

By: Steve Reed

I'm not a joiner. I've been a free-lance communications specialist for most of my life. I came to Mexico, to little Los Barriles, to retire, not to serve as the Public Relations Director for a tiny Rotary Club. I bumped into Chris Geyer at a Saturday Market and a week later I was attending my first Mexican Rotary meeting.

When I joined, our club had just over a dozen members, and today we boast thirty-one. Our Mexican membership is growing rapidly and we have initiated an Interact Club for teens, which brings their parents out to attend Rotary events and partipate in our projects. Growing the local membership is key to our efforts to work hand in hand with the community, to truly be of aid to all in need in our bicultural home.

Our little club continued to support technical centers in Los Barriles and La Ribera, rebuilt the Los Barriles Fountain, organized several beach clean up work parties following Tropical Storm Lidia last Fall, supported sports and scholarships for our youth, and continued our pursuit of healthful water for East Cape by running tests to determine the areas most in need.

This past season, we hosted several community events which have grown very popular. The Taste of East Cape brought the best chefs of the best restaurants together to offer their best efforts for all to sample. The first annual WinterFest Dinner and Auction in February was a tremendous success, selling out all 200 tickets the first week. We supported the always popular Tamale Cook-off, and our annual Carnaval Parade and Fiesta, with local Royalty and prizes for all the kids.



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Our most visible project currently underway is the remodel of Laguna Park: the stage, play and seating areas, and parking facilities. Stop in and see the progress being made. Donations are welcome, and you could get recognition on a plaque this Fall.



Continued on Page 17



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Rotary Continued from Page 16

In the past I've written mostly about the many projects and events our Club has sponsored, but not so much about the people. We're all proud of what we accomplish and it's easy to report good news, especially when most of our club members would rather not be caught in a spotlight.

Every member of our Club participates to the best of their ability. Everyone is essential to the continued success of the Club, and for our interaction with East Cape residents. And every member brings his or her own talents, skills, experience, and heart to the table for every project.

We are Club Rotario Los Barriles, and our names are, in alphabetical order: Bob Adams, Rubi Alvin Mejia, Tom Brogan, Leigh-anne Cameron, Mike Connor, Donna Eschel, Valentina Garcia, Chris Geyer, Fran Granger, Martha Gutierrez, Jean'e Harkleroad, Berenice Hernandez, Mary Joanis, Ivan Kaiser, Elaine Koehn, Mike Koehn, Jack Lentz, Marshall Lewis, Carlene Lokey, Ron MacRae, Dennis O'Brien, Francis Olachea, Ken Phillips, John Plotkin, Louie Pottschmidt, Steve Reed, Robyn Roberts, Josefina Ruiz, Chris Scurr, Felipe Valdez, Char Wenger.

Thank you, everyone, for all you do. I am proud to be in your number.





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Why Do Americans Move to Mexico?

Discovering Mexico through the Tale of a Tijuana Dog
By Walter S. Zapotoczny Jr.

Pepe discovers the real reason Americans move to Mexico. In an interview, Pepe tells his story and reveals one of the advantages of living south of the border.

Pepe the dog was born in Tijuana, Mexico. He was a skinny dog. He and his friends roamed the streets looking for food. Pepe was always looking across the border at the bright lights of San Ysidro, California, wondering what it is like there.

One day as he and his friends were hanging around the border-crossing checkpoint, he saw a pickup truck with some blankets in the bed. He told his friends he was going to see what it was like on the other side. He jumped into the truck and hid under the blankets. The boarder agents didn't find him and he was in the United States. He rode in the back until the truck came to a stop at a nice house in San Ysidro. The house had a nice green yard. The family in the truck heard Pepe squirming. They felt sorry for him and decided to keep him. They feed Pepe very well, took him to the doctor, and made a place for him in their home.

Pepe was living the life that he and his friends had dreamed of. He had rules that he had to follow though. There was no

barking because the neighbors would complain. He could only do his business at certain places. He could not walk on the neighbor's grass. Pepe thought that following these rules was worth it though. After all, he was well feed and healthy.

After a while, he started to look at the lights of Tijuana and wonder about the friends he left behind. There was something about those lights that kept calling to him. He decided to try to get across the border to visit his old neighborhood.

While the border guards were looking the other way, Pepe made his way under the fence and back into Tijuana. He went to his old neighborhood and found his friends. He went up to them and asked them how they had been. At first, none of Pepe's old friends recognized him. When he told them who he was they said, "You are fat and healthy looking. Why have you come back here? You had it made in America." Pepe told them, "I came back to bark."



