

El Residente



Following a Dream:

The G String Cowboys

Also in this issue:

National Theatre: Cultural Treasure
Driving in Costa Rica

Healthcare for Pets
Where to live in CR?

FREE MAPS
inside



Blue Cross Blue Shield is now in Costa Rica!



for more information contact ARCR at: 4052-4052 or at insurance@arcr.net



Franklin Martínez A.

Insurance Agent SUGESE COD: 08-1387

Insurance Office

Who are we? What do we do?

- **Our Insurance Office** assists clients to obtain the best insurance options. We feature a team with extensive experience, and are highly dedicated to our work.
- We are the **official insurance suppliers of ARCR**
- We will always find the best option for each client taking into account each particular case.

You can get new insurance plans and benefits that INS is offering:

1. If your home is in a condominium building, reduce the insurance premium with the new rates of Hogar Comprensivo.
2. New and improved support services included in your automobile and home insurance, such as taxi service to and from the airport, plumbing service, and more!
3. Ask us for the new option of Agreement in the case of an accident, if the damage is less than \$600.00 or car insurance with no deductible.

Insurance Options

INS offers all kinds of insurance to meet our clients needs, and uses a co-payment system with an average around 20%



HOME insurance



AUTO insurance

Phone: (506) 4052-4052

Cell: (506) 8338-1297

Address: Av. 4, Calle 42

Fax: (506) 2220-0031

email: arcr@pricose.com

CONTENTS



Across the Board ARCR Board of Directors	4
From the Director's Desk Rómulo Pacheco	5
The View from Downtown Michael Miller	7
Legal Update Rómulo Pacheco	11
Following a Dream Bettye Brown	13
From the Embassy U.S. Embassy & U.K. Embassy	16
A Day in the Life Allen Dickinson	18
Paradise, We Have a Problem Tony Johnson	25
Where to Live in Costa Rica? ARCR Staff	28
Healthcare for Pets Dr. Anna Herndon	31
Club Corner	33
Business Directory	35

CONTACT INFORMATION

Published by:	ARCR Administration
Email:	info@arcr.net / www.arcr.net
Managing Director:	Rómulo Pacheco
Editor-in-Chief:	Allen Dickinson
Associate Editor:	Bob Brashears
Graphic Design:	Rubén Chavarría
Advertising and Publicity:	Kenji Anduray service@arcr.net
Office hours:	Monday - Friday, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.
Main office, San José:	Av 14, Calle 42, San Jose, Costa Rica (506) 4052-4052
Mailing address:	P.O. Box 1191-1007 Centro Colón, San José, Costa Rica
Uvita office:	Uvita Law Firm, The Dome Commercial Center, 2nd floor, Offices 14 & 15 (506) 2743-8416 / (506) 2743-8619
Facebook page:	Find ARCR on Facebook under ARCR or ARCR@ARCR123
ARCR Forums:	www.forums.arcr.net
General information:	info@arcr.net
Caja account info:	service@arcr.net
Residency info:	legal@arcr.net

EDITOR'S NOTE

Welcome to 2017! It is a new year and with it come some BIG CHANGES. Be sure to read the **Across the Board** column about changes to the Caja and to learn some other important news.

In this issue we begin a series about people who, after moving to CR, have found a successful second "career." Throughout the coming year we will profile artists, writers, business owners, and others who have followed a dream and achieved success in their new life in a foreign land. For some, their new endeavors are in an area that is different from their previous, professional life; for others it involves the transfer of an existing profession to a new county. Look for "**Following a Dream**" and check them out, all have interesting stories to tell.

British members will be happy to see we have expanded our page **From the Embassy** page with some information from the Embassy of the United Kingdom. We thank them and welcome their participation.

There's also a column about healthcare for pets, and Tony Johnson shifts the focus of his articles in his "**Paradise, We Have a Problem**" series from relationships to happiness. Good reading here in one of the world's happiest countries.

El Residente has lots of new things for the new year! We hope you enjoy the issues.



This magazine has been published every two months since 1995 as the official communications media of the ARCR. Our organization provides service to thousands of foreigners who have chosen Costa Rica to reside for short periods or for permanent residence.

Since 1984 the ARCR has been offering reliable **services, information** and **advocacy** to Costa Rica's foreign residents. We have the experience and ability to help you with your residency application, immigration, business and financial management, real estate purchases and rentals, property management, insurance, pet importation and much more.

If you wish to place an ad in *El Residente*, please contact the Advertising and Publicity desk in the ARCR office or at the email address listed in the masthead. Goods & services offered are paid advertisements. Neither ARCR Administration nor *El Residente* research the companies and take no responsibility for the quality of such goods and services. Some articles published in *El Residente* may have been written by non-professionals. *El Residente* attempts to check all facts included, but takes no responsibility for their accuracy.

Cover photo credit: Daniel Areyzaga.

ACROSS THE BOARD

Notes and News from the Board of Directors

We want to give a big THANK YOU to all who contributed to the Tree of Hope, our charity effort to provide needy children with a some Christmas joy. Response was great with members contribution over \$700.00, resulting in our ability to purchase more than 110 items. The gifts have been distributed, some going to children in nine small communities in Santa Cruz area of Guanacaste, and others given out at the Obras del Espirito Santo at the National Stadium. Members generosity was amazing and on behalf of the children, we thank you!

Happy New Year from the BoD! A new year often brings changes, and included here are some messages about three important changes you should know about, as well as some information and updates about some other items of interest.

CHANGE #1: As a result of the new organizational agreement, ARCR has been granted reinstatement of the ability to enroll members in the Caja under the ARCR Group discount plan. Those members who enrolled in the Caja privately may be able to save money by transferring their current enrollment to the ARCR group plan. Interested? Send an email to: info@arcr.net for more details.

CHANGE #2: As of January 1, 2017, the Caja will no longer issue monthly, paper Orden Patronals to enrollees. All account data is available on-line and Caja sites can now check and verify the status of the account of a person seeking treatment via their office computers. Individuals can check the status of their account, and print a copy, by going to the Caja website. If you need assistance, see Kenji or Carolina in the office.

CHANGE #3: To determine the legitimacy of a claimed dependent spouse, the Caja now requires the enrolled individual to provide a current (no more that 3-months old) certificate of marriage each time the Carnet is renewed. For those married in Costa Rica, the certificate can be obtained from the Costa Rica National Register. For those married outside the country, the procedure used for all other external documents should be followed (state/country certification, apostle, etc.) It may be worthwhile

for those persons married outside of Costa Rica to consider being (re)married here. ARCR attorneys can assist with this process.

Coopealianza, who advertises in *El Residente*, is a financial co-op company (vs. a bank) and offers clients exemption from the 8% deposit taxes. Rentistas and Pensionados can save money by making their required deposits with them. Coopealianza also offers credit cards, debit cards, certificates of deposit, and other financial services to their clients. Check them out for more information.

NEW SERVICE FROM ARCR: ARCR Administration can now provide members assistance with creating a LIVING TRUST. This document determines the distribution of a person's financial assets upon their death. It DOES NOT have application to medical wishes, which should be included in the last will and testament. See the article under Legal Update in this issue for more information. ARCR attorneys will help members create the proper documents and ARCR can administer the trust when needed, if desired.

As previously noted in this column, Blue Cross/Blue Shield health insurance is now available in the insurance office. The office, via a separate ARCR division, Strategic Investments, can now enroll members in the Blue Cross/Blue Shield health insurance plan. Call Juan Carlos at 4052-4052 for more information. Franklin Martinez Insurance (Pricose) continues to offer members discounted home, accident, travel, and vehicle insurance through INS.

Last, Happy New Year from the Board of Directors!



ARCR Board members:

From the left, back row, Terry Wise, Ray Hagist, Allen Dickinson, Terry Renfer. Front row, Linda Leake, Martha Rollins, Mel Goldberg. Not present: Earl Tomlinson.

FROM THE DIRECTOR'S DESK

5

by Rómulo Pacheco
Managing Director, ARCR Administration

Dear ARCR Members:

Recently the Tico Times newspaper published an article stating that the Costa Rican Post Office (Correo) was going to start processing residency applications for immigration and issuing cédulas. The article implied that the processing time for residency applications could be pared down to about two weeks.

The article has, understandably, been the cause for numerous phone calls and questions to ARCR. While the article may be true, as far as it goes, there are several unmentioned aspects of the process that will have a huge impact on the actual results of the new service. Below is a quick overview of the main factors which ARCR believes will affect the plan. We hope this information will answer some of the questions being asked.

First, the option to present residency applications and their supporting documents to immigration via the post office is correct, but the service has not yet been fully implemented.

Second, the new service does not provide a change in the procedure of applying for residency. The Correo will only be acting as a middleman by accepting the documents, which they will then transport to immigration for processing. The approval procedure will remain the same; immigration will still have to process the applications, just as they have in the past.

Third, there has been no new office opened to expedite the process of residency applications. Presently, immigration has about 85,000 applications pending, and most of them must be resolved before any new applications can be handled. The personnel required for this are presently not available and no increase in staffing is planned. Therefore, the present time frame of about one year to complete the application process is not going to change. Sadly, the new service is not going to make the application process become any faster.

