

Artist Studio Tour

By: Chris Courtright

We all love to take a peek into the lives of those we admire. And we have provided that chance to take a peek at the *studios* of some of the artists who reside in the Los Barriles area! **Asociación de Artes's** presents **Artist Studio Tour** held **February 12**, from **10am – 4pm** is your chance to browse through 15 different art studios in the Los Barriles area. Many of the stops have more than one artist showing and there are also new stops.

Some of the artists you will see on the tour are Elizabeth Perkins with some one of a kind silver and precious stone jewelry, Mary Naylor (artist of the Studio Tour poster) with her colorful and playful pictures and prints, Victoria's Sunny Dresses is the stop with the party atmosphere, Steven King the artist (not the author), Jeff Heintzman paintings, Christine Kenck Design and her Mexican Folkloric sewn creations, Michele Melehes with her up-cycled indigenous Guatemala clothing, Tessa Nisbet custom knits, Christene Comstock and her mosque designs, Connie Heimen and Seddon Wylde art – just to name a few.

The artist studio tour has become a favorite event for many in Baja Sur. Friends meet and tour the studios while enjoying drinks or treats at many of the homes. You linger, visit, shop and snack and end the day then have dinner at one of our great restaurants. And remember it is right before Valentines, so you can get your special one (and yourself) a gift on the tour!

Parking is easy and provided at each studio with many within walking distance of each other. And it can't be any easier this year. Get your tickets and maps at **Baja Properties** on 20 de Noviembre (across from Tios) at our drive through booth – how simple is that!?! Tickets are sold from 9:30 am to 1pm, with studios open to 4pm. Ticket price is just \$5 usd or \$100 pesos.

The Studio Tour is one of the major fundraisers of the Asociación de Artes del Mar Cortez. As we have mentioned before, Asociación de Artes's mission is to enhance the educational experience for students at 19 area schools – through art and school supplies, library books and if needed, ceiling fans! We are also big financial



supporters of other programs such as sports program at Easter and Cursos de Verano for East Cape Children. We look forward to everyone enjoying our 2020 Artist Studio Tour! More information at www.eastcapearts.com

Festival de Artes- A Must do Tradition of the Baja Sur

By: Artista En Hidin

In our once sleepy, now bustling town of Los Barriles, you will find a gathering of many of the Baja Sur full and part time residents as they make their way to Hotel

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Advertising in East Capers

Advertising in the East Capers gets the word out about your business AND your ad money supports the 3 week 'Cursos de Verano' summer school, for over 120 local children, provides art supplies for 19 East Cape public schools, baseball camps, just to name a few things the Asociación de Artes does!

In addition to space in the printed version, your color ad appears in the online version at no additional cost. You can download the 2019/20 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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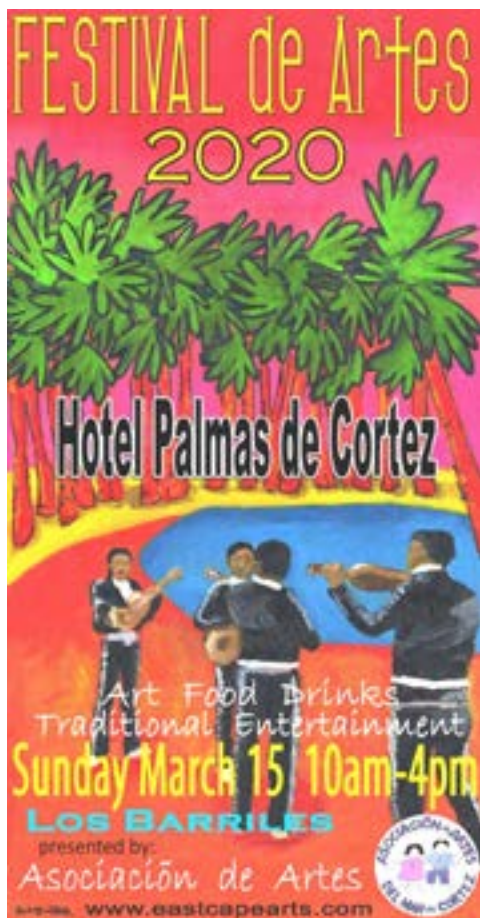
To learn about Ciudad Los Niños, visit their website at:
<http://ciudadninoslapaz.org/english/home.htm>

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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Mexican entertainment featuring our local area school kids, along with dancers from a variety of Cultural dance troupes located here in Baja Sur, and music from some of our musically talented residents! If you were lucky enough to attend last year, then you know when we say fantastic, we mean fantastic! Our 'voice of Festival de Artes', Dennis O'Brien will return to keep you informed of what is going on at the festival! We have tightened up our grounds to leave more parking space and will bring in more tables, chairs and shade, and make the experience for our guests more memorable.

There will be plenty of seats in our 'beer garden', which is situated right by our dance stage, and in the center of all the activity and vendor booths. You can browse through the booths, shop, eat and drink, enjoy the entertainment, and finishing browsing the booths! Just pick your table, then you can have breakfast and then later, have lunch all while enjoying the sights and sounds of the event. We will meet the 5 "S's" with sights, sounds, smells, selection and shopping!!!

You have also come to enjoy our raffle and silent auction area – a definite must-see area, conveniently located right next to the beer garden and the entertainment stage. This is the most important area to the **Asociación de Artes** as this is our major fund raiser that allows us to continue our mission as we support the children of the East Cape area.

We will have a variety of great items that you want and need to have. We have golf packages, adventure trips, hotel stays in a variety of towns in BCS, spa packages

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Festival de Artes Continued From Page 1

Palmas de Cortez for the 27th Annual **Festival de Artes** event. Always held the third Sunday of March, this year's event is **March 15^h** from **10am – 4pm**. Come and enjoy the sunshine, the vendors, the traditional entertainment, the food and our second to none beverage garden!

Last year we returned to the method of our glory days of the early festival by bringing in a higher caliber of artists and reaching out to newer artists with varied mediums. Artists must produce 90% of their own pieces which ensures you get a one of a kind and original designs. We have added an adventure category of vendors that we hope to appeal to a wider variety of our active and experience driven guests – the retired earlier forever young residents! We are refining and expanding our food vendors bringing back our favorites like San Antonio Gourmet, Palmas Carne Asada Taco Stand, Sausage Ladies and their delicious brats and bringing in some new vendors with a wider variety of tasty things to eat. You will be able to hear the ice crackling on the beverages in our bar hosted by Hotel Palmas de Cortez and Asociación de Artes!

We will return with our fantastic traditional folkloric

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Festival de Artes Continued From Page 3

jewelry, shopping opportunities and dinner packages – and that is just the start. You can also purchase a raffle ticket for your chance of winning one of our ‘packed full of great stuff’ packages! All these things you are going to buy anyways, so why not buy them from us and help the kids! Watch the Festival de Artes page for the listing of some of the things in our baskets and our silent auction.

For more information and complete details on this free event that offers free parking, go to www.eastcapearts.com – and go to the Festival de Artes page and keep up with all the details! Check out the video via drone on the Home page of the website! You will really get an idea of what we are all about!! Questions? Email: eastcapearts@gmail.com



All Photos by Lori Makabe



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Baja Shakespeare 2020 - A Baja Chorus Line

By: Kim Scholefield

Welcome to Baja Shakespeare's 20th season. Yes 20! A miracle built on blood, sweat and tears. This year our production is: "A Baja Chorus Line" inspired by and loosely based on the 1985 Director Richard Attenborough movie and Tony Award & Pulitzer Prize winning Broadway production "A Chorus Line."

Baja Shakespeare began in 2000 with MacBeth, followed by 12 years of the Shakespeare comedies. Since then we have expanded to farcical fairy tales, British pantos and even a Woody Allen comedy, always writing our own scripts, with Baja twists! We incorporate singing & dancing, with a live band! We

are excited & very proud to celebrate year 20 with you!

"A Chorus Line" is about auditions, performers and the process of getting cast or not. It's about folks putting

themselves out there, perhaps getting cast or perhaps not getting recognized or seen. How we are individuals, but also part of the whole: or a chorus line. All equal. All nervous. All different. All creating together.

Our Baja production will have the original music score, under the musical direction of Lynn Goetting. Our fabulous costumes are designed by Colleen Baltzer. Our professional choreographers Robin Jackman & Victoria Olenich are leading the dance ensembles. The script is written, and rehearsals are underway with our beloved returning Director Camilla Ford. Our stage & set are being built. We are thrilled to transform this show into our 20th Baja Shakespeare comedy! We hope you will consider joining us for one of our 7 performances.