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Ever notice that people either love or hate cilantro? It turns out there's a genetic component to that preference. A study of twins found that 80% of identical twins agreed in their liking/disliking the taste of cilantro, while fewer (50%) of fraternal twins agreed about their preference. The variation is due to genetic differences in the sense of smell in gene OR-GA2 which is found among a cluster of olfactory-receptor genes. In a broader study, people who reacted negatively to cilantro reported that it tastes like soap to them, while those who reacted positively described it as having a pleasant, almost citrusy taste.

Nutritionally, cilantro is rich in vitamins A, C and K. The coriander seeds have a lower content of vitamins, but have significant amounts of calcium, fiber, iron, selenium, magnesium and manganese. Preliminary studies show the coriander plant (leaves, fruit/seeds, root) as having potential as an analgesic, as an anti-inflammation agent, as an antioxidant, as skin protection against harmful UV rays, as an anti-fungal, as a food preservative, and as a purification agent against accumulated lead in the body.

Thoughts on Cilantro

By: Renée Lagloire, Buen Provecho, San Bartolo

Cilantro is so integrated into the cuisines of Mexico that it may come as a surprise that the herb did not originate in the Americas. The coriander plant (*Coriandrum sativum*), whose leaves are called cilantro in Mexico and North America, is from the Old World. It is native to a huge swath of land spanning southern Europe and northern Africa to southwestern Asia. The coriander plant is an annual herb in the *Apiaceae* family, which includes numerous species including carrot, celery, and parsley.

In other parts of the world, what we know as cilantro is referred to as coriander leaves or Chinese parsley, while the fruits/seeds are called coriander seeds throughout the world. Both names, coriander and cilantro, have their roots in the Latin (*Coriandrum*) derived from the Greek (*kariannon*) which was named after the bedbug, supposedly because they share a "foetid" scent. (Suddenly feeling grateful that my life experience to date has not included the ability to recognize the smell of bedbugs!)

The earliest archaeological evidence of coriander is in Israel in the Nahal Hemar Cave, approximately 8,000 years ago. By 4,000 years ago, the coriander plant was cultivated in ancient Greece where the seeds were associated with enhanced male sexual potency. As testament to its importance in the ancient world, in Egypt over 3,300 years ago, half of a liter of coriander seeds was placed in King Tut's tomb (Tutankhamen) purportedly as medicine to accompany him in the afterlife.

While it is not known when the coriander seeds arrived in Mexico, cilantro was grown here by the early 1600s. It was brought to the British colonies in North America in 1670, making it one of the first herbs planted by the early settlers.

While all parts of the coriander plant are eatable, the leaves and the fruit/seeds are most often used in many of the world's cuisines. Because the taste of cilantro diminishes if

Continued on Page 21



Cilantro Continued from Page 20

it is heated, recipes across the world call for the use of raw leaves, or leaves added to a dish immediately before serving. The following recipe for a Mexican tomatillo green sauce does just that. The salsa uses ingredients that are first charred on the grill, are then liquefied in a blender, to which is added the raw cilantro. Remember to use a skewer to lance the onion and garlic before grilling. Enjoy!

Salsa Verde - Green Tomatillo Salsa

1 pound tomatillos, charred
¼ small white onion, charred
2 cloves garlic, charred
Finely chopped green chiles, charred, amount to taste (serrano or jalapeño are good choices)
1/2 cup chopped cilantro
Salt
Lime juice (optional)
Combine tomatillos, chiles, onion, and garlic in blender and puree until smooth.

Transfer to a bowl and stir in the cilantro.
Taste and add salt and lime juice as needed.



Texting Codes for Seniors

Young people have theirs, now Seniors have their own texting codes:

- * **ATD** ♦ At the doctor's
- * **BFF** ♦ Best friends funeral
- * **BTW** ♦ Bring the Wheelchair
- * **BYOT** ♦ Bring Your Own Teeth
- * **CBM**- Covered by Medicare
- * **CUATSC** ♦ See You at the Senior Center
- * **DWI** - Driving While Incontinent
- * **FWIW** - Forgot Where I Was
- * **GGPBL** - Gotta Go, Pacemaker Battery Low
- * **GHA** - Got Heartburn Again
- * **HGBM** - Had Good Bowel Movement
- * **LMDO** - Laughing My Dentures Out
- * **LOL** - Living on Lipitor
- * **OMSG** - Oh My! Sorry, Gas
- * **TOT** - Texting on Toilet
- * **WAITT** - Who Am I Talking To?
- * **GGLKI** (Gotta Go, Laxative Kicking in!)