Fourth, saying that the complete procedure, from application to issuance of the cédula, is going to take about two weeks is, in ARCR's opinion, irresponsible. The history of Migración over the last 20 years bears this out. Based on our experience, the new procedure may ADD time because, due to the level of knowledge that

most post office clerks will have, it may result in many incomplete files being submitted. Immigration, which must take the time to properly examine each and every applicant's file, will have to spend time examining and rejecting the incomplete files, thus taking time away from those files that are complete and properly submitted. Ultimately, the Correo's service may slow the process rather than speed it up.

ARCR appreciates the concern of our members and we understand their desire to see any changes that will speed up the process of obtaining residency. We will continue to offer our members the same top quality service we always have, while also supporting their desires for faster processing times.

Romulo Pacheco

Attorney at Law

Managing Director, ARCR Administration

Free Advice & Travel Planning for Costa Rica

Located on the beach, inside "Lo Que Hay" restaurant

- Maps
- Tours
- Hotels
- Transportation
- Restaurant Discounts
- Job Bank
- Cell phone rentals
- Volunteer Center

info@samarainforcenter.com
 (506) 2656-2424
 www.samarainforcenter.com
 f Samara InfoCenter



To
ship
from

HERE

to
HERE

call

SHIP TO COSTA RICA

shiptocostarica@racsa.co.cr

Door to door shipping of FULL CONTAINER LOADS or
CONSOLIDATED SHIPPING

Commercial shipments - Household goods

Cars - Boats - Anything

Custom Brokers

Toll free: 1-866-245-6923 • Phone: (506) 2431-1234 • Fax: (506) 2258-7123

by Michael Miller

National Theatre of Costa Rica, a Cultural Treasure



The National Theatre of Costa Rica is an architectural and cultural gem in the heart of Downtown San José, Costa Rica. / Costa Rica's National Symphony Orchestra, along with a chorus and soloists, bask in the applause after a fabulous performance of Beethoven's 9th Symphony.

If you ask the average Costa Rican what feature of San José is he or she most proud, you will get one of two likely answers. Some will point to the national football (soccer) stadium, which is located in Sabana Park, about two miles west of the downtown area. Others will say without hesitation, that it is the National Theatre (Teatro Nacional de Costa Rica).

When you visit the National Theatre in the very center of downtown San José, you will understand why everyday Costa Ricans are so proud of it; it is an architectural and cultural gem. And, a vital part of the country's history.

The story of Costa Rica's National Theatre, and how it came to be, is a fascinating one. To understand this, you need to keep in mind that San José was not the original capital of Costa Rica. During the Spanish colonial days, the capital was the city of Cartago, about fifteen miles

to the east of San José. When Costa Rica became an independent country in 1821 the capital was moved to San José, which at that time was a small, dusty, ramshackle town whose economy was based on the hardscrabble agriculture that took place in the surrounding area.

Then, in the middle of the 1800's, something amazing occurred; the world discovered Costa Rican coffee!

Once that happened, money started pouring into the Costa Rican countryside. Within a couple of decades Costa Rica's farms and plantations, which had for centuries been barely surviving, suddenly discovered prosperity.

The successful coffee farmers, now flush with cash, typically did two things with their newfound wealth: First: They built beautiful town-homes in the new capital city, mostly in the area known as Barrio Amon and, second: They sent their children to Europe to be educated and to tour the continent.



The lobby of the National Theatre, with marble floors and columns, offers a stunning first impression.

The rise of the plantation owners (known collectively as the “coffee barons”), created a class of sophisticated, educated, and well-traveled residents of downtown San José. As their numbers grew, these residents became keenly aware that their city was an economic and cultural backwater, especially when compared to the artistic and intellectual centers of Europe. They yearned for the finer things in life. After many years of talk, persistence paid off and the nation finally decided to build a national Theatre. Initially, it was to be funded by a tax on the exported coffee, but later a general tax was imposed to cover construction costs. Historians tell us that this is an important point, since it meant that all Costa Ricans helped to pay for the new Theatre.

Construction began in 1891. After three years of missteps, cost overruns, and missed deadlines, Costa Rica hired a famous Italian architect who was an expert on building theatres. Under his guidance, the nation created a masterpiece.

Today, when you visit the National Theatre, the first thing that will strike you will be the beauty and elegance of the lobby. The floors and columns are made from Italian

marble, there are statues from Italian and Costa Rican artists, the ceiling panels are hand painted, and the doors to the interior feature etched French glass. The effect is breathtaking.

Visitors can see the lobby for free. From there, you can go to the gift shop on the right or the coffee shop to the left. If, however, you want to see the rest of the Theatre you must either take a guided tour or attend a performance.

After you pass through the French doors on the way to the auditorium you will continue to be enchanted. Majestic marble staircases go up either side of the interior lobby. The walls are adorned with gold-leaf details and there are antique bronze lamps, which your tour guide will be sure to inform you, were electric lamps since the Theatre’s beginning. (Ticos are very proud of the fact that San José was the third city in the world to have electricity, after New York and Paris.)

Take the the stairs to the second level and you will see the most famous painting in Costa Rica, “The Allegory to the Coffee and the Bananas,” by Italian artist Aleardo Villa. This image has been reproduced in several places, most

notably on the back of the five colón bill (that's right, a *five colón bill*) which was still in circulation in the 1980's.

Ticos have a love/hate relationship with this painting. It is supposed to be a composite of typical scenes in Costa Rica, but your guide will quickly point out that the artist never set foot in Costa Rica and that there are a number of "mistakes" in the painting, including a bunch of bananas that the artist portrayed upside down.

At the top of the stairs is The Foyer, an elegant room that has been used for meetings, receptions and recitals. Here are more classical statues, elegant ornaments, and angelic ceiling art. You will also see that the ceiling has a coat of arms for each of the seven provinces of Costa Rica.

Finally, there is the auditorium. Laid out in the style of European opera houses with seating in a horseshoe shape, it will accommodate just over 900 spectators. This is a small Theatre, compared to the grand concert halls of Europe and the US, but its small size assures that there is not a bad seat in the house; no matter where you sit you are close and intimate to the performers.

The best way to visit the National Theatre is to see a performance. I attended a few months back as a guest of Jerry Ledin, a fellow member of ARCR. Jerry is an expat from San Diego who has season tickets to the National Symphony Orchestra performances. We sat on the second level balcony, not far from the Presidential Box, and had a sweeping view of the entire room. During the concert I watched as two symphonies were performed. The first was an exquisite piece by Joseph Haydn that required only strings. But that was just the warm-up act for the main event, Beethoven's 9th Symphony.

After an intermission, the entire orchestra reassembled, along with a fifty-voice chorus and four soloists, to perform Beethoven's last symphony. From the powerful first movement to the triumphant final *Ode to Joy* movement, it was clear why this work has inspired millions for nearly two centuries. I found myself shaking with emotion as Costa Rica's National Symphony Orchestra brought the work to its exciting conclusion.

Top: Ornate marble staircases are decorated with paintings and gold leaf detail.

Second below: The most famous painting in Costa Rica, titled "The Allegory of the Coffee and the Bananas" was supposed to be a composite of typical scenes in the country.

Third below: The Foyer, which is on the second floor above the lobby, is an elegant room used for receptions and recitals.

Bottom: The auditorium is designed in the classical horse-shoe shape, so that virtually every seat has a great view.



The National Theatre hosts more than classical music. During any month, you may find performances of Japanese music, plays, folkloric dance numbers done by Costa Rican school children, or conversations with noted speakers such as Nobel Peace Prize winner Oscar Arias. The Theatre has been the venue for meetings with US Presidents John F. Kennedy and Ronald Reagan.

In the evening of October 21st, 1897, thousands of citizens of San José crowded the dusty streets and sidewalks near the new National Theatre for its grand opening. It was a glittering event that was attended by the city's elite, visiting diplomats, and military men in full dress uniform. Costa Rica's president, Rafael Iglesias and his wife decided to walk from their home to the Theatre, and were cheered by the crowd along the way. The performance that night was an operatic version of "Faust" by the renowned Aubrey French Opera Company. By all reports, it was a great success...the first of many great successes at the National Theatre.

The National Theatre is one of the most treasured buildings in the country. Costa Ricans of all classes take

great pride in it. For visitors to Costa Rica and for expats living here, I will tell you this: If you care about Costa Rica, if you want to learn about the people, about their history and about their culture, the National Theatre of Costa Rica is a must-see.

The National Theatre of Costa Rica is located between the Plaza de la Cultura and Avenida Segunda (2nd Avenue). The Theatre faces Calle 3 (3rd Street) which is a pedestrian walkway at this point. It is open to the public from 9 AM to 5 PM and guided tours in different languages are scheduled throughout the day; cost is \$10 US. To learn about upcoming performances, visit the Theatre's website at: www.teatronacional.go.cr

Michael Miller is the author of the only guide book that focuses on Downtown San José Costa Rica, titled: The Real San José. Paperback copies are available at the ARCR office. An electronic version is available at Amazon/Kindle. You can contact Michael at: TheRealSanJosé@gmail.com.