Opening show is Friday March 6th, Saturday 7th, Sunday Matinee 8th, Wednesday 11th, Thursday 12th, Friday 13th & Closing Saturday March 15th. Curtain rises at 7pm promptly, doors open at 6pm. The Sunday Matinee begins 1:30pm. Our theatre is located at the Hotel Buena Vista Beach Resort (Spa). For those traveling from afar, the Hotel offers fabulous overnight room with meal specials,

boasting a wonderful restaurant and menu, that we locals have been enjoying for years! Contact for info: hortencia@hotelbuenavista.com or call: 624-142-0099. Tickets go on sale February 1. Our Los Barriles outlet is located at Homes & Land of Baja, on our main road 20 de Noviembre, everyone knows Carlene's office. If you are out of town, you may order your tickets through Will-call. Email: nanatembden@ymail.com or call 624-141-0314. Ticket prices have remained the same, \$20 or 400 pesos. We must warn you, do not wait, get your group together now, all of these shows will sell out.

If you have ever been to any of our productions, you will be anticipating the laughter, the local jokes, the parody, the toe tapping sing-a-long music. This event will be one of our largest casts with tons of talent! The Smokehouse Hotties are back for another command performance! Come join the Baja Shakespeare family, we couldn't do this without you! BRAVO!

If you would like information about our Friends of Shakespeare program, front row seating, please contact Anne: herschleb@gmail.com

If you would like general information, please contact Kim: tyfield1@hotmail.com.



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Loreto: Mother of the Missions

The Birthplace of California

By: Greg Niemann

The gulf side village of Loreto is important, and the villagers know it, even though they often appear to ignore the town's significance. They move at a slow pace and enjoy a somnolent life, only having to dodge a hurricane every hundred years or so.

But every October there is an awakening. It is a time to acknowledge that little Loreto was the first permanent settlement anywhere in the Californias, including that big U.S. State to the north. That's when Loreto celebrates the Festival de las Misiones de la Antigua Cailifonia (Festival of the Missions of Old California), a two-week affair that encompasses much of the Mexican state of Baja California Sur.

Loreto, the first 17th century development in the Californias, came into being on Oct. 25, 1697. The "*Nuestra Señora de Loreto*" (Our Lady of Loreto) mission became the first of a system that would colonize and settle not only Baja California, but all the way up to northern California.

The 300th birthday in 1997, was a grand and historic affair that infused even more pride into those noble and proud

loreteños (people of Loreto). But each year, the fiestas offer much for the visitor, featuring conferences, recitals, movies, leyendas (readings), special visits, art and photo expositions, ballets, concerts, children's programs, solemn Masses and more. Much of the celebrations spills out beyond Loreto to the towns and settlement and missions of San Ignacio, San Luis Gonzaga, San Javier, and La Paz.

Loreto had earned its historical significance. The inscription above the mission door reads "*Cabeza y Madre de las Misiones de Baja y Alta California*" Translating "Head and Mother of Missions of Lower and Upper California." It dates back to Oct. 19, 1697, when the Loreto founding party of six Spanish soldiers, led by indomitable Jesuit Mission President Padre Juan María Salvatierra, came ashore and began preparations to establish the mission. The entire California mission system began on that day.

There was an earlier short-lived settlement at San Bruno, eight leagues (24 miles) north of Loreto. In 1683 Padre Eusebio Kino, Admiral Isidor Atondo, and some Spanish soldiers and friendly Indians constructed a presidio and mission at San Bruno. It was abandoned in 1685, primarily for lack of water.

Padre Kino would get another chance after he and Padre Salvatierra helped create the Pious Fund, into which donations were made by wealthy individuals. They proposed to the Spanish viceroy that the Jesuits get another chance to colonize and Christianize the peninsula. They not only agreed to pay their own way, but also the wages of any soldiers needed for the support. As there were no great riches to be taken, Spain didn't really care what happened to California and granted the Jesuits their wish. But Padre Kino had been recalled to the older mainland missions, and the foray into California rested on the shoulders of the capable and zealous Italian Padre Juan María Salvatierra.

At Loreto, under Padre Salvatierra's direction, a church was constructed of stone lain in mortar of clay, all enclosed within a hardwood timber stockade topped by cactus thorns. Thatched palm leaves made the first roof.

Later a permanent chapel, three small hou8ses, and storage rooms were built. Handhewn cedar timbers were cut and dragged down from the mountains by oxen. The Roman bricks, forming a decorate motif in the mission walls, were contributed by an Italian patron and shipped over as ballast.

The mission church was completed in 1704. By this time the padres had baptized over 200 Cochimí Indians, and there were over 70 permanent colonists (Spaniards, Mestizos and Christian Indians from Mainland Mexico). The stone Loreto mission building of today was completed by Padre Juan de Armesto in 1748.

The mission not only served as headquarters for the Jesuit mission chain for 70 years, but was, in effect, the capital of both California's for well over 100 years. When the town was wiped out by a hurricane in 1829, the capital of Baja California was moved to La Paz, and the village of Loreto began to dwindle in importance.



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Read the color version online at www.eastcapearts.com

SNAP - Spay, Neuter & Prevention

By: Kathy Ice

Our once little sleepy town of Los Barriles is growing. The word is out there expressing what a wonderful, giving community we are; thus, bringing in a lot of 'Newbies' who have no idea what S.N.A.P. stands for or what we do, so here is a brief summary. We are an independent organization here in Los Barriles that perform FREE sterilization clinics for dogs and cats to the Mexican community.

We feel that spaying and neutering is the first step in preventing the over population of dogs and cats everywhere.

We try to have a clinic every three months to get as many pets fixed before they mature to the reproduction age. For those of you who have been here for at least 15+ years, you can remember when the town was overrun with dogs who were not always friendly. You witnessed litter after litter of unwanted puppies who were uncared for, starving, sick with various diseases only to grown up (if they were lucky) and produce more puppies. The same scenario with cats. Slowly over the years, S.N.A.P. have been successful in eliminating hundreds of unwanted animals in our community and surrounding communities and the way we accomplish this task is to spay and neuter as many pets as the pet owner will allow and rounding up strays and get them fixed. In the past, setting out poison was the way to control the packs of dogs roaming our streets. No dog was safe. A reminder to keep your dog on a leash when you are out and about.

If you are here during a clinic date, please stop by and check out the "Spa Day" for our pets. We get them registered, put them in their temporary house, then give them a night-night sedative and wait for surgery. Then they go to recovery area which is where most of our wonderful volunteers are sitting and waiting to give them their Spa Day treatment. They help clean them, rid them of fleas and ticks, cut the nails, clean out their ears, keep them either cool or warm in the winter months and most of all, watch their recovery process with attention to all vital details making sure they are safe and secure. If you haven't volunteered before and you have a deep affection for dogs and cats, please come experience the most rewarding feeling you will get when you help a pet recover from surgery knowing they are scared and need your kindness and caring. Our next clinic is January 19 and then another one in March.

In addition to fixing these pets at one of our clinics, S.N.A.P. implemented an additional program starting in 2018 where we grant pet owners who are unable to bring their pet to a clinic for various reason, the opportunity to make an appointment with Dr. Cristobal, our Vet at Clinica Veterinaria in Buenos Aires, to get their pets spayed or neutered free paid for by S.N.A.P. In 2019, we were able to fix approximately 400 pets, 143 of those were walk-ins. This free service is offered to the Mexicans, but for a modest donation, we will never turn down any pet that needs to get fixed since this is what we are all about.

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SNAP Continued From Page 7

HOW ARE WE ABLE TO DO THIS -you ask? It only takes money and these clinics are expensive. We pay for the Vets doing the surgery, medical supplies and recovery supplies, etc. Most of our large donations come from business owners in town who appreciate not having dogs roaming their establishment begging for food and disturbing their clients. To be a sponsor of one of our clinics, we require a minimum of \$700 USD where we advertise you by acknowledging you on our flyers and public notices. For this amount, you will have paid for 42 pets. So, depending on the number of pets that are at the clinic, the balance of the money comes from the community who donate to S.N.A.P. Having said what a wonderful giving community we have, you have given so much to our organization through your donations of money, collars & leashes, bedding, and recovery supplies. 100% of all donations go toward spay and neutering animals. Some of you even make us lunch knowing we need fuel to be able to put in an 8 to 10-hour days at the clinics. At our last clinic at the end of October, we were able to fix 98 pets as a result of your generous donations and volunteering your time at the clinic. Thank you. We couldn't do this without you, so please help us by continuing your support. You can drop off supplies and money to Homes and Land Real Estate Office stating it is for S.N.A.P. or email me and I can get together with you and answer any questions you have regarding our wonderful organization. S.N.A.P. (spay, neuter & prevention).



