



Vientos Bajos Codger



Activities in and around San Ramon

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Upcoming Activities	
Daily:	Walking Club, 7 AM, Vientos Bajos
Ad hoc:	Pickleball
Fridays:	Poker
DEC, 5:	TubaChristmas, 2 PM
DEC, 12 & 13:	Christmas Madrigal Dinner, Noon
On Call:	Libraries: DVD, CD, Books, Picture Puzzles

Vientos Bajos Update—The Virus Continues—and continues—and continues. Another month, and the virus continues to dominate the local, regional, national, and global news. Here at Vientos Bajos, as we enter September, Costa Rica has accepted an average of almost 1,000 cases daily. With this acceptance, Costa Rica has now opened up the Juan Santamaria International Airport to returning expat residents and tourists from many areas. The restrictions have been reduced, although not lifted, for those in most areas of the country. It looks as though, over the next month, Costa Rica will continue to relax its restrictions, inviting tourists, as well as residents and citizens, to return. Bottom line: Although we're cautiously optimistic, until a vaccine is available to the general public, we highly recommend caution. Continue to social distance, wear masks when going out, and guard your bubble. Inside that bubble, Vientos Bajos is beginning small-group, spaced rehearsals for the Christmas Madrigal.

So, What's Happening at VB?

1. Activities.

- a. **Pickleball:** We continue to offer space for two pickleball groups, one a more competitive group, the second a leisure group. Days and times vary, so if you're interested, please contact us to get on the WhatsApp list. Both groups continue to protect their bubble, playing with people with whom they've been playing for months, if not years.
- b. **Poker:** On Friday afternoons, we continue our small group for penny-ante poker. Again, this small bubble is about eight in size. If interested in either of these groups/activities, please contact us.

c. Music practices:

- i. **Low Brass.** Weekly. Calling all B-flat instrument players! We have both treble and bass clef sheet music and have just begun practice for *TubaChristmas* and the madrigal. If you play or have played and are interested in joining us, please contact us.
- ii. **Recorder Ensemble.** You remember the fourth grade—yes, they're the same instruments you learned way back then—although we've added alto, tenor, and bass recorders to flesh out our ensemble. If you've played any instrument and can read music, you're invited! We can definitely put an instrument in your hands. Again, contact us if interested.
- iii. **Ukulele Band.** We currently have seven players and we'd be thrilled if you want to join us. For ukulele band, you don't need to read music. So if you're interested in a beginner, fun group music, this may be your cup of tea. Contact us if interested.

d. Golf Simulator: The upscale golf simulator and all its pieces are still in Florida. Caryl and I were disappointed to have our flight carrier cancel our September flight tickets to the States, but we've rescheduled for OCT. With LOTS of luck, maybe we'll have the golf simulator installed and ready to play by NOV, an early Christmas present.



Simulation of the Simulator

e. Cattle Call!! The Christmas Madrigal Dinner Needs You! As all of you who have attended one or more of our seven consecutive annual Christmas Madrigal Dinners know, the annual Dinner is the Vientos Bajos major event of the year and a major undertaking with LOTS of moving parts. Our usual complement of those bringing you the show and meal is 30 to 40 people. We need you!

If you would like to participate in any capacity as part of the court/cast (skirts, readings, storytelling, musical instrument, vocal, directing, sound & lights), or

behind-the scenes coordination (decorating, set-up and break-down, serving, preparing, parking, seating, table hosting, marketing, sales)—let us know. As of today, we're beginning to build the cast, crew, and show so now's the time to jump on board. We plan to distribute music (brass, recorder, and lute [ukulele] ensembles) in August or early September. For a select few, we may have instruments available. As with low brass, we can provide music even if we don't start group practices yet.

- f. **Go Slow Policy.** We continue to have our eye clearly focused on the COVID-19 ball. We will take re-involvement in all activities slowly. The goal is to build a plan, and begin to work the plan, understanding that like all plans, it's subject to change.

2. Upcoming Events.

- a. **TubaChristmas.** Now scheduled for Vientos Bajos, 2 PM, Saturday, December 5. More information to follow....



TubaChristmas 2019, SiNEM

- b. **Christmas Madrigal Dinner.** Saturday and Sunday, December 12 & 13, noon, Vientos Bajos.



Ready for the Boar's Head Carol!

3. Landscaping the New Entrance and Parking Lot.

Now, four months along in the process, we have finished the off-road parking lot for about 15 cars. Within the month of September, we plan to finish the service road to the four residences on the upper part of Jardin La Torre. These units will be accessible by golf cart, scooter, or ATV. Asphalt for the entrance was laid in July. We hope to have hung our new decorative, secure gate by the end of October. Linear gardens are being planted, and garden paths developed.