MUNDO BBQ
TIENDA ESPECIALIZADA



**YOUR ONE STOP SOLUTION
FOR ALL YOUR
GRILLING NEEDS**

WE OFFER A WIDE SELECTION OF INNOVATIVE
• QUALITY AND LEADING WEBER AND NAPOLEON GRILLS •



**Grill products
and tools**



**Charcoal &
smokers**



**Rotisserie
products**



**Grill
maintenance**



**Chips, planks,
propane gas tanks**

*ARCR card members. Get an 8% product rebate in accessories of your choice with purchase of any grill. Valid jan-feb 2017. Restrictions may apply.





Visit us at our convenient location
Santa Ana, Lindora, Centro Comercial Vistana Este behind BAC San Jose Bank.
2203-6420/ 6381-6800 www.mundobbq.com

Hours:
Monday to Saturday 10 am- 7pm
Sundays 10 am - 2 pm



by Rómulo Pacheco

Living Trusts in Costa Rica (Part 1)



Hello everyone! I am pleased to have this opportunity be able to share some ideas and provide information for your everyday use in Costa Rica. In this article I will explain what living trusts are and the benefits that they can bring to you and your family.

A living trust—an “inter vivos” trust, to be formal—allows a person to put their assets in a trust while they are still living. It is one of the two main ways to avoid probate. The other is incorporating all the estate’s assets. (Or, in the case of bank accounts, naming beneficiaries directly at the bank.) One of the purposes of probate is to determine the disposition of a person’s property left after their death. Since the trustee of the living trust owns that property, there is no need for probate.

If a living trust is revocable, as most are, it gives great flexibility. Someone in whom you have confidence manages the property, usually for the benefit of you or your family. Some people name themselves as trustees and find there is no difference between managing the trust and managing their own property—they have the right to buy, sell, or give property away, just as before, even though the property is in the trust’s name rather than the person’s.

Living trusts have become extremely popular in recent years. Even though they’re a useful, simple, and relatively inexpensive way to plan your estate, they do not magically solve all problems.

How They Work

Requirements for setting up a living trust are simple. In general, a document saying that you are creating a trust to hold property for the benefit of yourself and your family, or whoever is to benefit, is executed. Some trust declarations list the major assets (home, investments, etc.) that are being put into the trust; others refer to another document (a schedule) in which the exact property that will be placed in the trust is listed. Or, the property can simply be transferred to the trustee under the trust agreement. In any case, property can be added or subtracted whenever desired. However, the ownership registration on whatever property is put into the trust—deeds, brokerage accounts, bank accounts, etc—must be changed from the person’s name to the name of the trust. When property is put into a living trust, the trust becomes its owner, which is why the title to the property must be transferred from an individual’s name to that of the trust. But you retain the right to use and enjoy the property.

Anyone can be named the trustee. Also the name of an alternative trustee (sometimes known as successor trustee) to take over in the event of the original trustee's death or incapacity, can be included. We often recommend allowing a corporation to be the trustee to avoid such situations.

In a revocable living trust, you keep the right to manage your property whether or not you are the trustee; you have the right to change the terms of the trust, the trustee, and the property in the trust, at any time. When death occurs, the trustee distributes the property per the terms of the trust. Usually a trustee is a corporate entity, or it can be a trust company if you are willing to pay their fees.

Living trusts, like wills, give wide flexibility in distributing property. For example, the trust agreement could say, "Upon my death, my trustee is to give my car to my son Cain, my coat to my son Jacob." and so on. The instructions can also tell the trustee to continue managing assets for the benefit of someone else, distribute them to any beneficiaries you choose, or perform some combination of these actions. If beneficiaries of a living trust pass before you, the property reverts to you, unless

you've named other people (contingent beneficiaries) for those gifts.

Another feature of a living trust is that it can continue long after a person dies. For example, they can be designed to benefit some infant grandchildren by specifying that the trustee make gifts to them, as needed, until they are fully grown.

Deciding on whether a living trust is right for you depends on the size of your estate, what kinds of assets it contains, and what plans you have for yourself and your family. In the next edition, I will provide more information about living trusts so you can decide what is right for you. In the meantime, if you have any questions or want to create a revocable trust agreement, please give me a call. I will be pleased to assist you.

Romulo Pacheco

Attorney at Law, Notary Public

Pacheco, Marin, & Associates

4052-4055/ 8710-0780

romulo@residencycr.com



Haven't filed your
Taxes with the IRS ????

Didn't think you had to?

Wrong!

IRS AMNESTY PROGRAM

This could be your last and best chance to get caught up with the IRS.

This is the best amnesty program in over 31 years.
See if you qualify...

We specialize in:

- U.S. citizens living, working and investing abroad
- Back reporting and filing
- Foreign earned income exclusion
- Business consulting & financial reporting
- U.S. and Costa Rican accounting and bookkeeping



www.ustaxinternational.com
SERVING CENTRAL AMERICA FOR OVER 20 YEARS

CALL NOW SEE IF YOU QUALIFY FOR THIS AMNESTY!

• Telephone:
+1 506 2288 2201
(Costa Rica)

• Telephone:
+1 507 836 5714
(Panamá)

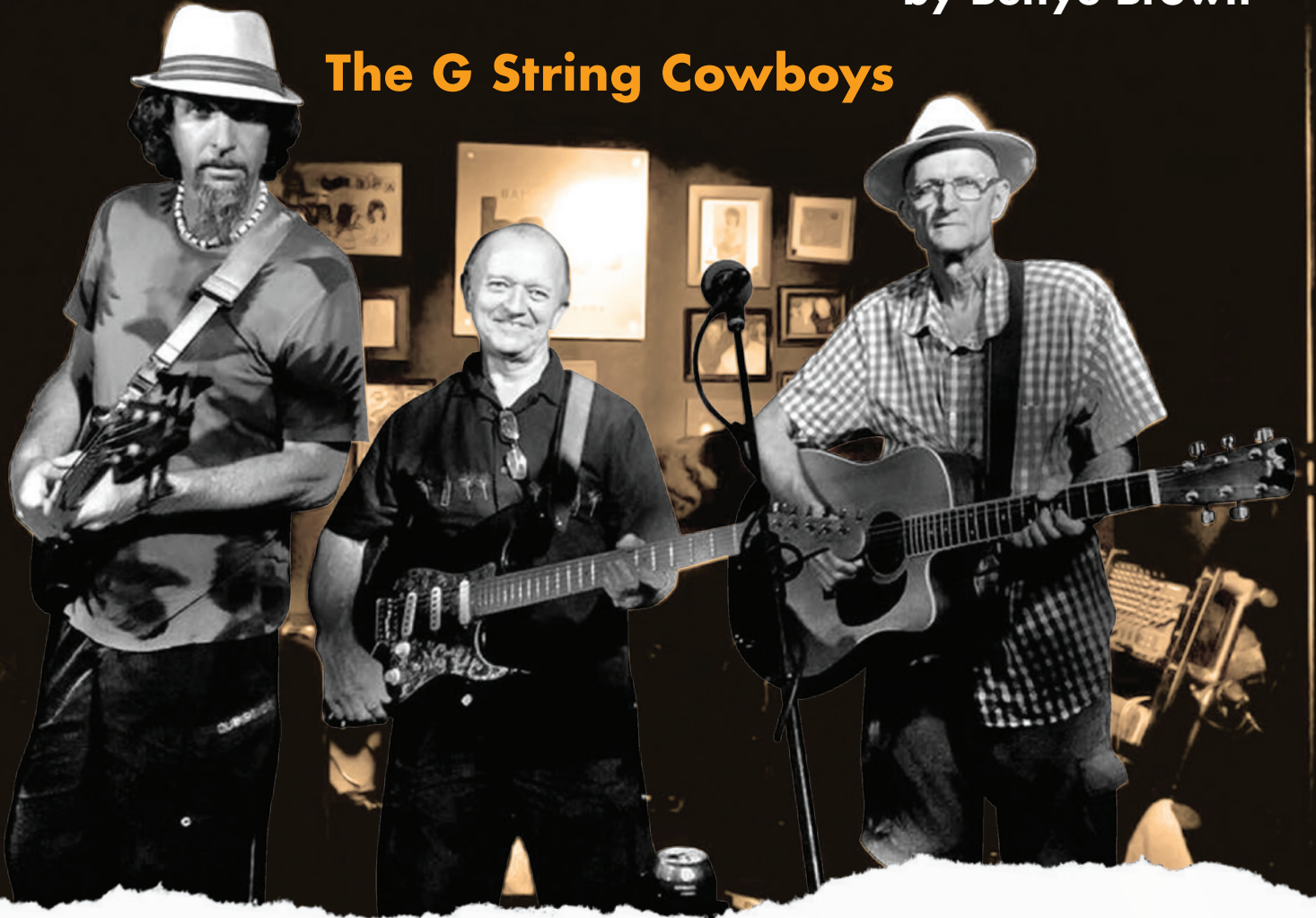
• Telephone:
+1 786 206 9473
(United States)

FOLLOWING A DREAM

13

by Bettye Brown

The G String Cowboys



After decades working in professions as diverse as farming, export management, education, and milling timber, three Costa Rican expats are living out the dream they've had all their lives; all three have known since childhood they wanted to perform and work as musicians full time. But life got in the way.