Cats in post-operation sleeping off the sedative



Many volunteers to do each clinic

A colorful advertisement for Casa Kootenay Bed & Breakfast. The top left corner features the price "\$92.00 dls" with "WINTER RATE" underneath. The logo for "CASA Kootenay Bed & Breakfast" is prominently displayed, featuring a palm tree and a sun. A central text box reads "2019 AWARDED B&B IN LA PAZ". The bottom left lists amenities: "BEACH JACUZZI BREAKFAST SWIMMING POOL AND MORE...". At the bottom, it says "VISIT: WWW.CASAKOOTENAY.COM". The background shows a scenic view of a resort building and a swimming pool.

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Benjamin Franklin



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Friday Night at The Movies - Join us for a fun night!

By: East Cape Recycling & Environmental Education

Movie Night Dates for 2020

February 7th & 21st

March 6th & 27th

April 3rd & 10th

The film starts at 7pm. You may place your chairs after 5pm at the Parque Laguna Community Park in front of our BIG screen and professional sound system...there is NOT a bad seat in the house!

You can enjoy the movie with a bag of fresh popped theater style popcorn (with real butter and sea salt!). There is also red and white wine, beer, bottled water, and candy for sale. All profits from food and beverage sales support our non-profit work.

So, have your folding chair ready and we will see you at the movies!

We ask for a 100 peso (or more) donation per person, and remember, all proceeds support the "Cursos De Verano" Environmental Education program for the children of Los Barriles.

Recycle News-

Additional Recycle Collection Day

Note: This is in addition to the original recycling collection day: 1st Thursday of every month between November & August and location: Baja's Resort at East Cape (formerly East Cape Casas & RV Resort), located on Calle 20 Noviembre just north of Caleb's & the Bike Shop.

When: The third Thursday of the month (November to April)

Where: Across from Baja's Awesome Horse Corral (North of La Casita Restaurant)

Who: You! With an additional opportunity to recycle, we're counting on YOU to participate and bring SORTED & CRUSHED materials

What: A second monthly collection of household recyclables

Why: Because diverting waste from our landfills is the right & responsible thing to do!

Reminder! We Accept:

For a full list on our website please visit www.eastcaperecycling.com/recycle-this/



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February March 2020

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Recycle Continued From Page 11

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CRUSHED/FLATTENED recyclables.

- * PLASTIC BOTTLES & JARS: Clean & crushed. No need to separate caps.
- * CLEAN PLASTIC BAGS: We accept all plastic bags except black ones.
- * HARD PLASTIC: furniture and crates, etc.
- * ALUMINUM CANS: Rinsed and crushed.
- * TIN METAL CANS: Rinsed and crushed.
- * CARDBOARD: Separate from all other paper. Flattened and tied in bundles.
- * MIXED PAPER, NEWSPAPER, MAGAZINES, PAPER EGG CARTONS: Tied in bundles or boxed.
- * BATTERIES OF ALL KINDS
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- PRINTER CARTRIDGES: HP, Samsung, Xerox ONLY
- * VEGETABLE OIL (used): in a closed/sealed plastic container
- * EXPANDED POLYSTYRENE 6 (EPS 6): packing foam from electronics and appliances. (1) We accept Recycled Expanded Polystyrene (EPS 6), not to be confused with Styrofoam. EPS No. 6 is white foam commonly used to package TV's, home appliances, computers, etc. It is composed of white beads compressed together. If you break up



EPS No. 6, unlike Styrofoam, it becomes little round pieces/beads. Some of the foam will be marked with recycle symbol with a 6 inside it.

Ideas for Your Waste That Are Better Than Recycling

Separate aluminum cans at home, put out with the trash cans, the garbage men will recycle them and make money. We don't earn money for the can recycling because of extra processing needed by the transfer station team in La Paz.

Compost your cardboard and paper on your land - improving your soil while reducing your carbon footprint! Sounds like a win!

Only buy beer in returnable glass bottles - check with your favorite market.

Get a SodaStream to replace Topo Chico bottles (cartridges available at Wolf Property Management.)

If you're already planning a trip to La Ventana bring them all your glass - check them out online: No Mas Basura.

East Cape Recycling & Environmental Education is excited to announce changes to the leadership team. As we enter the new decade it's time for Lynn and Holly to retire from their leadership roles after 10 dedicated years. Their work to build and sustain this organization has been an incredible blessing for all of us who love the planet and want to be positive agents for change in the community.

Thankfully for us, Holly and Lynn will continue to volunteer and participate at Movie Night, our popular fundraising events that are held two Friday nights a month at Parque Laguna, January through April. Remember, this fundraising program is critical for supporting the local environmental education program: "Cursos de Verano" a three-week summer camp for the children of Los Barriles.

Holly & Lynn's departure is opening up some great new volunteer opportunities. If you are a steward to our amazing Baja environment and would like to make a difference, email us at info@eastcaperecycling.com to volunteer so we can use your special skills or expertise. Remember...many hands make light work. One hour a month is all we ask.

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by
Connie Heinen



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Delicioso Chorizo Mexicano

by Renée Lagloire

Chorizo, a spicy ground meat sausage, is very popular in Mexico. It is served with eggs for breakfast, as well as in tacos and burritos, and even as a pizza topping. It is often crumbled on top of foods and is a delicious addition to many meals.

Chorizo has its roots in the Iberian Peninsula (now Portugal and Spain). The Spanish brought it to the New World in the 16th century. There are two types of *chorizo*, the dry and the fresh. In Spain and Portugal, dry *chorizo* is much more common than fresh, and is eaten much like salami. The Iberian *chorizo* was most commonly cooked by smoking, spiced with paprika and made using white wine. Importantly for sailors of the 1500s, it is tasty and it has a shelf life so it could be brought on long sea voyages.

In the New World, there were adaptations made to *chorizo*. Probably from expediency more than anything, the most common way to eat *chorizo* became fresh, as opposed to cooked or smoked. Vinegar replaced the wine, which was scarce and expensive. And, *chiles* were substituted for paprika. Nowadays paprika has been added back into many recipes, but the *chiles* stayed. Mexican *chorizo* is more acidic and has more of a *picante* kick than its Iberian parents.

In Mexico, most *chorizo* is made fresh, and is presented either loose or in a casing. It is sold with other raw meats or sausages at grocery stores. *Chorizo* is usually made of fatty pork, but it can also be made from other meats like beef, chicken, turkey, venison, and even with soy beans. Typically the *chorizo* is taken out of its casing if it has one, and is cooked on the stovetop, where it is broken up into small pieces much as you would cook ground beef. Most *chorizo* is red in color because of the *chiles* and paprika used in its making. A notable exception is the green *chorizo* from the *Valle de Toluca* in

Mexico that gets its color from the cilantro, tomatillos, and *chiles* in the recipe. There is a wide variety of *chorizo* in the markets, attesting to its popularity.

The following recipe merges Mexican *chorizo* with spinach, folds in the crunch of jicama and apples, and rounds off the whole thing with almonds and cheese. Guaranteed ... this warm salad makes a delicious meal or side dish. Enjoy!

Ensalada de Espinacas y Chorizo - Warm Chorizo Spinach Salad

1 pound Mexican *chorizo*, casing removed
2 medium red onions, sliced 1/4-inch thick
6 Tablespoons olive oil
¼ cup light-flavored vinegar (rice vinegar is very good here)
4 teaspoons sugar
Salt
1 pound (10 to 12 loosely packed cups) salad spinach, long stems removed
1 small jicama, peeled and cut into 1/4-inch cubes
2 apples, thinly sliced or cubed
1 cup toasted sliced almonds
2 ounces *queso fresco*, goat cheese, or bleu cheese, crumbled

1. In a very large skillet, break up and cook the *chorizo* over medium heat for 4 or 5 minutes until it has rendered a good amount of its fat.
2. Add the onion and continue cooking until the onion has started to soften but is still crunchy, about 5 minutes.
3. To the skillet (still over medium heat), add the oil, vinegar, sugar and 2 tablespoons water. Mix well, taste and season with salt, usually about 1/2 teaspoon.
4. Pour the warm mixture over the spinach, add the jicama and apple. Mix well transfer to a serving bowl. Sprinkle with the sliced toasted almonds and cheese of choice.



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Winter Whales - Mother Nature Blesses the Baja

By: Theresa Comber

Mother Nature blesses the Baja with her winter whales. From as early as Thanksgiving to as late as Easter, both sides of this incredible 1000-mile peninsula are a veritable baby whale nursery. On the Pacific Ocean side of Baja, concentrated in three remarkable bays, Grey whales find a safe haven in order to birth and begin the rearing of their young whales. On the Sea of Cortez side of Baja, momma Humpbacks bring their babies to play and frolick, like the sea is one big play pen for young humpbacks.