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Land Reform in Mexico

Throughout history, Mexico has been faced with the problem of the fair distribution of land to its poor rural citizens. Before Mexico gained independence from Spain on September 27, 1821, the wealthy owners of haciendas who owned vast hectares of land, herds of cattle and mining claims controlled large tracts of land. The Indian population, denied ownership under this regime, served as indentured servants of this ruling class. The cry for independence from Spain initiated by Father Miguel Hidalgo y Costilla on September 16, 1810 highlighted the issue of racial equality and of the national political debate, as witnessed during the most recent election for Presidente.

When Benito Juárez became Presidente in 1855, he instituted the *Ley Juárez*. This law emphasized human rights and agricultural reform. It became a permanent part of Juárez's constitution of 1857. José de la Cruz Porfirio Díaz, who

followed Juárez in three-quarters of Mexico's mineral rights to foreigners and doled out large blocks of land to the hacendados. Distribution of land to the poor was forgotten. By this time, a disenchanted populace had had it. Revolution was in the air.

The years 1911 to 1920 were hard and bitter years for Mexico. There was war, revolution, revolt and murder. In 1910, an illiterate, but very intelligent Indian peasant, Emiliano Zapata decided to take up arms against government. His cry "*Tierra y Libertad*" (Land and Liberty) galvanized the poor residents of the huge private haciendas along with distribution of a large portion of this land to the poor. An agrarian reform program was developed. Ejidos were formed in which large tracts of communal land were promised to the poor for settlement. Individual families were allowed small plots within these Ejidos.

Even though the government has given millions of peasant families the right to a plot of and in an Ejido, the original intent of the Plan of Ayala envisioned by Zapata has been compromised. Much of the Ejido land is remote, dry and barren with the best irrigated land remaining in the hands of the wealthy. Although the distribution of land after the Revolution seemed to restore something of the internal harmony of the countryside, living conditions rarely improved. Educational, health, nutritional and housing standards are still dramatically worse in rural than in urban areas. The result is that millions of peasants have abandoned their land, moving permanently to Mexico's urban areas or crossing illegally into the United States. It will be a major challenge to the incoming Presidente and his government to find ways to work cooperatively with the new congress to find a positive solution to this age-old problem.



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Today's Funny's

A woman goes to the doctor worried about her husband's temper.

The doctor asks "what is the problem".

The woman says "Doctor, I don't know what to do. Every Day my husband seems to lose his temper for no reason, and it really scares me".

The doctor says "I have a cure for that. When it seems, your husband is getting angry, just take a glass of water in your mouth. Don't swallow it, just swish and swish it around in your mouth until he calms down or leaves the room".

Two weeks later the woman comes back to the doctor looking fresh and reborn.

The woman says "Doctor, that is a brilliant idea! Every time my husband started losing it, I just swished and swished with the water, and he calmed right down. How does a glass of water do that?"

The Doctor said "The water itself does nothing, it is keeping your mouth shut that does the trick".

My husband says the above would help him too!?!?!...



"The doctor will be with you in a few minutes. He's trying to figure out what disease goes with your insurance."

Community and Athletic Complex in Los Barriles

By: Ken Phillips

Over the past several years there has been talk about a future Community/Athletic complex. We know talk is cheap, but this rumor is finally on the way to becoming a reality. The property is approximately 16 1/2 acres and consists of two parcels; one for community buildings and the other for the athletic fields. Thanks to the hard work of our mayor Francis Olachea and the La Paz Municipal President Armando Martinez Vega, the property has been deeded to the community of Los Barriles. The preliminary plans of the park have been drawn up (subject to change) and will be submitted to President Armando Martinez Vega, who will then submit them to the Governor of Baja. If approved by the Governor, it will be placed in the budget for funding.

The complex is located off the "by-pass road" on the north-side of where the current soccer field and baseball fields are located. This is just the beginning of a long process to complete the complex. It will require lots of money and volunteers to finish the job. When accomplished, the new athletic complex will give our neighbors a place to play, enjoy the arts, and gather for meetings. This is a huge undertaking for our community and if you are interested in helping (either financially, or by volunteering time) contact Ken Phillips at bajadays@aol.com. Future updates will be provided as available.