Ken Nickell, a Kansan, has had a varied work life, first as a farmer until a bull ran him down and broke his back. He then turned to teaching science: Microbiology, anatomy, physiology, and high school chemistry research. Ken, who plays acoustic guitar, started performing in church at age five. He explains his childhood fascination with music; "Mom started me singing because I would guess she probably couldn't shut me up anyway. I can't remember too many songs but she taught piano and I was playing the *Bobcat Boogie* on an old upright piano at

the Mound Creek Community Meeting on Friday night every month, not sure what age that was but I was pretty young. Later in 3rd or 4th grade, I started playing an old metal clarinet that mom had used in high school and was still playing in college (NEO A&M.) I got a full ride for playing in the marching band."

Tim Rath, who is from Canada and grew up in Ontario, has operated a crane truck, dump truck, excavator, and milled timber, plays bass guitar. Tim was raised in a musician family (both parents were instrumentalists.) At the age of eight his grandmother gave him a violin and when he won a musical competition he began his multi-instrumentalist journey, later taking up the bass in a youth symphony orchestra. At eleven he focused on the snare drum in a Scottish pipe band. From that experience he caught the tour bug and, at age sixteen, he began playing acoustic guitar as a studio musician, and touring and recording with bands all across Canada.

But life interfered; he retired from touring after he met his wife, and his musical focus shifted to writing and recording. Less time performing led to the session period of Tim's music career and he sang and played instruments on many Canadian artists' recordings.

In 2013 Tim, his wife Karen, and son Jack were thirsting for a new life adventure, so they packed everything up and moved to Costa Rica. Very soon after arriving he met Ken and Shorty, who were performing fairly regularly at "The Roadhouse" in Ballena. Initially he sat in on drums but soon switched over to bass. He plays also with a variety of other

musicians in Costa Rica and has continued the pursuit of his recording and production interests, including "The G String Cowboys", in his Painted Lizard Studio.

John "Shorty" Hill, who grew up just outside of Boston, worked for 35 years as an export manager for a US manufacturer selling products, mostly in Latin America. He wanted to be a performer since age six when he conducted the performance of his First Grade rhythm Band. Afterwards he knew that would be his work of choice, and he has since played in swing and rock bands.

In the mid 60's Shorty was a founding member of "The Shadows" in Newburyport, Massachusetts, the city's first vocal rock band. Their late 60's single "Search Your Soul", though little noticed at the time, later emerged as a classic representation of the "Garage Band" era, and remains a prized collectible. During the mid-70's he formed Shorty Hill and the Longhaulers, combining small combo swing with blues, rock, and country. Over the years Shorty has performed with an array of bands playing a variety of music styles. His electric guitar work has become recognized for its clean and melodic improvisational style. In 2006 Shorty released his first solo work, "So Just Get Over It!". Also during 2006 Shorty began entertaining audiences in Costa Rica, where he now spends most of his time. In 2014 he teamed up with Ken Nickell and Tim Rath to form "The G String Cowboys".

After their fateful first meeting in Costa Rica (at a live music venue), the three men started jamming together

as a trio. They had no problem melding their individual talents and perspectives into a unique and cohesive sound, and in 2014 they formalized the association and formed "The G String Cowboys".

The double entendre of the name becomes funnier when



the three are seen and their banter heard, but more important is their music. Shorty describes it as a unique blend of country, blues, rock, swing, and *je ne sais quoi*. About fifty percent is original (mostly Ken Nickell's compositions) and the remainder is a diverse collection of covers with their own twist. They perform both

dance and listening music in restaurants and bars, and as a group, are capable of producing an entire night of original material. They currently play in the Bamboo Room in Ojochal and their audiences are usually about one third expats, one third Ticos, and one third tourists.

The G String Cowboys' style is mostly country music marked by simple, beautiful lyrics and melodies much like ranchero music with a down-home and simple choral structure that is popular in the Central Valley. The mix of styles, the musical talent of the performers, and the writing ability of Ken Nickell, make their music distinctive and a delight to hear. The band does not have a drummer, an important factor in their style. Guitars only and the drummer-less sound allow the audience to hear the stability of the arrangements and represent a solid beat in the music. This writer recognized that beat when playing a video of their arrangements; the music was happy and had me tapping my foot and longing for a dance floor.

All three men sing vocals, mainly in English. Tim and Shorty call Ken "the writer" because he writes most of their compositions. Shorty describes Ken as a prolific writer who writes at least two songs per week. Ken says he loves song writing and finds it intellectually stimulating. The musical talent of the other two men enhances his writing. A goal of the group is to get Ken's songs exposed to an appreciative and wider audience.

Among the three they have over 100 years of musical experience and have formed a congenial group that

shows promise of bigger things in the future. Their first CD, **The G String Cowboys, Live at the Bamboo Room** (Ojochal) has just had its digital release (iTunes, Amazon, CD Baby, etc.). A physical CD release will take place soon. For a quick sample of several songs from their live CD, visit <https://soundcloud.com/user-912318606/sets/promo-clips-the-g-string>

Like many, these expats have taken a desire from childhood and turned it into a reality in Costa Rica, a place for making dreams come true. El Residente wishes them all the best. The group can be contacted or you can *like* them on their Facebook page, The G String Cowboys.



FUNERARIA POLINI

SABANA NORTE, DEL I.C.E. 200 OESTE, 175 NORTE
CÉDULA JURÍDICA 3-101-367550 - TELÉFONOS: 2231-3121 / 22313226
info@funerariapolini.com

Contact the ARCR office for details on discounts to members



A PUBLICATION FROM

THE TICO TIMES

WWW.TICOTIMES.NET

KEEP AN EYE OUT FOR OUR LATEST TITLE,
COMING IN DECEMBER 2016!

For more on "Love in Translation" and our first title, "The Green Season," visit store.ticotimes.net/collections/books



Christopher Howard's Relocation & Retirement Tours to Costa Rica
Recommended by the Association of Residents of Costa Rica (ARCR)

The FIRST logical CHOICE before you make the move...

Costa Rica's #1 Retirement Relocation Expert

Sign up here: www.liveincostarica.com



16 FROM THE EMBASSY



U.S. Embassy

Over the Christmas and New Year holiday the American Citizen Services section at the Consulate of the U.S. Embassy in San José sees an increase in the number of lost and stolen passports, often due to the flurry of holiday travel and increased incidence of petty crime. We encourage you to take the necessary steps to safeguard your passport when traveling: never leave bags unattended even in a locked car, keep your passport locked in a safe when not in use, maintain for your records a copy of the photo and biometric page of your most recent passport as well as the page featuring your entry stamp into Costa Rica.

Don't be a victim of fraud!

We have received recent reports of U.S. citizens paying high fees for passport or Consular Report of Birth Abroad (CRBA) forms and paperwork, or passport-sized photos.

The forms required for all passport and CRBA services are **free of charge**, and are available both online at travel.state.gov and in hard copy at the Consular section in San José. We can answer any questions you have about the forms at the time of your appointment. Please exercise caution if someone other than yourself is completing the forms for you.

We also wish to remind U.S. citizens that you can have your 2 inch x 2 inch passport photo taken at the Embassy in San José to ensure that your photo meets all the current specifications required by the Department of State. The cost of a set of passport photos at the Embassy's photo booth is 1,000 colones. Please note: specifications for Costa Rican passport photos are a smaller size than those required for U.S. passports, so they cannot be used for U.S. passport applications.

What Should a U.S. Citizen Do if his/her Passport is Lost or Stolen Abroad?

You will have to replace the passport before returning to the United States. If you wish to report the loss of your passport, you may file a notification online at [www.travel.state.gov/content/passports/en/passports/lost-](http://www.travel.state.gov/content/passports/en/passports/lost-stolen.html)

[stolen.html](http://www.travel.state.gov/content/passports/en/passports/lost-stolen.html), or you may do so in person at the U.S. Embassy when you apply for a replacement.

If you do not have immediate travel needs, we request you make an appointment to ensure we are ready and available to assist you when you arrive. You can find more information on passports and our appointment system by visiting costarica.usEmbassy.gov/passports.html. If you wish to expedite your visit, you can print and fill out your application and bring it with you.

If you have concerns or questions before your visit, or cannot find a suitable time on our schedule to visit us, you can reach our staff at the U.S. Embassy in San José via phone at +506 2519-2590 or email at ACSSanJose@state.gov. If you are scheduled to leave Costa Rica shortly, please provide our consular staff with the details of your travel. We will make every effort to assist you quickly.

If you are notified by a relative or friend traveling abroad that his/her U.S. passport has been lost/stolen, you may wish to contact the Office of Overseas Citizens Services, U.S. Department of State in Washington, D.C. at +1-888-407-4747. That office will be able to help you put your friend or loved one in touch with the closest U.S. Embassy or consulate. He or she must apply in person for a new passport.

What Do I Need to Replace my Lost or Stolen Passport?

The following list identifies a number of documents/items you should take with you to the Embassy. Even if you are unable to present all of the documents, the consular staff will do their best to assist you replacing your passport quickly. Please provide:

- A Passport Photo. One photo is required.
- Identification (valid driver's license, expired passport etc.)
- Evidence of U.S. citizenship (birth certificate, photocopy of your missing passport.)
- Travel Itinerary (airline tickets.)
- Police Report, if available.
- DS-11 Application for Passport (may be completed at time of application.)
- DS-64 Statement Regarding a Lost or Stolen Passport (may be completed at time of application.)
- Execution fee, paid in cash or via major credit card, in either dollars or colones.