Humpback Whales are the most acrobatic of whales, often hurtling their enormous 40-ton bodies into the air, like a school bus thrown from the surface, even breaching completely out of the water. When they splash back in, it's like a reverse waterfall that can be seen for miles! Humpbacks are easily distinguishable because of their long pectoral fins. They can lay on their sides, lift their 15-foot long pectoral fins from the surface and wave – or at least in our minds, they are literally **WAVING** to us! When that big flipper hits the water, it is sending a huge noise below the surface that can reverberate for miles, so other whales know where they are. And their tails? They can be as much as 18 feet wide and they can fluke, or wave with them, too! But just because they are big doesn't mean they are not fast, and agile. They are also intelligent and gentle, with a friendly curiosity.

Momma whales carry their babies for almost a year, and when the babes arrive, they weigh a ton! That's when the fun really begins. The Sea of Cortez is a gentle place and provides an environment for mommas and babies to spend their first winter season safe and secure. Babies drink as much as 100 gallons of milk a day, growing and having fun. Somewhat solitary and traveling in small pods of perhaps just 2 or 3, here in wintertime they can also be on the look out for mates to create next year's babies. With hopes to attract and impress females, males sing unique songs that can last as long as 20 minutes and be heard as far as 20 miles.



With approximately 40,000 humpbacks, they have been found in all the oceans of the world. Our southbound whales

Whales Continued From Page 14

have their wintertime vacation to our Sea of Cortez are part of an annual journey that can be as much as 16,000 miles per year - one of the longest of any creature in the sea. As they can live more than 50 years, perhaps as many as 80 years, they can travel more than 800,000 to a million miles in their lifetime.

A Grey Whale experience can literally change your life. These gentle giants were once hunted almost to extinction in the very bays that now provide their protected birthing grounds. Having reestablished a trust with humans, these momma whales will literally cradle their babies up and into the awaiting hands of passengers in small boats, reveling in the stroking and petting and kissing! One of 20 are especially 'friendly' mommas that seem to indulge the human-whale experience and love the interaction

With approximately 20,000 Grey Whales in the Eastern Pacific, they can live to almost 80 years and average 45 feet in size, with females commonly bigger than males. Grey Whales are pregnant for 13-1/2 months and travel non-stop at 5 miles per hour from the cold, nutrient rich Bering Sea of Alaska to the shallow lagoons of Baja. Here there is safety for newborn and growing baby whales, away from the threat of sharks or killer whales. And female whales are also coming to find their mates that often await in the deeper waters near the openings of the lagoon areas. Grey whales also sing to each other, fluke, breach and display a love of life in the abundant waters off the Baja peninsula.



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A Brief History of the East Cape

The first inhabitants of the East Cape were the Pericue, a warring tribe of indigenous peoples living in the region at least 10,000 years ago. Burial sites and other archaeological remains discovered in caves on the hillsides surrounding Cabo Pulmo demonstrate the importance of this area to them. The Pericue subsisted on fish, shellfish, and marine mammals and were one of the few aboriginal groups on the California coasts to use wooden rafts and double-bladed paddles for maritime travel.

After Cortez's discovery of the peninsula in 1533, sporadic encounters, sometimes friendly and sometimes hostile, put the Pericue in contact with a succession of explorers and settlers from Europe and the Philippines. Early in the 18th century, the Pericue succumbed to Old World diseases and battle attrition. It is possible, however, that some of their genes survive among local ranch families.

Perhaps the most famous visitor to the region was John Steinbeck, who in 1940 traveled the coast by ship with his friend, the marine biologist Ed Ricketts to collect marine specimens. In the book *The Log from the Sea of Cortez*, in which he recounted their journey, he describes in vivid detail the rich wildlife encountered in Pulmo Bay and the curious people who paddled out to meet them.



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In the history of East Cape development, perhaps the most significant visit made to the region was that by Robert Van Wormer. While visiting Rancho Buena Vista in 1959, "Bobby" fell in love with the white-sand beaches and abundant marine life. He soon moved here and ultimately created his own fishing destination, Hotel Punta Colorado. Along with his wife, a local lady named Rosa Marie "Cha Cha" Ruiz González, and their three sons, Bobby turned the East Cape into a world-class fishing destination. In Los Barriles and beyond he became a much loved and respected head of a growing community of expats, who turned to him often for assistance with their own projects. The Las Palmas de Cortez Hotel is the jewel in the crown of his accomplishments.

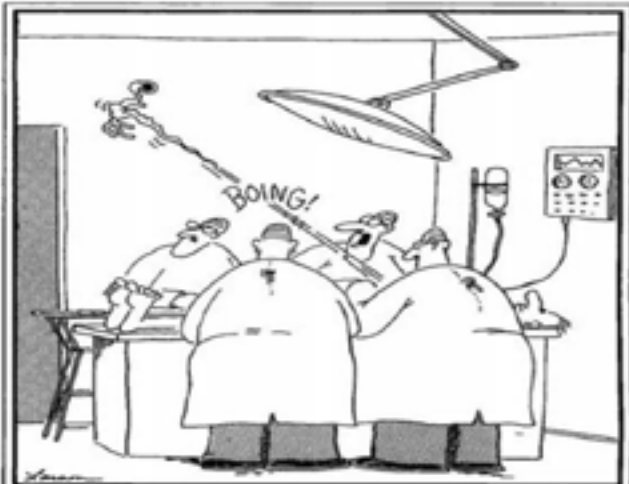
Prior to completion of the Trans Peninsular Highway in 1974, the southern portion of the peninsula was accessible only by boat or small aircraft. It was not until the late 1980s, when completion of the international airport at San Jose ignited a boom of real estate development that more than a few intrepid souls made the bone-jarring trip to the more isolated parts of the East Cape in search of solitude and unriden waves. Gradually they bought land from locals and erected simple beach homes of concrete block and palm-thatch construction. Those first visitors would hardly recognize much of the East Cape today.

In 1995, a vast area of sea from Las Barracas to Los Frailes was designated Cabo Pulmo National

History Continued From Page 16

Park, and in 2011 the park, which exhibited a 463 percent increase in biological abundance over 10 years, was deemed the greatest marine conservation success world-over.

Control of Baja California shifted between various groups in its early history and it was not admitted into Mexico as a state until 1952. In 1930, the Baja California peninsula was divided into northern and southern territories. However in 1952, the northern region (everything above the 28th parallel) became the 29th state of Mexico, while southern areas remained as a territory.



"Whoa! Watch where that thing lands—we'll probably need it."

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Yvonne and I were invited to tag along, and a few weeks later we were trolling down-swell, south, aboard their Hatteras. Our trip was punctuated by frequent billfish, dorado and yellowfin tuna strikes during the day.

As we often did on these ventures, Yvonne and I volunteered to take the “graveyard watch” to enjoy the solitude and the extraordinary star-filled sky together.

As the islands in the distance came into view, the wahoo bite was astonishing. Multiple strikes repeatedly stopped us. It was crazy! By the time we neared the island chain, we were limited out; the fish hold, the on-deck freezers, as well as the ice chests, were plugged with wahoo filets.

You’ve heard of fish jumping in the boat? If a spinning rod with a free-swinging lure was left dangling in.

One afternoon, we anchored in the bay near the naval station in about 60-feet of water. As dusk turned to dark after dinner, I pinned a caballito and dropped it down to the bottom. Within minutes, I was hooked up to something solid and stubborn. It wouldn’t budge. One by one everyone went to bed, and throughout the night I continued my battle alone struggling with many unknown adversaries who either managed to rock me or break off without ever showing themselves.

My frustration spawned determination, and finally, shortly after dawn, I brought an Almaco jack to the boat on its side.

I awakened Greg, sleeping on the bridge, who gaffed the 30- to 40-pound fish for me.

According to Crooke, the easiest way to differentiate between the two species of fish is by the height of the dorsal fin which is twice as high, and the number of gill rakers on the Almaco jack. The first is easy and so is the second if you can count. If there are 18 or 19-gill rakers, use the dorsal fin method to be certain.

Almaco jacks are much more robust, shorter and stockier in the body, plus they feature a dark bar that extends through the eye to the base of the dorsal. The few amberjack Crooke has seen traveled down the Mexican coast and to the south. He did count a few gill rakers to be sure.

My next encounter with Almaco jacks, in quantity, was several years ago at East Cape on a ridge approximately 70-foot deep below Los Frailes.