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Nueva Creación Niños

By: Adam Greenburg

Last March, on a beautiful warm Friday evening we held our third annual subasta (auction) in support of the Nuevo Creación Niños (www.newcreationkids.com). Nueva Creación is an Albergue (Hostel). This is a home for children whose parents are unable to care for them. Some of the parents are in prison. Others are suffering from addiction or other mental health issues and some of these sweet kids have simply been abandoned after repeated back and forth stays. It's a difficult situation but I can assure you that the Albergue is a happy place and the children are loved and well cared for. Although some Albergues in Mexico receive some sort of government funding (as limited as it is) this particular facility receives no outside funding whatsoever and so relies on the kindness and donations from people like you and me, members of the local church and the community at large. Roberto Osuna Alma, the pastor who operates the facility and his wife Alma wake up each day and go around asking for donations to ensure food is on the table and the lights stay on. When I ask Roberto how he will continue doing this in the years to come he likes to say 'the lord will provide' but I think it's important to 'give the lord

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a little help' and to take a more proactive approach to running things. Today I am pleased to share an update on the progress we have been making, and to provide a specific update to last year's fundraising efforts and a special request for this year and the years to come.

I have personally been involved with Nuevo Creacion since 2011. To read about how that came to be please visit the web site we created. Since then I have had the privilege of being involved in a number of different fundraisers with various areas of focus. In 2013, we raised funds to buy all the kids new bicycles. In 2014 we built a workshop so the kids could learn a trade and build things to help support themselves. 2014 was also the year of Hurricane Odile so there was money raised to make major repairs to the entire facility. In 2015 we invested in Eve, the daughter of Roberto and Alma Osuna and sent her off to cooking school to learn proper food handling and cooking skills as well as doing what we could to cover some operational costs. We are talking about 90 meals per day to feed 30 kids so it's a lot of food and energy. Imagine 90 meals a day come out of your kitchen. This isn't any different. It's a massive task. In 2016 we raised funds to rebuild their kitchen including all electrical and plumbing. In 2017 money raised went to mostly operational costs (It costs around 10,000 pesos per week to cover all costs including propane, fuel, vehicle maintenance, medicine, food, water, basic building repairs and school supplies. Operational costs were almost entirely covered with these funds from April to December. It also bought them a new (gently used) van so that the children can be safely transported to school, parental visits, soccer games and other events. More importantly it freed up Roberto and Almas time to look after some of the kids other immediate needs.

Fundraising is done in 3 ways.

1. Canvassing folks for donations. I do this via the web site, facebook, and by having a large dish at the market every Saturday.

Continued on Page 27

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Nuevo Creations Continued from Page 26

2. At that Saturday market, I also sell the various wooden crafts that the children make in their workshop.
3. We hold an annual fundraiser. Through all these methods, we raised around \$14,000.00 which made 2017 our best year yet.

A huge thanks to Alexandre Abrams-Deli who led our efforts for the past several years organizing the annual auction. Alexandre has to step aside this year so we need a new energetic leader to help rally the troops and kickoff another successful event. We already have the donated space and a group of willing volunteers to canvass local businesses and friends for donations so now we just need a leader. If that person is you please reach out to me via email info@adamgreenberg.ca so we can get the ball rolling.

You can learn more about Nueva Creación and get involved in so many ways. There needs are endless but I'll share a few final thoughts here:

Every Saturday (with some exceptions) I have a table at the Los Barriles Market. Come say hola and I'll answer your questions as best I can.



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On March 17th meet at the North Pemex Station in Los Barriles and follow me to La Paz. We will be visiting the kids, kicking around the soccer ball and hosting a fun pizza party – another annual treat!

On March 18th I will be at the Art Festival and all the kids will be there to join me so come around and say Hola.

Visit our website or facebook page. You can donate and/or shop online.

So, I think that summarizes my thoughts for the day and probably exceeds the character limit for my article which East Capers is kind of enough to donate. Hasta Luego Amigos.

Hope to see you around.



Kids from Nueva Creación and their Van

Recycle and share with a friend or return to East Capers Rack!

How to Peel a Mango

From "The Baja Survivor's Guide" 2005

The best way to peel a mango is not the oblivious way. Peeling it like apples leaves you with a slippery, frustrating handful which is apt to jump out of our grasp onto the floor. Nor can you cut a mango in half like a peach, since the flat, fibrous seed does not separate readily from the flesh.