How Long is a Replacement Passport Valid?

Replacement passports are normally valid for a full ten years for adults or five years for minors. If you have urgent travel plans, we can issue a limited-validity emergency passport on site, to quickly to allow you to return to the U.S. or continue on your trip. Once you return to the U.S. or your final destination, if you apply within one calendar year, you can typically turn in your emergency passport and receive a full-validity passport for no additional cost.

Other complicating factors, such as multiple lost/stolen passports or borrowing money from the State Department to fund your trip home, may cause you to receive a limited passport. The officer will discuss these circumstances with you at the time of your interview if this is the case.

Are Fees Charged to Replace Lost/Stolen Passports Abroad?

Passport fees are collected from applicants for replacement passports. Applicants unable to pay the fee will be asked to provide names of persons they feel would be able to assist them financially. See our information about Financial Assistance to U.S. citizens abroad and Sending Money Overseas to U.S. Citizen in an Emergency on travel.state.gov. A full schedule of passport fees can be found online at travel.state.gov. A regular passport renewal currently costs \$110, and an emergency passport costs \$135.

Can the U.S. Embassy Issue a Replacement Passport on a Weekend or Holiday?

The U.S. Embassy in Costa Rica cannot issue a replacement passport on a weekend or holiday. If you have an emergency need to travel or have been the victim of a serious crime, you can contact the after-hours duty officer for advice or assistance to learn what resources are available to you.



U.K. Matters...

A warm “Hello” from the Consular Section in the British Embassy in San José. As many of you may know,

we don’t process new passports or visas (of which more later) and most of our time is devoted to helping British Citizens, both residents and visitors, with information and practical help.

One of the most useful online tools we have available to us is the recently-introduced UK Government Website: www.gov.uk

If you are anything like us, you will have a healthy scepticism about websites that say they provide information to the public. This one, however, does pretty much what it says it will. The “Search” tool allows you to type in a couple of keywords and, amazingly, tends to return relevant results, often exactly what you were looking for!

Let’s have a go...

Type in “passport renewal abroad” and the first six results are all relevant, including the one we were looking for “Overseas British Passport Applications” as well as help on urgent applications, applying online, and tracking your application.

“Too easy” I hear you cry! Okay, let’s see what they say about taking a pet back home.... We type in “Pet passport” and among the results is “Bringing your pet dog, cat or ferret to the UK” (Really!)

Just a tiny dip sample of subjects shows: Benefits, Births, Deaths, Marriages and Care, Business and Self-employed, Childcare and Parenting, Citizenship and living in the UK, Crime, Justice and the Law, Disabled people, Driving and Transport, Education and Learning, Employing people, Environment and Countryside, Housing and Local services, Money and Tax, **Passports**, Travel and Living abroad, **Visas** and Immigration, Working, Jobs and Pensions. (We said we’d come back to Passports and Visas!)

There is information relating to Costa Rica as well. Type “Costa Rica” and get our Travel Advice, information on lawyers, medical facilities, translators, and a host of other things. We hope you won’t need the list of funeral directors, but it’s there just in case.

Do experiment with the www.gov.uk website. It’s pretty much unbreakable and there is a vast amount of information there for Brits at home and abroad. And if you spot something that’s wrong, or you need some information that’s not there, as always you can get in touch with us at the Embassy—find us in the “Useful Numbers” section of “El Residente”!

by Allen Dickinson

Driving in Costa Rica

This piece is adapted from a New York Times article about driving in Italy, written over thirty years ago. Because it so aptly applies to present-day driving in Costa Rica, it was too good not to share. Presented with thanks and apologies to the original author.

Attitude Preparation

There is a simple method of achieving the right state of mind for driving in Costa Rica; before you start your car for the first time, sit in the driver's seat, hold the steering wheel, and think the following, "I am the only driver on the road and mine is the only car." It may be hard to accept, especially after you have seen San José at any time during a week day, but many Tico drivers believe it, and so can you. Consequently, a local driver's reaction to any encounter with another vehicle is, first, stunned disbelief and then outrage. You don't have a chance unless you can match this faith. It isn't enough to say you are the only driver, or to think it—you've got to *BELIEVE* it. Remember, your car is *THE CAR*—all others are aberrations in the divine scheme of the universe.

The Law

In Costa Rica, as elsewhere, there are laws about stop signs, maximum permissible speeds, which side of the street you can drive on, and so forth. Here, however, these laws exist only as tests of character and self-esteem. Stopping at a stop sign, for example, is *prima facie* evidence that the driver is, if male, a cuckold or, if female, frigid and barren. Contrarily, driving through a stop sign is proof, not only that you are virile or fertile, but that you are a Person of Consequence. Every Tico's dearest desire is to be an exception to the rule—any rule. Remember, therefore, that signs, laws, and the commands of the Policía Municipal are only for the lowly.

The City Streets

The basic rule of driving in Costa Rican cities is as follows: Force your car as far as it will go into any opening in the

traffic. It is this rule which produces the famous Gordian Knot—a four-way deadlock where nobody can proceed. Sharp studies suggests that the deadlock can be broken only if any one of the cars backs up.

That brings up another important point about Costa Rican city driving; you can't back up because there is another car right behind you. If you could back up, however, and did, you would become an object of ridicule, for backing up breaks the basic driving rule and suggests a lack of virility.

The impossibility of backing up accounts for some of the difficulty you will have in parking. Aside from the fact there isn't anywhere to park, you will find that when you try to parallel park by stopping just beyond the vacant space and backing into it, you can't because that fellow is still right behind you, blowing his horn impatiently. If you point at the parking space, make gestures indicating that you want to park, he blows his horn. You can give up and drive on or you can get out and go back and try to get him to back up and let you park. This you do by shouting personal abuse into the window of his car. In that instance, one of two things will happen: the Tico may shout personal abuse back at you or, he may stare sullenly straight ahead and keep on blowing his horn. (If the second happens, you're whipped, for no foreigner can out-sulk a Tico driver.)

The parking problem created by the backing up problem creates the Right Lane Horror. At no time in a Costa Rican city should you drive in the right lane. One reason is that is where the buses stop to load and unload passengers. Another is that Costa Ricans usually drive head first into parking spaces. Thus, every third or fourth parked car has its tail end sticking out into the traffic making the right lane a narrow, winding adventure. Unfortunately, the left lane also has its hazards; the right lane drivers swerving in and out of the left lane as they steer around the buses and sterns of half-parked and double-parked cars. (Ticos double park only in four lane streets; in six lane streets they triple park.)

(Cont'd on page 23)

Places of interest

1. Clínica de Especialidades Médicas San Gabriel
2. Green Market Puerto Viejo
3. Iglesia Católica Diaconía Puerto Viejo
4. First Baptist Church
5. Autotransportes MEPE
6. ATM BCR
7. Car rental
8. Puerto Viejo Multicentro
9. Super Old Harbour



Map of Lower Caribbean Coast and Puerto Viejo



Map of downtown San José

Museums

1. M. de Arte Costarricense
2. M. de Arte y Diseño Contemporáneo (FANAL)
3. M. Nacional
4. M. del Ferrocarril
5. M. de Jade
6. M. de Criminología
7. M. de Oro y Numismática
8. M. Filatélico y Telegráfico
9. M. de los Niños

Hospitals

1. H. Calderón Guardia
2. H. San Juan de Dios
3. H. Nacional de Niños
4. H. de la Mujer
5. H. México
6. Cruz Roja Costarricense
7. H. Clínica Santa Rita
8. H. Clínica Bíblica
9. H. Clínica Católica

Markets

1. Mercado Central
2. Mercado Borbón
3. Mercado Paso de la Vaca
4. Mercado de Mayoreo
5. Mercado de la Coca Cola

Churches

1. Catedral Metropolitana
2. Iglesia La Merced
3. La Soledad
4. Santa Teresita
5. El Carmen



Bus stations

1. Caribe Sur / Valle de la Estrella / Bribí / Sixaola / Limón / Guápiles / Puerto Viejo de Sarapiquí / Siquirres / Río Frío / Pocora / Cariari
2. Liberia / Playa del Coco
3. Santa Cruz / Brasilito / Flamingo / Potrero
4. Nicoya / Tamarindo / Nosara / Sámara / Golfito / Palmar Norte / San Vito / Paso Canoas
5. Puntarenas / San Ramón
6. Jacó
7. Parrita / Quepos / Manuel Antonio Dominical / Uvita
8. Puerto Jiménez (Corcovado)
9. San Isidro del General (Pérez Zeledón)
10. Turrialba
11. Cartago / Paraíso
12. Heredia
13. Aeropuerto Intl. Juan Santamaría / Alajuela / Volcán Poás
14. San Carlos / La Fortuna / Los Chiles / Naranjo / Zarcero / Ciudad Quesada / Monteverde / Tilarán
15. Volcán Irazú
16. Panama City, Albrook terminal

COSTA RICA Seminar

Join us on the **last Thursday and Friday of any month** (except December) in San José to find out more about what it is like to live in Costa Rica and how to go about getting things done here. We invite professionals from each field to share their knowledge and expertise with you. Hear what they have to say and ask them the questions for which you have not found an answer.