THE FOLLOWING ALMACO Jack, *Seriola rivoliana* were caught at East Cape, Baja California Sur, Mexico: Note stripe through eye on this freshly-caught fish.

Continued on Page 19



Don't Know Jack?

By: Gary Graham -That Baja Guy

“Gary, have you ever tried to explain that amberjacks are extremely rare in Baja? All the fish being identified as amberjacks recently are really Almaco jacks,” Steve Crooke texted.

Retired from the California Department of Fish and Game after 38 years, Crooke had been involved with the live bait fleet (commercial mackerel/sardine fleet), the rockfish life history program, Ocean Resources Enhancement and Hatchery Program, and recreational angler catch program; he also co-chaired the Highly Migratory Species Plan Development Team for the Pacific Fishery Management Council.

Currently, he is the Scientific Adviser for the Sportfishing Association of California (SAC), providing biological assistance for both state and federally managed fisheries; and he is my “go-to” guy whenever I have a marine life question. He has never steered me wrong.

His recent question reminded me of my first encounter with the Almaco jack.

In the late '80s, Greg, our oldest son, was working aboard the sport fisher *War Eagle*, owned by Bob and Diana Hampton. They were planning a trip to Revillagigedo Archipelago, about 250 miles south of Cabo San Lucas, four islands of volcanic origin: Socorro, Clarion, San Benedicto, and Roca Partida.

Jack Continued From Page 18

Visiting fly fishers were finding it difficult to cast the heavy tackle trying to land these brutes that had gathered along the ridge.

As their guides, who were familiar with the area, we instructed them that the heavier tackle was needed to land these fish.

Instead of making long casts, we had them cast as far as they could and then shake out the rest of the weighted fly line. Once the fly reached the bottom, two or three abrupt strips would usually produce a strike, resulting in an intense battle on the 14-weight fly rod and a cherished photo-op for the excited angler.

Seldom targeted, the Amalco jack has seemed to make a resurgence this season already. And now that Crooke has helped straighten out the name thing, you will know Jack when you catch one!



ONCE THE FLY reached the bottom, two or three abrupt strips would usually produce a strike, resulting in an intense battle on the 14-weight fly rod and a cherished photo-op for the excited angler.



How to Wash a Cat

By: The Dog

1. Put both lids of the toilet up and add 1/8 cup of pet shampoo to the water in the bowl
2. Pick up the cat and soothe him while you carry him towards the bathroom
3. In one smooth movement put the cat in the toilet and close the lid. You may need to stand on the lid.
4. At this point the cat will self-agitate and make ample suds. Never mind the noises that come from the toilet, the cat is actually enjoying this.
5. Flush the toilet three or four times. This provides a 'Power-Wash' and "Rinse".
6. Have someone open the front door of your home. Be sure that there are no people between the bathroom and the front door.
7. Stand well back, behind the toilet as far as you can and quickly lift the lid.
8. The cat will rocket out of the toilet, streak through the bathroom, and run outside where he will dry himself off.
9. Both toilet and the cat will be sparkling clean

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El Ancón Update - LB Sports Complex

By: Ken Phillips

Five years ago, there were dreams that our community of Los Barriles would someday have their own athletic complex and community center. Over the years there was no progress being made, just talk of the dream. Our kids were playing baseball and soccer on a dirt field near the "by-pass" road and their needs could be clearly seen.

The new complex will have baseball and soccer fields, Pickle Ball courts, basketball and volleyball courts, and a track and community center. Two years ago, with the help of Francis Olachea, our Mayor at the time, was able to get the El Ancón property deeded to the town of Los Barriles. Now two years later and with the help of the local government led by our current Mayor Luis Enrique, and working in conjunction with Club Rotario Los Barriles, there is actual progress being made at El Ancón. The government has cleared half of the El Ancón area and has committed to the following: Complete the grading and fencing in the entire complex (after the fencing is complete, the art association is donating a pitching machine for public use), run power and water to the site, dig and provide the septic system to the bathrooms, all to be completed by the end of March.



Club Rotario Los Barriles has agreed to assist the government in completing the septic system, building the bathrooms / changing areas, and snack bar / cafeteria. Rotary club has already repaired and moved the bleachers to the new area, and members of the community have donated the grant resources to repair the backstop. Rotary club is currently taking bids for the above projects and hopes to complete them prior to summer. We are also in the process of working on a global with other Rotary clubs to help complete the total project. As more things develop regarding the complex, we will keep the community informed. El Ancón is a project that will benefit all the East Cape youth and our surrounding communities for generations yet to come.



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“Peregrina,” The Romantic Pilgrim

By: Elizabeth Reid

Mexican has a flare for romance, and nowhere is it more clearly evident than in their music. The ballad “Peregrina” is a classic example. It is not only romantic in its lyrics, but also in the story of how it came to be written. The first stanza praises the beauty of the lady to whom it is sung: “Pilgrim with pale, divine eyes and cheeks lit up with blush... Your hair is as radiant as the sun.” that’s guaranteed together attention!

The next stanza comments how she has left her home in a cold climate to come to this tropical land. The words go on to say that the songbirds of the meadows sing their tunes for her and the perfumed flowers caress her lips and forehead. In the final stanza the singer begs the “pilgrim with the enchanting face” when she leaves his land, “Do not forget my land, do not forget my love.” Certainly, the words are enough to sweep even “Hard-hearted Hannah” off her feet!



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The music is slow and haunting. And it is one of the few Latin songs written especially for a blonde or fair-skinned lady. The words for “Peregrina” were written by Luis Rosado Vega and the music by Ricardo Palmerín, who were commissioned to write the song in 1918 in the midst of a socialist rebellion in Yucatán. Felipe Carrillo Puerto, governor of the state, had fallen in love with Alma Reed, an American reporter who had been sent to cover the political situation. She was young and beautiful and although she spoke no Spanish, she quickly captured the heart of the man who had recently led his party to take over the peninsula.

Some of Palmerín’s best songs came out of this era. He and Rosado Vega had previously collaborated on tunes. Yet, even though Palmerín completed more than three hundred songs in his lifetime, “Peregrina” was his most successful, attaining international acclaim. Carrillo Puerto went to Palmerín and asked that he compose a song that would tell Alma of his love for her and ask her to stay in Yucatán or, if she must leave, to return and stay forever.

For the premier performance of this work, Carrillo Puerto held a party for close friends, including Alma Reed at the Mayan ruins at Chichen-Itza. There, in front of the Temple of the Soothsayer and under the light of the tropical moon, Palmerín and Galay, a tenor, sang “Peregrina” for the first time in public. Those present were electrified by the beauty and sentiment of the song rendered in such a magical setting.

History does not record whether Alma returned to Yucatán and to Felipe Carrillo Puerto. Perhaps this is due to a gentleman’s discretion. The song has been sung to “pale eyed beauties” thousands of times since that first moonlit night, here again with unknown results. Lots of musicians specialize in romantic music, both dance bands and strolling trios. If you want to know the effect of the song, some night request “Peregrina.” And if the moon is shining just right.... Who knows what might happen?

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Baja Frog Dinner Slippage

There is a very old *dicho*, a saying., about rulers and their subjects that has been attributed to Mexico and Mexicans.

“If you drop a live frog into a boiling pot of water, it might jump out, leaving you with no dinner. If you place the frog in a pan of cold water, slowly increase the heat, the frog will stay in the pan and eventually become your meal.”

It is purely a political concept and for that reason it has been relegated (lo’ these many years) to a dark and dusty cubby in the low rent district of my mind.

Today it screamed at me from the depths. My own little village just had some slippage in the tectonic plates of change; a tremor no one could have heard coming – our own perfect “frog and the pan” episode.

- This little place is a desert (3.5 inches of rain and over 100 inches of evaporation per year)
- No rivers
- All our water comes from rain
- Until now there has been no need to worry about running low or running out
- There are 400 homes in the village
- Most residential water bills have been between 50 and 100 pesos per month for as long as I have lived in here (11 years)

Most of the time I pay my monthly bill with coins – last month it was 57 pesos

All the bills are computer generated and hand delivered to each house. This month’s bill was delivered today. This month’s bill is double, triple, quadruple the normal bill! At first homeowners just thought it was a mistake, a glitch on ONLY THEIR BILL but when they got to the

water company office, saw the angry crowd, heard the shouts and curses they became angry, frightened and appalled.

My bill went from a normal 100 pesos to 285 pesos. I paid it because after almost 150 months at \$5 dollars and (all things considered – see my list) I figured “don’t be an Ugly American”.