Here is the method:

Take a good sharp knife. Put your mango on a cutting board and appraise it. The seed runs parallel to the flatter sides of the mango. A little practice will teach you to cut both cheeks of the mango off neatly, leaving very little attached to the seed.

Now you have two cheeks and the mango seed with a thin rim of mango left around it. Cut each cheek in two and then score it down to the skin in a tic-tac-toe design. Force the piece of mango flat on a cutting board. It will open up. Run the knife between the flesh and skin. Voila! Perfect mango cubed with a minimum of mess.



ROTARY LOS BARRILES WELCOMES NEW PRESIDENT ELECT

Club Rotario Los Barriles is proud to present our new President Elect, Ms. Jean'e Harkleroad. Jean'e joined our club just last year and has hit the ground running, taking the lead on several projects and always ready with a hand when anyone needs it.

Congratulations, Jean'e, and to all our members as well. We're all winners here.



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Compost: Making the World a Better Place

By: Renée Lagloire, San Bartolo

Originally, one of the main reasons we started making compost at Buen Provecho in San Bartolo was to condition the soil in preparation for organic gardens. As I began to learn more about compost, I found out that making and using compost not only helped my plants, but also other plants, and wildlife, and whole ecosystems.

As you may know, composting is a process of bringing together various organic ingredients that when decomposed, become a rich soil conditioner. Sometimes called black gold, compost feeds the soil, and in turn the enriched soil fertilizes the plants.

At Buen Provecho, we use what I call the orchard bottom as the basis for our compost, the VitaMix super soil. The leaves and smaller sticks from what is principally a mango and guava orchard are put through a mulcher. To the mulched leaves are added other organic ingredients. The ingredients are mixed, formed into mounds, and wetted down. At a week to 10 days, the mounds begin to heat up, such that vapor can be seen rising. This process kills off seeds that may have become part of the mix, as well as various pathogens. The mounds are turned every 7 to 10 days. When they get to be around 40% of their original volume and are at an ambient temperature, the compost is ready. The process is not complicated, but it is labor intensive.

When we first began making compost, the process took over a year. The addition of a mulcher has brought the timeframe down to around 5 weeks with most of the compost left to sit for a while longer before being bagged and sent to market. The process really can't be rushed, though, because immature compost can harm plants by competing with them for the nitrogen in the soil. As a result, plants look stunted and yellow.

At the micro level, in a vegetable garden or in a landscape, compost adds a porous and absorbent element to the existing soil. Because it holds moisture and soluble minerals, it can provide the support and nutrients that

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plants need to thrive. Some have likened the introduction of compost into the vegetable garden as turbo-charging the soil. If this wasn't sweet enough, the compost is made of various ingredients that disintegrate at different rates, making its nutrients available on a time-release basis.

At the macro level, there are at least six reasons to regularly condition the soil in your landscapes and gardens. Your use of compost: 1) protects aquatic life by binding contaminants (i.e. copper, zinc, hydrocarbons) found in the soil, keeping them out of aquifers; 2) prevents flooding by absorbing water, feeding plant life, and slowly releasing water; 3) breaks down pesticides, herbicides and hydrocarbons; 4) prevents soil compaction and erosion; 5) creates wildlife-friendly environments by supporting healthy plants growth; and 6) reduces reliance on synthetic fertilizers and irrigation methods.

So, woo-hoo! A simple way to condition your soil is to cover the area in the garden (much easier done before you plant) or the landscape with 3 to 4 inches of compost and till it into the upper 6 or so inches of your existing soil (or whatever you got!).

You can make your own compost, or you can buy it. When buying, look for soil that is dark brown, or even black, with an earthy smell. If you detect an odor of ammonia or see lots of woody debris, stay away, that compost is immature, it needs more time to "cook." And as you condition your soil, give yourself a pat in the back for not only boosting the wellbeing of your plants, but also for helping make the world a better place!

The Intimate and True Adventures of “El Ballenero”

By Urmas Kaldveer, PhD

Episode 19: Whale Mythology from around the World

Whales have been here a very long time. The baleen whales as compared to the toothed whales, came later – say 3 million years ago. It was the baleen whales however that caught the imagination of humans (“Moby Dick” and exception). They tend to be more docile and approachable therefore with more positive encounters with humans.