Subjects covered in the seminars

Costa Rican Laws and Regulations - Health System in Costa Rica - Buying, Selling or Renting Real Estate - Title Guarantee - Costa Rican Culture - Technology, Communications and the Internet in Costa Rica - Banking in Costa Rica - Moving and Customs - Insurance in Costa Rica - Living in Costa Rica



We offer the following amenities:



Golf



Restaurant



Tennis



Pic Nic



Pools



Wi-Fi



Soccer



Gym



Conference room
& Events



Club House



Jacuzzi

Ask about our exclusive types of memberships

Memberships / sales

Tel: 2438-0004

Extensions 115, 116, 117, 119 y Golf 111

www.losreyescountryclub.com

membresias@losreyescountryclub.com

info@losreyescountryclub.com

golf@losreyescountryclub.com



Los Reyes Country Club

Right lane driving is further complicated by the Costa Rican style of entering from a side street by driving halfway into the first lane of traffic and then looking to see if another vehicle is approaching. The way to deal with these Lane Swervers and Cross Creepers is to blow your horn and accelerate around them. If you make a careful, polite in-line stop when your lane is invaded, you not only expose your social and sexual inadequacies, but you may never get moving again, since you also mark yourself as a weakling whom anyone can challenge with impunity.

While performing these dangerous gyrations, it is imperative to blow your horn. The more risky the maneuver, the more imperatively you must hoot, for all Tico drivers accept the axiom that anything you do while blowing your horn is sacred. (Horn blowing, incidentally, except in cases of serious danger, is against the law in many Costa Rican cities. I mention this because you would never know it otherwise.)

Another thing to remember is that one way streets in Costa Rica are not one way. To begin with, a driver who has a block or less to go assumes that when the one-way sign were erected, they were not thinking of cases like his. He drives it the wrong way, going full throttle to get it over with quickly and to prove that he really is in a terrible hurry. More important, however, is to realize that many Costa Rican one way streets also have a contra lane; that is, a lane for going the wrong way. It is reserved for taxis and buses and, indeed, is always full of taxis and buses, producing the Two-Way One-Way Street, which, in turn, produces law suits, pedestrian fatalities, and hysterical foreign drivers.

A distinctive feature in Costa Rican cities is the rotonda—a circular path fed by as many as eight streets. Costa Rican traffic commissioners have sensibly ordained one-way, circular traffic for most of the rotondas. But the traffic circle, with its minuet-like formality of movement is, to a Tico driver, an exhilarating opportunity to out-bluff other drivers by taking the shortest cross-lane path from their point of entrance to the intended exit, all the while sounding their horn and flashing their lights.

All Costa Rican city driving requires (and soon produces) familiarity with the Funnel Effect. Especially in those cities that preserve narrow pathways as streets, which basically means all Costa Rican cities, you will find that four lane streets often, after four or five blocks, become a two-lane and then a one-lane street. Since many Costa Rican cities are force-fed with automobiles by an excellent

Pista (highway) system, this produces both the Funnel Effect and the Reverse Funnel Effect.

At first glance it may appear that the Funnel Effect is more dangerous and unnerving than the Reverse Funnel Effect. This is not correct. True, the unwary motorist entering a Funnel may get trapped against one side or the other and have to stay there until traffic slacks off around one or two o'clock in the morning, but you can usually abuse your way out of the trap.

It is the Reverse Funnel which produces what insurance companies refers to as “death or dismemberment.” Imagine the effect of bottling a number of prideful and excitable Costa Rican drivers in a narrow street for half a mile or more and then suddenly releasing them. It's like dumping out a sack of white rats. As each car emerges, it immediately tries to pass the car ahead of it and, if possible, two or three more. The car ahead is passing the car ahead of it, and so on. If all Costa Rican cars were of even roughly the same power, this would simply produce wild, group acceleration. But, in Costa Rica the car engines range from 500 cubic centimeter midgets up through Formula 1 racing cars, and the first hundred yards of the Reverse Funnel, before the shakedown, produces a maelstrom of screaming engines, spinning tires, and blaring horns.

On The Highway

Costa Rican roads, just like Costa Rican streets, change their character unexpectedly. It is not unusual to be driving on a four-lane, modern asphalt highway, then round a curve and find that you are suddenly driving on a two-lane, sunken road with man-sized potholes. In reality however, most roads are somewhere in between these extremes.

The paramount feature of Costa Rican highway driving is la Paseo, meaning both “to pass with an automobile” and “to surpass or excel.” To paseo someone is to excel him socially, morally, sexually, and politically. By the same token, to be paseod is to lose status, dignity, and reputation. Thus, it is not where you arrive that counts, but what (or whom) you pass on the way. The paseo procedure is to floor your accelerator and leave it there until you come upon something you can pass. If la Paseo is not immediately possible, settle in the wake of the intended target, at a distance of six or eight inches, blow your horn and flash your lights until such time as you can pass. Passing becomes possible, in the Costa

Rican theory, whenever there is not actually a car to your immediate left, regardless of road width, or lane markings. Paseo, however, can also take place on the right side of the vehicle being overtaken.

When a Tico driver sees the car ahead of him slow down or stop, he knows there can be but two causes. The driver ahead has died at the wheel, or else he has suddenly and mysteriously become a Person of No Consequence, which is roughly something which, in Costa Rica, hangs over every driver's head. He, therefore, accelerates at once and passes at full speed. If the driver ahead has, in fact, stopped for a yawning chasm, the passer is done for. More often, however, the driver has merely stopped for a stop light. The same thing, naturally, is happening on the other side of the intersection and the result is the Cross Double Cross; the instant the light changes, all four drivers obey the Law of Occupation of Empty Space and the four cars meet in the middle of the intersection, followed closely by the cars which are tailgating them. What follows is the Four Handed Personal Abuse in which the drivers of the two right lane cars usually team up against the drivers of the two left lane cars, but this is by no means a rule. Sometimes those in the newer or more expensive cars team up against the ones in the cheaper, older cars.

In Costa Rica you will see big trucks—huge, semis with cabs seating four abreast. There are no special speed limits for trucks enforced in Costa Rica. As if the very sight of these things was not terrifying enough, the drivers often paint mottos across their cabs just above the windshield, usually religious. It can be nerve-shattering to meet one of these monsters coming down a narrow mountain road at fifty miles an hour, and panic may loom if you see “God is Driving” written on the cab, while “Heart of Jesus, Help me” does bear thinking about.

The Pedestrian

It is gauche to be a pedestrian in Costa Rica; a pedestrian is a Person of No Consequence. The Costa Rican pedestrian feels ashamed of their status and does everything they can to avoid acting like a pedestrian. To cross the street in the crosswalk, for instance, would be admitting they are a pedestrian. To cross the street, the Tico crosses in the middle of the block, strolling slowly through the traffic, trying to make it clear that they are not a pedestrian at all, but a driver who has momentarily alighted from their car. If you treat them like a pedestrian, thus drawing attention to their shame, they will be furious. Do not


look directly at them. Do not drive around them. Above all, do not stop for them. If they challenge you to drive within four inches of their toes, drive within four inches of their toes, as if they were not there. Of course, if you drive on their toes they will shout personal abuse and call a cop.

The Scooter Plague

To get some idea of the Costa Rican Scooter Plague, imagine all the chinks between cars filled with hurtling motor scooters, each sounding its tinny horn, racing its motor, and emitting a small cloud of hydro-carbons. I used to think that nothing could be worse than the Costa Rican Scooter Plague, but I was wrong. As young Ticos have accumulated more money in their pockets, the Scooter Plague has given way to the Cheap Chinese Motorcycle Menace which is louder, faster, and altogether more surpassing.

* * * * *

It is at this point the original narrative cuts off. Rumor has it that the author was seriously injured by a motorcycle traveling at break-neck speed while its Tico driver was simultaneously texting his novia about their plans for the evening.



**SPECIALIST IN RENTALS,
SALES, AREA TOURS AND
PROPERTY MANAGEMENT FOR
THE INTERNATIONAL
COMMUNITY**

Expat Housing
Costa Rica

(506) 6255-7577
info@expathousingcr.com

www.expathousingcr.com

PARADISE, WE HAVE A PROBLEM (25)

by Tony Johnson

Whether the good doctor means more time happy, more intense happiness, or more people happy, we will all agree that the expansion of happiness is certainly one purpose of our life.

The good doctor neglected to mention, however, the conflicting reality of life. Providing both exultant happiness and deep lows; life “sends” a confusing message. We are, after all, wired for both pleasure and pain, joy and sorrow. Those conflicting messages create, for some, unrealistic expectations and for others many disappointments. And no clear way to happiness.

It’s crystal clear, however, that our conflicts with the realities of life are a direct path to unhappiness.

Since we can be happy, some think we are supposed to always be happy. And when we’re not, some feel cheated out of their due. While for others happiness is a sick fraud; life sucks, don’t be deluded by positive moments, they believe. So which is it? Are we destined for happiness or misery? Or both? And, do we have any say in the matter?