The Mexican homeowners/customers were irate. They bullied and abused the local water boss with such rage and vitriol that he had to be taken to an emergency medical center, our local *Casa de Salud* for treatment of hyperventilation. The parking areas of the clinic and the two private doctors (usually vacant) were filled with people, cars and trucks, spilling into the streets.

What a surprise! It turns out that Mexicans, who abhor confrontation, have a damn good reason – stress can kill you if you have never had it!

Some of my Mexican and gringo friends stopped by to ask my advice but it’s too late for that. I did the math and found that the water company had been charging about 20 pesos for a cubic meter of water a month over as many years as anyone could remember. The new price is 57 pesos for the same CM3.

Most Mexicans I talked to refused to pay – almost all the gringos paid. Now each customer will have to decide if they are the jumping frog or the burnt frog.

The *dicho* guides the cook, not the frog, because if you don’t pay, if you jump, the fall can kill you.



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80 Years Young

By: Alexandra Delis-Abrams

As I write this article, I'm surrounded by an array of colorful and comical birthday cards, even though my gala celebration has come and gone. In addition to their reflective messages, on my bookshelf at my fingertips are: "I've Decided To Live 120 Years", "Younger Each Year" and "Secrets of Longevity, an 8-Week Program." Would you guess that I just had my 80th birthday?

I've never been one to state my age when asked. "I'm ageless with radiant energy," was a typical response; words snatched from Peace Pilgrim. Never truthful about my age until I walked the Camino in Spain and the two most common questions, I was frequently asked were, "what organization are you walking with and what is your age?" My answer? "Walking on my own and 75 years young."

One of the gifts I received were LuluLemon yoga pants and top and when I tried them on and looked in the mirror, I couldn't help but recall the words of Gloria Steinem when she turned 40 (45 years ago). To the comment, "You don't look 40," her reply was, "This is what 40 looks like." This is what 80 looks like! This is how 80 feels!

80 is different! How did I get to live eighty years on the planet? I'd say, mostly by following my heart along with the words of Socrates, "The unexamined life is not worth living." My family will say that I took those words to heart and they would be correct. Growing up on the shores of Lake Erie, pursuing a career in Transpersonal Psychology in California and adopting the handle of The Attitude Doc, marrying, then raising three awesome kiddos, exploring my roots by briefly living in the village of my father's birth in Greece, teaching in Nepal and India, writing a book with the focus of Attitudes, Beliefs and Choices, going on safari in Africa, and being blessed and supported by an incredibly caring and loving family and phenomenal friends.

I believe that it's a healthy maneuver to take stock from

time to time and ask yourself, "how did I get to be who I am?" Every sunrise reminds me that all we have is the now--we can make changes--we can forgive--we can dream and fulfill those dreams--we can think big--we can let go of what doesn't work--we can be accepting--we can choose to love ourselves. The key word here is choice.

I invite you to review your life at your next birthday. Or better yet, don't wait till then...do it now. Ask yourself if it's time to examine your attitude, question your beliefs and choices. Do they service you today? Would an attitude adjustment enhance the quality of your life? How about some belief busters to reduce or eliminate stress from your 24 hour-day. Ask yourself why you make the choices that you do? Do they serve your highest good?

The mantra I've chosen to embrace my ninth decade is, "Why not," in addition to the following profound and timeless wisdom of The Buddha and the Tao Te Ching.

*The problem is you think you have time.
Delay does not matter in eternity, but it is tragic in time.
Those who are awake, live in a constant state of amazement.*

Here's to living each day in wonderment, offering some time to service, caring for your physical, mental, emotional and spiritual nature...and having lots and lots of FUN.



"My teacher says little girls can grow up to be anything they choose! Why did you choose to be an old lady?"



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If you've lived or traveled the Baja peninsula for many years you've probably come across a familiar collection of surnames....Gonzáles, Ceseña, Manríquez and Ruiz, to name a few. Around the East Cape, we have many local residents who carry these names. What you may not realize is that they and others represent the founding "fathers" of the Baja peninsula.

The majority of Baja's founders came from the west coast of the mainland Mexico over 300 years ago. Many came to assist the Jesuits build Baja's missions. Expert stonemasons, caulkers, shipbuilders, carpenters and blacksmiths worked under the direction of dedicated missionaries who had set out to settle an unforgiving Baja landscape. The majority of Baja's founders, however, were enlisted soldiers who were assigned to protect the fledgling missions. Most of these soldiers began their service at Presidio de Loreto where Baja's first mission was located.

In 1768, the Jesuits were expelled from Baja and sent back to Europe. Released from their service of the missionaries, Baja's founding families began to spread out. Many followed the Franciscan missionaries to Alta California... Verdugo, Amador, Trasviña and de Arce among others. Others stayed on, fulfilling their military assignments in the southern half of the Baja peninsula. You may encounter an Aguilar, Castro, Estrada, de Uribe, Moreno and Verduzco along the way.

Anastasio Verduzco is East Cape's most notable Baja Fundador. Sr. Verduzco enlisted as a soldier and was stationed on the peninsula before 1765. He served as the supervisor of Misión de Todos Santos and La Pasión at Misión de los Dolores (north of La Paz). He became one of the first soldiers in Alta California from 1769 – 1773. He returned to Loreto as a corporal and then went to Misión de la Purísima as supervisor. He retired in 1787 and moved to East Cape where he founded Rancho Caduaño in 1818. Many of his ancestors live in and around the La Ribera area today.



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THE HEART WASN'T THE TINMAN'S
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The Importance of Learning the Culture of the Language You Are Studying

By: Pamela Aguilar

The first time I traveled to another country I went to Canada. I have some anecdotes about that trip that now make me laugh like the first time I tried to get in the bus and I was running after it for many blocks until I realized that it only stopped at certain points and not everywhere like it does in Mexico. Or the time I went with my friends to eat hot wings and drink beer in a local bar and got quite surprised when the waitress brought the bill to the table without us asking for it. We were offended and left the place without understanding why on earth will they throw us out of the place we were planning on staying for a long time and then figuring out this to be the most normal thing to do in this country. Another anecdote I can recall is when an American friend of mine came to visit me at home and I asked him if he wanted to stay for dinner for which he only replied no. I could continue telling you stories of my learning process with different cultures but what my real goal is to share about the importance of knowing the culture of the country where they speak a foreign language and you are trying to learn it. After over 20 years of living between Canada and the United States I am still learning new things



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about the culture of this amazing two countries and this has helped me very much to relate to others.

After many years of teaching Spanish to foreigners I have tried to share my culture with my students to try to help them make their way through easily in Mexico. I always like to share things like this: In a restaurant you must ask for the bill once you are ready to leave otherwise, they will not bring it to you. Always refer to men as jóvenes (young men) and to women as señorita (young lady) in the service industry. It does not matter how old they are. The servers will be very happy and totally appreciate

Continued on Page 29

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Language Continued From Page 28

you trying to use Spanish therefore you will receive a greater service, and everyone will be happy.

Dating from the times of the colony we Mexicans learnt not to say no. If you are approached by street vendors and you are not interested in buying, try saying. Hoy no, posiblemente mañana (Not today, maybe tomorrow)...

Muy bonito, gracias (Very pretty, thank you)

Otro día, gracias (Another day, thank you). Street vendors will understand you are not buying and will leave you alone with a smile on their faces.

In the street always try to say hola or adiós as an informal greeting, people will always have a smile on their faces and respond back. We Mexicans are relational, we always acknowledge one another and are interested in spending time finding out how the other person is.

When someone is calling you or you simply did not understand what they said. Use mande? Instead of qué? Mande comes from the verb mandar which means to command. In the times of the colony we had to use this when the Spaniards called us, it literally means Command me and it is educado (polite). This expression is only used in Mexico and not in the other Hispanic countries.

If you are wearing sunglasses and need to talk to someone, remove your glasses before you talk to anybody this is a sign of respect and of good upbringing.

When you decide to learn a new language pay attention to the culture where this language is spoken. It is worthwhile to be able to speak another language and to relate to a different culture. You will not regret this.



It's a New Year

By: Carol Dunbar

Here starts a new decade with a new year,
It's no time to idle - shift into gear!
Withdraw from worry - face what you fear,
Negate negativity - cherish what's dear.
With an open mind listen - but choose what you hear,
Speak only the truth in a voice that is clear.
Be thoughtful and kind - like it's your career,
And live in the present - we are only once here.