There are few if any cultures that do not now or had in the past, myths surrounding the great whales. This is one of the very first ones.

Australian Aborigines: The Rainbow Serpent To the Australian Aborigines, whose traditional homelands encompass the coastal regions of the Australian continent, the powerful and boisterous whale is a beloved ancestor, shaper of the landscape, and immortal being of that timeless, instructive and never-ending epoch of creation and earthly transformation widely known as the Dreamtime or Dreaming. To the coastal tribes the whale is the all powerful Rainbow Serpent and is closely associated with the Rainbow Serpent/Snake of the inland. The whale is, as is the serpent elsewhere in the world, associated with fire, earth energy, wind, water, the sun, moon and the symbol that links all of these elements - the rainbow.

In most coastal tribal stories the whale, after arriving from his ancestral home in the Milky Way, causes the seas to rise, brings other creatures with him, and travels into a sea cave home moving inland to emerge via blowholes, caves and waterholes into the sunlight of the inland. To the 'People of the whale', blowholes, caves and waterholes were sacred because they were the aperture through which the whale ancestor made his first appearance on earth. These places were also sacred because the whale's presence continues to animate them, to pulsate from them in ways that challenge the human imagination and that permeate the natural world.

During the course of the whales land sculpting journey

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on and under the earth's Dreamtime surface, the whale left in its wake a sacred, eternal living essence. Rock formations, (both natural and man-made), trees, waterholes, and other features that dot the local terrain, mark these ancestral Dreamtime passages, record the dramas, and entomb many of its principal characters, as if in sleep. At the same time, these sacred places are centers of nature's reproductive powers.

The whales story is a reflection of the whale 'totem' people. Dreamtime origins, religious duties, and of the primal, cyclic, life-perpetuating processes of the natural world. On at least one level the Whale embodies the essence of nature's life force and fertility, in particular the fertility of the waters. Consequently, the items used to harvest the produce of the sea; spears, nets, baskets, and stone fish traps, are associated with and are sacred aspects of the whale mythology.

The whale clan's knowledge that the local terrain is a sacred map of the whale's ancestral journey gives them an extraordinary sense of participation in the workings of local ecosystems. The initiated members of the clans could

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Whales Continued from Page 30

communicate directly through ritual and 'prayer', with the forces of nature. Radiating out from the sacred whale dreaming places along the Dreamtime trails of the ancestral whale are indelible geographic points, where the aboriginals understanding of the Creation Time connection between the land and nature's mysterious regenerative powers allows them to work in harmony with the forces of fertility at these locations.

During the whale's treks across the landscape, he left a trail of words and musical notes as well as indelible physical footprints, permanently etching the whales story in the earth. Generations later, by devoutly singing the appropriate sacred song, a totemic clansman could reliably navigate for days along these great Dreamtime tracks. In the process, the land would be rejuvenated, memories of totemic ancestors would be rekindled, and reunions with faraway kinsmen would take place along the ancient Dreamtime trails of stone, story and song. In one sense the whole of Australia could be read as a musical score of songlines. The songlines could, in a sense, be visualized as a serpent, writhing this way and that, in which every 'episode' was readable in terms of geology and natural phenomena.

Beyond lending a sense of spirituality and cosmic order within the aboriginal world, these ancient beliefs convey genuine ecological insights into the working of nature. Stories of the Dreamtime travels of the whale reveal a sophisticated grasp of whale ecology. Maps of the whale's journeys, breathing life and form into the landscape as he went, correspond with uncanny precision to maps of the preferred habitats of the whale that have recently been painstakingly assembled by detailed aerial and ground based scientific study.

Traditional aboriginal beliefs about the sacred sites of the Whale Dreaming represent a remarkable fusion of ecological and spiritual knowledge. They encode genuine ecological truths about the population dynamics and location data, with sacred places corresponding to prime whale breeding habitat and with places where whales 'like to linger' the Mirning tribes names for the Southern Right Whale, Numbadda, means "to hang around wanting something", reflecting this species tendency to favor particular locations to. In fact, one of mate, give birth and rear calves or just linger close to shore. At the same time, unlike sterile scientific findings, they contain a moral code mandating irrevocable human responsibility to honor and nurture the precious, life-sustaining whale populations and nature in general.

More to come next issue!