Life definitely gives us much to be genuinely happy about. Glorious sunrises and dazzling sunsets, newborn babies and cute puppies, first love and lasting love, deep and satisfying relationships, illuminating discoveries and eye-opening insights, ‘hits the spot’ meals and thirst quenching water, small and large – I could go on forever. Because life brings so much joy and opportunity for sustained happiness, it is not surprising that some consider permanent happiness to be our natural state.

But life is also a major source of unhappiness. Both the reality of our existence and the life we lead within that reality contain huge obstacles to happiness and regular conditions for sadness. So it’s also not surprising that some consider sadness our fate.

Can we steer ourselves to more happiness? Less of sadness?

Life is Relentless Taskmaster

The reality is that life was not engineered to be easy, fun, or to provide us with continual, regular happiness. Those are modern human expectations, inconceivable to most of our ancestors and all other forms of life. Recall that of the

“The Purpose of Life is the Expansion of Happiness”

Deepak Chopra

billions of species that ever existed, 99.99% are extinct. In the end, our blessed earth flourishes with life and eventually extinguishes every life form. That’s because life is a relentless struggle for our daily bread and survival; a struggle to continuously adapt to the unchanging change of reality. It is a struggle that we will all ultimately lose. Also remember that life only lives by consuming other life. Predators devour prey, herbivores munch on plants, parasites and diseases live on their hosts, and plants live on the recycled energy of other decomposed plant life. We are all a sort of predator to some and prey to others.

Yet earth can also be accurately described as a “Garden of Eden.” It’s located in a “Goldilocks Zone” of our solar system; far enough from the sun that it is neither too hot nor too cold for liquid water, the essential ingredient of life. It gets constant energy from the sun to “power” life, but is protected from too much life killing radiation by a magnetic belt. Life flourishes nearly everywhere, successfully occupying almost every environment.

As beautifully as it currently suits us (seven billion and growing), life was not created just for humanity. Many of us raised in a faith that teaches “God made the earth for Man”, find that hard to believe because the reality of living is so demanding and difficult. Everyone everywhere struggles with ever present frustrations, disappointments, setbacks, and problems.

So, rather than being a perfect, paradisaical home designed just for us, where all our needs are effortlessly met, life on earth can, at times, be a veil of tears. Any happiness we enjoy, be it fortuitous or earned, requires an exquisite and continuous adjustment to life’s facts. We don’t merely desire, pursue, and enjoy happiness in a vacuum, we must achieve it under the pervasive conditions that constantly challenge our well being and survival: disease, the deaths of loved ones, the loss of what we need, temperature extremes, insufficient sustenance, old age (if we are lucky), and the always unchanging change. Very little of our lives is under much (if any) control by us; we are often at the mercy of conditions and the trials, tribulations, and the joys and opportunities daily existence brings to us.

Life Gives With One Hand, Taking With The Other

So if you are feeling happy, congratulations! Proving that the Buddhists are correct: “While life is suffering, we can still be happy”.

The possibility of happiness is not in question, we see and feel examples daily. The question is, how can we attain and maintain some level of happiness? How can we be happy in a world that both sustains and destroys us? How can we be happy in a world that provides and denies us, satisfies and yet obstructs our wishes, desires, and needs? How can we be happy when the essence of our very nature is both the capacity for happiness and the innate reflex of pain?

A good place to start is realizing that we sometimes create our own unhappiness by expecting the world to be very different than it actually is; when our expectations are in conflict with life's reality. By realizing that disappointment, pain, frustration, and dissatisfaction are the contributions that WE make to our own unhappiness, we take the first step toward sustaining contentment.

So, we do have some control, but mainly over how we FEEL; how we respond to the realities of existence. Life provides the material of existence. It's up to us to decide what we make of it.

To be happy we must understand how WE make ourselves unhappy. There are many, many reasons people feel unhappy. Some of the more obvious:

- A loved one has recently passed.
- We've lost a good job or suffered some other financial setback.
- We are alone and lonely.
- We are in ill health and in pain... and on and on...

Each of these examples, and most others I could offer, involve some loss, some setback, some disturbance to our preferred way of life. Often these setbacks leave us feeling “cheated” or “treated unfairly”. We feel that we've worked hard to create a certain way of life and it's been unfairly disrupted. “Life is hard already,” we think. “Why make it harder for me? That's not the way it's supposed to be!” We are unhappy when life's overall trend is opposite of our desires.

When we resist reality, we tend to suffer.

Conversely, there are many reasons for people to feel happy:

- A loved one has recovered from a life threatening illness.
- We've found a better job and enjoyed some financial advance.
- We feel surrounded by loving friends and family.
- We're in great health....and on and on...

Essentially we are happy when life is going well, not perfect, but well; when we feel that we are more or less on top of things and there are no big problems.

When we accept our reality, we tend to feel happy.

Again, life's conditions alone do not determine how we feel. How we “SEE” those conditions makes all the difference. We often forget our role in our own well being. We often believe we are only “seeing things as they are” - rather than how we assume them to be.

Let's test these principles in a situation most would see as the worst possible: “A dear friend has died! How am I supposed to ‘see’ that other than what it is - a terrible tragedy?? It's ridiculous to think I could somehow ‘see’ it in a way that makes me happy!”

Agreed! No perception can turn the death of a dear friend into a source of happiness. But our perceptions of the event can make it feel worse, or a bit better.

We've all enjoyed the natural return of some happiness. You know that with time life will look different, look better, and you'll feel better. That's because as time passes you will focus less on the loss and more on the positives of your existence.

We can accelerate that recovery by reviewing the MEANING the loss has for us. Certainly, you have not only lost a dear friend, but also the loss of other things connected with that friend. Things have changed; things you unconsciously counted on remaining the same. You can no longer get together to... or... and that's another loss, more meaning. Or, perhaps you are thinking, “This is wrong! This shouldn't be happening... he was so young.” And “life will never be the same... life will never ever be good again.”

I am not suggesting here that you twist reality. It would be preposterous to assert, “My friend is dead and that makes me happy” because it doesn't make you happy. It's tragic and painful, and there is nothing happy about it. Nor would it help to deny their passing.

So what could one possibly do to restore happiness after such an irreversible loss? Maybe if you ask yourself, “Am I seeing this situation realistically?”

Remember, throughout your life you HAVE recovered from setbacks and restored happiness after pain and loss. And that can happen again. It WILL happen again.

So, how do we get back to that place? ASK: "Is it really true that my life will "never" be good again?" Different yes, but "never good again"? REALLY? Your challenge is to see how to make your life good again in a different way. Maybe never as good as it was with your friend, but good, nonetheless.

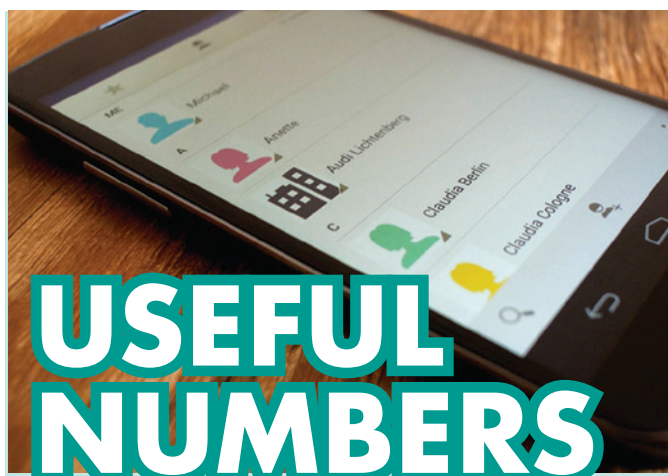
And, no this is not just pollyannish positive thinking. It's REALISTIC thinking.

To recap for today: We are innately able to feel happiness... and pain. Conditions out of our control can INFLUENCE what we feel. But our VIEW of the situation is IN our control and most impacts our FEELINGS. The key is to remember that our life was not custom made to meet our personal needs. If we fight

that reality and insist that "this is not how it should be", we make things worse and create unhappiness. But, if we accept that "this IS how things are" AND that we have the ability to "see" things differently, we can adapt to the undesirable. In other words, rather than battling reality and expecting IT to accommodate to us, we can accommodate ourselves TO LIFE – and in turn feel better. Maybe even happy! More, next time.

Regular readers may wonder why the change in focus from relationships to happiness? Actually, happiness has always been the topic – whether through improving relationships or by the adaptation to life. My purpose here is to expand your happiness by better understanding its nature and nurture.