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A Penny For Bliss

By: Thom Davis

My daddy gave me a penny
He found on the street
I took it to the candy store
Where he walks his morning
beat
I gave it to the clerk and said
What can I get for this
He recognized me
As my father's daughter
And said, "Bliss"
He reached into a jar
And pulled out something red
I put in my mouth
Into the midday sun
"Bliss" I thought
Sure is fun



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6 Reasons Why Mexico is Safer Than You Think

These things don't make headlines, but they are the real-life experiences of people visiting and living safely in Mexico

By: Mexperience

We occasionally receive questions from people asking about the current situation regarding safety and security in Mexico. To provide some perspective, listed here are six reasons which demonstrate how Mexico's drug-related issues, which remain a body of work to address, do not make Mexico wholly unsafe.

Mexico continues to attract a record number of international visitors: Mexico's National Statistics Institute is responsible for collecting and reporting data on Mexico's international visitors. Mexico is one of the world's top-ten most visited nations and despite negative news flow, especially about drug-related violence, people keep coming to Mexico. Statistics from foreign consulate records consistently show that the overwhelming majority of visits to Mexico pass trouble-free.

Mexico is one of the world's most important economies. Mexico has a welcoming economy with policies that encourage trade and partnership. (Mexico has tariff-free trade agreements with 46 countries around the world.) This, coupled with years of sound macro-economic management,

have created an attractive environment for investors and foreign companies. Mexico took a positive approach to the NAFTA re-negotiations —now titled the USMCA— advocating an agile trading framework to benefit all three countries involved. Mexico is today one of the world's few 'trillion-dollar' economies and mature nations are keen to work with Mexico.

No foreign resident exodus. In decades now long-past, when Mexico's economy was less open and less stable, foreign residents would often flee home in the event of a peso crisis. Today, even with the drug-related flare-ups, no such exodus is taking place and, furthermore, we are seeing consistent demand from foreigners who are interested in relocating to Mexico. Mexico's government is expecting its expat communities to grow over the coming decade, and offers choices in facilitation of this, as welcoming foreign residents —who bring their energy and capital to Mexico— creates significant mutual benefits. If Mexico is a wholly dangerous place to be, why are existing foreign residents staying put and inquiries for relocation to Mexico growing?

The violence is mostly confined to drug-gangs. When you drill-down into the detail of the data, figures show that the surge of homicides in Mexico over the last decade has come about through criminal gang members fighting each other. Tourists, business visitors, and foreign residents are not being targeted by the drug-gangs, and statistics from foreign consulates show that the overwhelming majority of visits to Mexico pass by trouble-free.

Mexico matters. Mexico is a good neighbor to the U.S. and is also one of the world's most important emerging markets. Mexico and the U.S. share a broad range of common economic, social, and security interests and behind the scenes both nations continue to work closely together on issues concerning trade and security in efforts to bring prosperity and well-being to the continent they share.

Mexico's underlying story remains strong. Notwithstanding the drug-related issues, the country's macro-economics are in good shape; Mexico has substantial oil and gas reserves as well as considerable mineral and precious metal wealth. In recent times, the country has been enacting structural reforms across key industrial sectors with the intention to transition the country's economy away from being heavily dependent on oil and manufacturing. [Foreign visitors keep coming](#) despite the negative news-flow; Mexico's free trade agreements are bridges which cultivate understanding, trade and prosperity between the signatories of these accords

In summary: Every day, tourists arrive in Mexico to rest themselves and enjoy its rich culture and heritage; business visitors arrive to trade, cultivate friendships and agree deals that create new wealth; and foreign residents living here are going about their lives normally and contributing positively in the Mexican communities they love calling home. These activities don't make headlines, but they are indeed the real-life experiences of people visiting and living safely in Mexico.

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Called to Wander

By: Chris Harvey

In March 2018 we gave away the last of the things we could not sell, said farewell to friends and family in Florida and loaded up into our truck camper with the goal to drive from Alaska to Argentina. It was a foreign idea to us at first. But one that felt safer than our other crazy notion to outfit our small sailboat for an indefinite journey to the Caribbean (we did not know how to sail, so easy decision).

We sold the sailboat, bought the truck camper and spent a few months planning a journey that could take anywhere between 1 year and a lifetime, depending on the rate at which one wanted to drive from one end of the world to the other.

The easy part of the planning was drawing a line from Florida to Alaska. The hard part was sticking to it.

We have branded our journey "Called To Wander" and, as such, we have admitted in the deepest parts of our beings that we truly do not feel as though we have a home. To date, we have traveled over 40,000 miles and yet the furthest south we have driven is the East Cape.

The journey has thus been slow because, like any great adventure, there have been opportunities and losses that have defined our path.

- Lindsay has been living with Crohn's Disease since she was 12 years old and uses a regimen of natural supplements and vitamins to live healthy from day to day.

- Our journey is only financed one month at a time by the online work we complete along the way.

And it seems that nearly every time our reliable truck, Rocket, hits the unpaved roads (why, hello Baja!) we seem to have one thing, or another need repair.

Still, for us, we would ask for no other life. Because on this journey we have found our true purpose: To Love our neighbors as ourselves, everywhere that this may be. We love travel. And we love people. And we have been as determined as the salmon that swim upstream to live a life that combines the two in such a way that we leave the world a better place. We're idealistic, no doubt.

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But it is this idealism, grounded in our faith, that convinces us that the world needs us to carry on in our mission of serving others everywhere we go.

"Don't ask yourself what the world needs," Howard Thurman once said. "Ask yourself what makes you come alive, and go do that, because what the world needs is people who have come alive."

We come alive both in the service of others and in our desire to report out to other people the many ways in which they too can be involved in serving others as they travel.

As such we are documenting our experiences through our website, YouTube and virtually anywhere anyone will listen to our simple message.

Baja has yielded us the opportunity to connect with amazing individuals and organizations that are only beginning to reveal to us the true need to connect others to the people and places we visit.

Continued on Page 32

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Called to Wander Continued From Page 31

Recently we were afforded the chance to serve children in an orphanage outside of La Paz, generously supported by the East Cape community. We arrived on Christmas Day and lived nearly a full week with the beautiful children.

Despite our inability to fluently communicate with the children, we found the *Language of Love* to be sufficient. The children simply wanted attention no child should be denied. And while we felt severely inadequate in our ability to “do” things to help the orphanage, we did find that what the children wanted most was to leave the property and simply walk around the surrounding desert.

So, we walked, sometimes three times a day. We kicked a flattened soccer ball, threw rocks at cactus targets, chased dogs and held hands.

In sharing meals with the kids, helping with chores around the property and playing games we found that these children quickly became a part of who we are, and we are forever their advocates, though our call is still to wander.

This becomes a crushing imperative for us: to not abandon the children in heart or mind. And so, as we left them, we promised them they would not be forgotten.

To date, nearly three months into our travels in Baja, we have a dozen other stories like this of people and organizations who are in need. Some are in need simply in financing their existing expenses. Others have physical needs, such as medical or school supplies. Still more simply need others to come along and acknowledge their existence.

It is the latter on which we focus, which makes all of our striving to overcome the personal obstacles in our way, worth it all.

If you will read this story, watch one of our videos, or meet us on the road somewhere and then go do something to help



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someone else - then we have not sought to travel in vain.

Whether you find yourself grounded in “home,” or find a part of you comes alive when the packing begins, we encourage you to join us in creating a smaller world in which we intentionally seek opportunities to Love our neighbors.

If you would like to be a part of creating this world with us, we would appreciate the best you have to offer - whether you would commit to helping to further finance our mission, to share other opportunities for us to connect people with needs or to use your skillset and passions to help us reach more people with our message.

We’re working on creating a network for travelers to connect their gifts, talents and passions with those in need and we can use all the help we can get!

Please consider joining our community wherever you can best connect:

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SUPPLEMENTS, BEST DIET FOR WORKOUTS, PLANT BASED

By: Sefi Held, A.C.E

I often get asked about what are the best foods, workouts, supplements and eating plant based diets. Whether you are a regular daily exerciser, a weekend warrior or a couch potato, if you don't eat well you cannot perform physically and mentally at your best. Your energy levels will be low and physically, you will feel sluggish and mentally, you will not be able to focus and concentrate as well. When you don't eat well, you will also see it in your waist line. The empty calories associated with pops, alcohol, sugary and fatty snacks takes its toll and you slowly gain pounds and inches.

Some brief, condensed research set out below may help you decide what choices you want to make to stay healthy as you age.

Supplements are a multibillion-dollar industry in America, but recent studies continue to call into question their usefulness. In a large analysis of 277 randomized trials, researchers from West Virginia University, Johns Hopkins and elsewhere found no proof that vitamin, mineral and other nutritional supplements could help stave off heart disease or prolong life, though there was some weak evidence that omega-3 fat supplements might be beneficial.