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CALLI Tales ***Voices of Nature***

By: Kitzia Kokopelmana,
Founder of Buena Fortuna Botanical Garden, in La Ribera

'Palo de Arco' Medicine and Eco~wood. Only if you stop long enough and breathe beyond the salty breeze that cleanse your lungs, can you also welcome the healing properties of the wild healing plants of Baja.

The sweetness of the yellow trumpet 'Palo de Arco' as an invitation to help renew your skin cells away from skin infections and malignant cell growth.

Not only the folklore of the old Baja carries the stories of its healing properties but also, the University of La Paz, about 15 years ago published a book on the healing properties of the plants and animals of Baja, a very interesting book in Spanish, with an extended research from both information copulated from the old ranch settlements of Baja and the new university studies on the chemical composition and healing potential of the native species.

I personally have used the palo de arco tea effectively in treating fungal skin problems.

Palo de Arco (latin name *tecoma stans*) has sweet flowers, medicinal bark and the Wood sticks are great for construction (termites don't bother it, a table can last up to 20 years or more). Besides it is a plant that doesn't require much water to grow, lives well in the Baja soils (if you want it to grow faster, then you will add extra water and compost) excellent as a living fence (and the cows don't eat it!)

How to grow it?

Plant seeds direct (2 times the seed size in depth), any time a year. If you add some garden soil and water a couple of times a week it will grow best. You could also simply plant the seeds before the summer rains.

Be kind to the Earth. Plant a seed. Said the voice of Nature.



LIVING POEM

By Kitzia Kokopelmana,

In the whispers of the wind
I hear you, Mother
in your Cosmic dance
my soul rejoice.

In your heart imprint
there is no other
but the love Divine
it is your voice.

You dress
in royal garments
silky ocean
mountain skirt..

Everything in you
speaks of love
for you are a living poem.



The Cave Paintings of Baja California

By: Harry W. Crosby - review by Alfred JaCoby
A Baja explorer records cave artists' work

Surprise, Harry Crosby remembers, was an inadequate word for his first sight, on a spring morning in 1971, of the great cave paintings of Baja California. At the urging of a trusted guide, he had added a half-day search for rock paintings to a two-week exploration in the mountains in the center of the 1000-mile peninsula. After all, he thought to himself: I'll never come this way again.

And then, after a rocky climb up a 200-foot cliff, after a half-day mule trek through thick brush and over piles of tumbled rock, he reached the San Gregorio Cave. "Over the slit like opening of a long, shallow cave was a vast panel of fairly smooth rock," Crosby writes in his newly reissued book, "The Cave Paintings of Baja California." (Sunbelt Publications, \$39.95)

"On it was painted a tumultuous procession of human and animal figures of perhaps double life size. All these beasts seem to form a herd of movement right to left; huge red and black deer and an equally immense mountain sheep dominated the surge."

"The successive figures were partially superimposed, creating a powerful sense of crowding, urgency and motion - each animal in mad flight, treading on the heels of those ahead and straining to free itself from the crush behind." "Scattered among the creatures of this bustling frieze were a variety of strangely static humans."

"Whereas the hurrying animals moved in profile across the stony canvas, the men faced us, frozen into identical erect postures with their arms upraised."

Even now, a quarter-century after his first major viewing, Crosby is excited by that long-ago discovery.

"I was astonished and overwhelmed," he said recently. "Nothing I had encountered before (in explorations in Baja California) so put me in the presence of a supposedly unknowable people. The artists' work was an unforgettable message blazed across the ages."

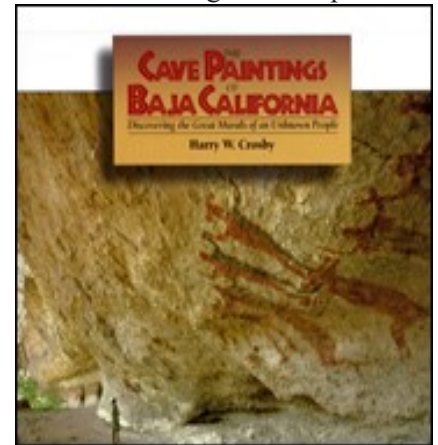
Over the next decade, in another dozen trips into the interior of Baja California, Crosby discovered and mapped what he believes is representative of a complete record of the cave paintings.

"There are hundreds of them, some small but mostly huge, usually in the same style," Crosby says. "And we have no real record of who the artists, the painters, were." The caves are unlike the popular concept of deep, dank wet holes in the ground with dark recesses. The Baja California caves, Crosby explains, could be

called overhangs or rock shelters, and are created usually on cliff sides when softer material is worn by wind or water and falls away, leaving a sheet of clean, hard stone as a canvas for the muralists.