4. Roadwork.

By mid-July, the municipality completed the initial work leading up to asphaltting the roadway that collapsed just beyond Vientos Bajos for the past two years. Due to the exploding costs triggered by the virus and now faced by Costa Rica, the national government pulled back funds from major municipalities which had been earmarked for road work, as well as other projects. That left the impending roadwork without financial support.



A special “thank you” to Ron and Suzy Calhoon, Jim Watt and Kelly Bennett, John and Laura Mitchell, Mark Lemke, Knox Turner, Rolando and Gina Chaves, Rick Reimer, Kim Colthart and Barb Nielsen for your contributions to help pay for asphalt to seal the repair work and also to repair potholes the distance of Calle Empalme. The expat community came through! We’re still accepting donations, but the good news is that the asphalt repair work is now in place.

5. Activities Room, Vientos Bajos.

There is no change in converting the upper pickleball court to an activities room yet. The workers continue with the landscaping of the new acquisition and completion of the master suites in “Rana” and “Colibri” (see below).

6. Computers and printers for Kids.



This past month I was talking with our Ana and Claudia, our two cleaning ladies for the past six years, who are sisters and grandmothers. We were talking about the status of schooling for their grandkids. I recently was told that most CR schools won't open for attendance until after January 1, 2021, but lessons are being offered online.

And there's the rub: Ana and Claudia informed me that each have a grandchild whose parents cannot afford a computer or printer. Printers aren't mandatory, but if the students don't have printers, they need to download the homework, get it printed in town, and get it back to the teachers. Yeah—a bit old-fashioned.

So, what to do? If you have a computer, printer, or component that works but is no longer being used that you would like to donate to “the cause,” I'll make sure it/they get into the hands of students whose families don't have the wherewithal to buy even a used machine. This includes the paraphernalia that goes with—mice, keyboards, and monitors.

Caveat: We don't want to be in the “business” of collecting funds, picking up computers, scheduling repairs, etc. IF you have a computer, printer, or component that you would like to donate, I can make a point of picking it up if you can't drop it off. On the other hand, if you're looking for an outing and want to see the changes we've been making here, bring the stuff on out for a visit—free tours! If you want to contribute to a fund that will identify and provide computer support to needy students, I recommend you contact the CAA.

7. Opportunity to make your pet a star!

Sharon Hammer contacted me recently concerning a local artist who could use a boost—and at the same time present you with a lasting portrait of your favorite pet. As we all know, the pandemic has limited income for many, and the artist community is no exception. If interested, please look at some of Maickol Castro Castillo's artwork on his page: https://www.instagram.com/maickcas_art/?hl=en or make an appointment to go to his studio and see his paintings. You can email or call him directly at maickcascas@gmail.com / 8943 8424. He speaks very little English, so if you need help with translation you can email or call Sharon at verbatim335@aol.com / 8549 6207.



He says he'd like at least one, and prefers several, photos of your pet from which to work, and charges anywhere from 20k CRC for a 20 x 20 centimeter painting to 60k CRC for a 1 meter x 70 cm painting.

8. And finally, the Classified Ad: Jardin La Torre and Vientos Bajos Residences for sale or rent.

If you're looking for a fully-furnished modern residence in a secure community of 55+ long-term residents, friendly neighbors, a phenomenal view of the Pacific coast, only 10 minutes from downtown San Ramon, and across-the-road access to a recreation center, visit our websites at www.latorrecostarica.com and www.vientosbajos.com for more information, or contact jcbuford@aol.com

- a. **"Colibri"**: Two bed, one bath, \$750/month!
- b. **"Toucan"** Two bed, two bath. Mark Lemke, the new owner of Toucan, is still working in the States, and has asked us to notify anyone interested that Toucan is available for a long-term lease, \$950/month.
- c. **"Mariposa"** Two bed, three bath with lock-out mother-in-law apartment, \$1200/month.
- d. **"Amapola"** Two bed, two bath, located in Vientos Bajos, \$1,100/month.

If you're interested in any of these, please give us a call or email us.

In the meantime, watch our Facebook page for any mid-month updates, keep your heads down, stay safe, and healthy. We hope to see you as this pandemic slows down and allows us to circulate more.

9. Residential building lots for sale.

In August, one of our neighbors approached us with a "deal we couldn't refuse." We now have purchased an additional 3,500 square meters of ocean view property adjacent to Jardin La Torre. Within in the next six months, we plan to turn it into several residential building lots, but given the entry into the rainy season, we plan to let it sit idle until the sun reappears for most of the day. If you have any interest, please feel free to contact us.

Again, wishing you the best. Stay safe!