In another study, researchers at Tufts University analyzed dietary data from 30,899 U.S. adults and then followed the subjects for a median of 6 years. Their findings: Eating adequate amounts of vitamins and minerals from food was associated with fewer deaths from diseases like cancer, whereas vitamins and minerals from supplements had no protective effect.



And in JAMA Cardiology, a meta-analysis of 21 studies did not find evidence that vitamin D supplements reduce rates of heart disease or all-cause mortality

Best Diet for your Workout: A study in the Journal of the International Society of Sports Nutrition suggests that athletes can thrive on a variety of different diets. German researchers recruited 76 male and female recreational runners, each of whom was following one of three diets—vegan, lacto-ovo-vegetarian (includes dairy and eggs) or omnivore (includes meat and fish)—with similar calorie intakes.

After the runners exercised to exhaustion on a cycling ergometer, the researchers determined that exercise capacity—as indicated by measures such as maximum power output—was about the same among the three groups. So whether active individuals prefer beef or beans, it appears they can thrive during a sweat session—as long as they get the overall nutrition needed to sustain training.

People can get caught up in the details of paleo, ketogenic and gluten-free diets, but one of the most buzzworthy eating styles at the moment is also super simple. It's the **plant-based diet**—one that places less emphasis on animal-based foods and more on dishes derived from the plant kingdom.

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Supplements Continued From Page 34

Here's some evidence for why Michael Pollen's famous pronouncement, "Eat food, not too much, mostly plants," makes good sense:

1. **Diabetes.** People who adhered to a plant-based diet **slashed their type 2 diabetes risk** by an average of 23%, according to a nine-study meta-analysis in JAMA Internal Medicine. The inverse association was even stronger when healthy plant-based foods—such as vegetables, nuts, whole grains and legumes—replaced starches, sugars and refined grains.
2. **Heart disease.** Among more than 12,000 middle-aged adults studied by researchers at the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health, those with a diet higher in plant foods and lower in animal foods had a **lower risk of death from heart disease.**
3. **Diet quality.** A study in The American Journal of Clinical Nutrition found that eating more plant proteins like legumes at the expense of animal protein can be a cost-effective way to improve diet quality. That's an important perk for those living on limited incomes.
4. **Weight.** Harvard investigators found that eating a plant-based diet, especially one that emphasizes healthier plant-derived foods, was associated with **less weight gain** during 4-year intervals among 126,982 subjects.
5. **Nutrition.** An investigation published in The Journal of Nutrition reported that vegans and vegetarians tend to have **higher levels of certain antioxidants**, including carotenoids and flavonoids, compared with nonvegetarians. This could be one way in which focusing more on plants can be a strategy for longevity.

It is important before making any changes to your lifestyle or nutritional needs to consult with your doctor, nutritionist, dietician, etc., to ensure that you are proceeding in a safe and healthy way specific for your body.

EVERYONE IS INVITED TO CARNAVAL!

By: Steve Reed

Everyone loves Carnival, the biggest street party of the year. This year our annual Los Barriles Carnival Parade takes place on February 29th. Gather at the Fountain and be prepared to start rolling at 4:30pm. Everyone is welcome and highly decorated children and vehicles of all descriptions are expected to reappear this year. We'll march from the Fountain to Laguna Park, and gather to award prizes for best costumes and decorated floats. No costume can be too extravagant or too spare – it's simply about being there. Everyone dances in the street at Carnival!



Everyone Loves a Parade, and this carnival

parade is great entertainment!



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24-HOUR EMERGENCY CARE

By: Leigh-Anne Camerone

A year ago Centro de Salud - the Mexican public clinic (white building across from Las Palmas Hotel) had a flood in the area where the nurses and Doctors were housed when doing their internships to help the Clinic. The Clinic did not have the money to fix the roof and just made do.

The Chief Administrator, Dr Manuel Ramirez, brought this situation to Leigh-Anne Cameron at Rotary and advised that if we could fix up this area the government would be willing to assign doctors to enable the clinic to have 24/7 medical coverage. This clinic is used mostly by Mexicans but any local person living or visiting Los Barriles, El Cardonal or San Bartolo will be helped. It is available for our entire community.

We pulled together donations for the \$8,500 US project to also fix up the area behind the clinic so that no other flooding would occur during the summer rains. Private donors of all sizes helped this project and our local Rotary contributed \$2,000. Two other Rotary groups - Nevada City and Fair Oaks also contributed. The other donors either helped financially or with materials. Our own Christine Courtright from East Capers Magazine was so kind to make the curtains for the doctors' bedrooms.

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The Clinic is now trying to start a dental program that will support the entire community and the 1,200 local children who need regular routine dental care. The program is almost complete with a dental chair and some equipment. We just need 26,000 more pesos for the compressor and last equipment. If you wish to donate dental equipment or financially, please contact leighanne292@gmail.com for a list of needed equipment or see us at the Community Market on Saturdays. Thank you to the community for the continued support!



The Sabio Sees a Sow

From Mexican Folk Tales

There was an old man living in the village of Santa Maria. Everyone in the region thought he had the ability to find things that had been lost. Actually, he had been deceiving the people for many years by taking things from their houses, hiding them for a while, then pretending to retrieve them by using powers of divination. "There goes the Sabio," (seer) the people would exclaim whenever he passed by.

One day a group of pistoleros (gunmen) from a nearby rancho came to town. They stopped by Porfirio's cantina. After several drinks, they started arguing about the powers of the Sabio. Finally, one of the pistoleros suggested that they kill a pig and bury it behind the cantina to test the Sabio's power.

Early the next morning, the pistoleros went to the Sabio's casa and woke him up with loud knocking. "Who is it?" the Sabio called. The men replied, "Something has been buried behind Porfirio's cantina. You are the Sabio so come and tell us what is buried there." The sleepy old man was reluctant to get out of bed, but he recognized the voices of the pistoleros and decided that it would not be wise to oppose their wishes. "The devil's really got hold of me now," he thought as he walked with them toward the cantina.

Word had gotten around quickly. There was a large crowd of people waiting for the Sabio to arrive. As soon as he got there, they began to ask him questions. They all wanted to know what was buried behind the cantina. "Give me time to think it over," said the Sabio. "Sometimes the spirits take a long time to answer." The poor Sabio was very frightened. "I might as well tell them the truth," he decided. Everyone watched as he walked toward the back of the cantina.

"This is it," he said dejectedly, "This is where the sow twisted her tail." (This was his way of admitting that he had finally been discovered as a fake).

As soon as the pistoleros heard the word "sow," they exploded into cheers. Soon everyone was shouting, *Esa la persona sabia vive* (That the wise person lives)! Needless to say, the old man had had such a fright that he never wanted to practice divination every again. He preferred to lose his reputation rather than his life.

"Everything can be taken from a man but one thing: the last of human freedoms - to choose one's attitude in any given set of circumstances, to choose one's own way."

Viktor Frankl, Author, *Man's Search For Meaning*

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Baja Facts

Baja (pronounced Ba-ha) comprises the two most western states of Mexico. Together they form the Baja Peninsula - the second longest peninsula on earth. The Baja Peninsula is longer than the U.S. State of California, which it is attached to on its northernmost boundary. It is roughly 800 miles (1275 km) long and averages 75 miles wide with its narrowest point at just 26 miles wide. It is said to be the last true frontier in this part of the world.

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The Whale Shark (Señor Big)

By: Pepe Murrieta - Fall 2006

Known as Pejesapo (Angler) by local people in Baja California, the whale shark is the biggest fish in the ocean. It looks like a shark and is as big as a whale. The species is believed to have originated about 60 million years ago. The largest specimen accurately recorded is 18 meters (60 feet) long and probably weigh more than 21.5 tons.

The whale shark is found in tropical and warm oceans. They cruise along from the surface down to the depth of about 700 meters (2100 ft.) they are often seen by divers in Thailand, the Maldives, the Red Sea, the Ningaloo Reef in Australia, the Gladden Spit Marine reserve in Belize, the Galapagos Islands and the Sea of Cortez. The migration of the whale shark into the Sea of Cortez starts from May to July. They swim in shallow water during the day, diving to depths of 700 meters at night. During the Baja "season", they will travel as far north as Bahía de los Angeles. On the return trip south they will pass by East Cape from late September through October.

The whale shark moves gently, feeding on phytoplankton, macroalgae, plankton, krill or small squid and vertebrates. The whale shark is not dangerous to human beings. Divers and snorkelers can swim around this giant fish without problems apart from the risk of unintentionally being hit by its large muscular tail fin. Recently, a whale shark became marooned on top of the Cabo Pulmo Reef. Divers came to the rescue, gently rocking the big

fish from side to side until it was able to break loose and swim out into the Sea of Cortez again.



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