The local word for the caves is *respaldo*, a rock overhang. Who the painters were, when they created their works, and why remains a mystery. "They painted as few on this globe have done," Crosby says in his chapter on practices and puzzles of the painters, "decorating hundreds of locations with thousands of images, great and small. They left no other obvious clues to distinguish themselves." These mysterious people didn't practice agriculture. They made no pottery. They had no permanent buildings. They didn't even have the dog as a companion.

When were the murals painted? Crosby believes they range from between 500 and 700 years old to 2,000 to 3,000 years of age. "Movement was the key to life for people inhabiting the central desert of Baja California at any time."



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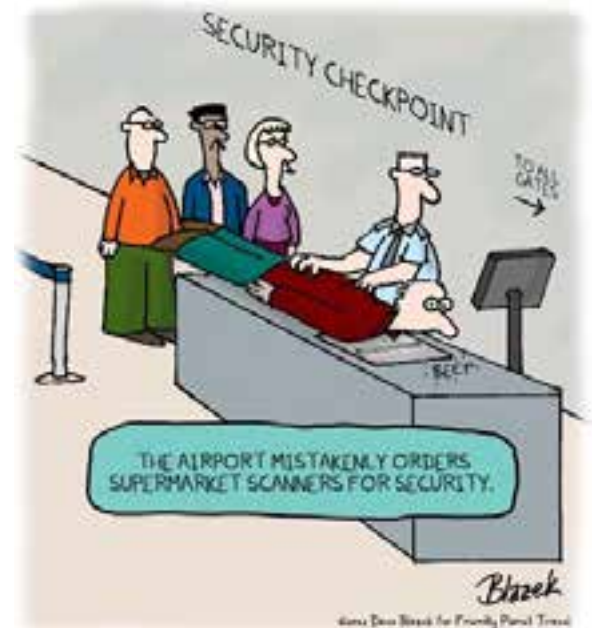
By: Theresa Comber

A goddess of the sea, my girlfriend Leeanne and owner of the B & B “Casa Kootenay” on the bay in La Paz is a preeminent Master Diver. She’s an expert on dive locations from the coasts of Alaska to the island archipelago of the Revigallilledo’s, Mexico’s Galapagos, located 250 miles south of Baja’s tip. Aboard ‘Too Awesome’ and under Captain Adan’s kind and watchful eye, were on an overnight trip to dive, snorkel and swim, two wannabe mermaids with a love of the sea. We had already dived ‘La Reinita’, the small reef midway up Isla Cerralvo. We had a mind-blowing time at ‘La Reina’, the incredible pinnacle at the north end of the island where currents collide off the 24-mile-long island located 30 miles north of Los Barriles which the Mexican government has christened ‘Jacques Cousteau Island’.

After a lovely overnight anchored at the Bay of Dreams dawn had given way to Adan’s love of fishing and we were offshore slowly trolling between shark buoys. On approach we could clearly see there was something else in the water below the buoy; eyes strained, Adan tried

to make out what exactly it was as Leeanne and I were hitting the deck to get into our snorkel gear. The boat slowed toward the buoy and quietly overboard we went. Leeanne slipped in first; I was two seconds behind when we could see three dolphins just 15 feet away, lolling horizontal in the water, very near the buoy and completely unconcerned with us. What was hard to grasp were the two dolphins hanging completely vertical, with their noses pushed right up to the floating buoy – a bit surreal, strange really, we were observing them when Leeanne kicked ahead. Well, that was IT! The bigger of the two hanging dolphins was NOT happy being disturbed and zipped over to Leeanne to let her know it! The dolphin made two super-fast 360-degree circles around Leeanne, creating a bit of an underwater hubbub. WOW, that was crazy! Fifteen feet away I could see the dolphins gather, and five abreast they headed south. Longing to have our own tails, we did our best to keep up but soon then disappeared in the distance.

These were not our local dolphins, the ones we easily recognize. We were ready for a long swim so we spied the next buoy and swam a half mile to it, Adan slowly trolling for blue marlin as his mermaids swam along in the deep blue heaven of the endless water below. Our Sea of Cortez guide book proved to us it was the rough toothed dolphin, a rare visitor to our waters and I was grateful for the bountiful springtime in the El Nino cycle.



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