Questions? Comments? Write me at: paradise.we.have.a.problem@gmail.com



United States of America Embassy

Phone: (506) 2519 2090

Address: Vía 104, Calle 98, San José

Hours: 8AM–4:30PM

American Citizens Services: (506) 2519-2590

Fraud prevention Department: (506) 2519-2117

Duty Officer (after business hours): (506) 2519-2000 (Dial zero and ask for the Duty officer)

United Kingdom Embassy

Phone: (506) 2258 2025

Address: Edificio Centro Colón, Paseo Colón, Provincia de San José, San José

Hours: 8AM–12PM, 12:30–4PM

Website: www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice/costa-rica

Email: costarica.consulate@fco.gov.uk

Canadian Embassy

Phone: (506) 2242 4400

Address: Sabana Sur, Edificio Oficentro Ejecutivo, atrás de la Contraloría, San José, 1007, Provincia de San José, San José

Hours: 7:30AM–4PM

Web site: <https://travel.gc.ca/assistance/emergency-assistance>

Email: sos@international.gc.ca

Emergency phone: +1 613 996 8885 (call collect where available)

French Embassy

Phone: (506) 2234 4167

Address: A022, San José, Curridabat

Hours: 7:30AM–12:00PM

Email: ambafrcr@gmail.com

Spanish Embassy

Phone: (506) 2222 1933

Address: Calle 32, San José

Hours: 8AM–4AM

Email: emb.sanjose@maec.es

Emergency assistance: (506) 6050 9853

Venezuelan Embassy

Phone: (506) 2231 0974

Address: Boulevard de Rohrmoser, Calle 80A, San José

Email: embavenezuelacostarica@gmail.com

Hours: 9AM–12:30PM, 2–4PM

(28) WHERE TO LIVE IN COSTA RICA?

by the ARCR Staff

Every year people considering relocation to Costa Rica ask ARCR the question, “Where is the best place to live?” The answer, of course, depends largely on personal preferences for climate, infrastructure, recreation, and multiple other environment and cultural choices. Therefore, it is impossible to give a single definitive answer. So, for those seeking “Best Place” information, we will provide here a thumbnail sketch of some of the different possibilities available.

Blessed with amazing biodiversity, Costa Rica has seven provinces (states) and each offers a wide variety of choices regarding topography, climate, city and town size, and amenities. There is not enough room for us to cover everything in detail here, but we will start in the north, from the Nicaraguan border, and work our way roughly south, highlighting some of the more popular locations.

The northwestern most province, Guanacaste, is one of the favorite spots for expats to live. In what is possibly the hottest part of the country, this province has a mix of awe-inspiring nature and beautiful beaches that make it an ideal spot to live a stress-free happy existence while enjoying surfing, fishing, and relaxing. There are many resorts here as well as boutique and luxury hotels, with lower priced accommodations available as well. The population centers have all the basic services and the largest, the capital city of Liberia, which is located inland, has developed into a self-sufficient area boasting an international airport, shopping and business centers, and private schools.

Many are attracted to some of the most commonly selected locations in Guanacaste, the beach communities. Some of the most popular are along the coast of the Gulf of Papagayo, at Playa Hermosa and Playa Coco. Further south and also popular is Flamingo Beach, featuring many homes and condos with views of the Pacific Ocean. The area is relaxed, and sport fishing is a frequent pastime. Other beach-front areas, like Playa Tamarindo, have long been popular with expats from North America

and Europe, and tend to be relaxed communities where one can enjoy surf and ocean-side recreation while not having to sacrifice any conveniences.

Further down the coast are beaches, Playa Nosara and Playa Guiones, to name two, which are popular communities for Americans. There are few paved roads, but the area contains some heart-stopping natural beauty, complemented with a wide variety of restaurants. Some upscale housing compounds exist, which can make this an exclusive, beautiful, but expensive area in which to settle. Here can be found most of the needed services like clinics, restaurants, private schools, and shopping.

In the north central part of the county are the provinces of Alajuela and Heredia. The northern areas of these provinces, which are quite mountainous, are lightly populated. Several of the smaller towns, such as La Fortuna and Quesada, are called home by some expats.

Both provinces extend southward and encompass part of the Central Valley. The largest communities on the valley’s northern side are the modern cities of Heredia and Alajuela. Many international companies have made their business centers in this area. There are many beautiful locales which are popular sites for relocation, and some boast large expat communities. The attraction for many are the beautiful mountain areas. Santo Domingo, Santa Barbara, and San Joaquin are among the most popular, possibly because they enjoy a slightly cooler climate and a quiet, almost rural, atmosphere. Shopping is extensive and residents enjoy all the amenities and convenience of a city without much of the downtown stress.

On the mid-western Pacific shore of the country is Puntarenas province. The major population area is in and around the city of the same name, which is primarily a sea-going industrial area. A few expats have found it desirable because of its proximity to the Gulf of Nicoya and the Pacific Ocean as well as its more isolated habitats.

Puntarenas extends along the Pacific coast south to Panamá and a large population of expats live in Quepos. There are many smaller, beach towns such as Jacó, Herradura, Manuel Antonio, Dominical, Uvita,

Santa Teresa, and Montezuma along the coast, and most are blessed with beautiful beaches. These smaller municipalities have a relaxed environment and attract a somewhat younger crowd focused on surfing and partying. Condos abound and many expats choose this coastal area for permanent residence. The temperatures, however, though slightly lower than Guanacaste, are still too hot for some. Manuel Antonio and Uvita are eco-friendly destinations and, although Manuel Antonio also offers plenty of partying places, it tends to be a bit more upscale.

Puntarenas Province balloons in the southern end of the country and extends to the border with Panamá. A few expats choose to live in the more isolated inland towns of San Vito or Neily.

In the central zone of the country is San José Province. It includes much of the Central Valley and has the highest population density of the country, with the capital city of San José as the focal point. This area is often preferred by expats because of its lower and stable temperatures. Many choose to live in, or close to, downtown San José to be close by the many art, culture, and business opportunities. Like any big city, all the main services are readily available but, also like other big cities, the cost of living is higher than in outlying communities.

The cities, towns, and municipalities of the Central Valley hold the largest concentration of expats anywhere in the country, and most choose to live in locations outside of downtown San José. Some of the more popular places for expats are on the west side of the city, in Santa Ana and Escazú. Housing accommodations, in Escazú, including homes and condos can be very expensive. On the east side expats tend to cluster in Curridabat and Tres Rios. All these areas are suburban to San José, and access to downtown and its extensive shopping and cultural activities is convenient. They all have similar characteristics: upscale neighborhoods, nice residential zones, close-by malls, private schools, hospitals, supermarkets, restaurants, gyms, etc. Escazú and Santa Ana have a warmer climate, while Curridabat and Tres Rios are somewhat higher and cooler. All have housing areas that cater to different budgets. The largest downside to living in San José or its suburbs is the traffic, which is usually heavy.

Ciudad Colón is another municipality to the west of San José that is gaining popularity with expats. It is slightly west of Santa Ana, but remains within easy commuting

distance of the embassies, malls, and medical facilities in Escazú and San José. It is a smaller town with fewer social activities, but is one many expats are choosing as their home for its lower cost of living and country atmosphere.

Directly across the Central Valley to the north, and a short commute to the city of San José, are the modern cities of Heredia and Alajuela, mentioned earlier.

The San José province extends southward to include the second largest city in Costa Rica, San Isidro de General. This is the second largest city in Costa Rica, featuring all the usual services and is home to a sizable expat community who enjoy a calmer lifestyle than that found in the “big city.”

To the west of San José, lower in the Central Valley, are some other smaller towns enjoyed by expats; Grecia and Atenas. Grecia, located about 40 driving minutes from San José, is a small town surrounded by mountains and plentiful coffee plantations. The location offers all the basic services, has plentiful shopping, and a wide range of living accommodations.

Atenas has a legendary reputation for having the best weather in the world and it is considered by many to be the cleanest town in the country. Like all Costa Rican towns of similar size, it provides the expected set of amenities and services, and various levels of housing options.

Living in either of these communities combines the advantages of being in a semi-urban area while having the calm of nature close by.

To the east of San José is the province of Cartago and the city of the same name. Cartago is a medium size city with a complete menu of public services, markets, and healthcare facilities. Located in the higher Orosi Valley where the weather is generally cooler, many choose Cartago due to its proximity to San José, making it easy to take advantage of the features of downtown San José via bus or taxi. Other expats prefer one of the smaller Orosi Valley communities, like Turrialba, because of their magnificent views, fresh air, and slower pace.

Limón province extends along the Atlantic Coast of Costa Rica. Much of the coastal area has a unique flavor and expats that decide to live there are often of European origin. Puerto Viejo, Cahuita, and Manzanillo have a typical Caribbean style that is colorful and picturesque. The hot, humid weather is not for everyone, however, but those seeking nature and the raw unspoiled beauty of the

beach, and who don't need a luxury resort to enjoy it, may find it to be the best place to live.

We've taken you on a very quick tour through the seven provinces of Costa Rica and, each holds its own attractions; recreation opportunities that run from surfing to white water rafting to zip linings through the jungle; communities which range from small, isolated towns to a mega-city, and everything in between. There are climate choices that extend from the very hot to chilly cool, and environments that range from dense tropical jungles, to volcanic mountain slopes, to amazing beaches; available arts and entertainment running the gamut from opera to beach side bars with local bands.

Although small in size, Costa Rica has many unique and beautiful places to visit and live. The many varied communities, cities and towns offer choices of locations that will suit almost everyone. To find where is right for you, we strongly recommend that you do lots of research before arriving. Then take the time, as much as a year, to visit and check out the various locations that most appeal to you before making your final decision.



SHIP TO COSTA RICA

MAKING SHIPPING TO AND FROM NORTH AMERICA EASY

Our new California warehouse serves ALL the West Coast of the USA and Canada for shipment of large and small consignments – from cars and boats to building materials and household goods.


**California
Container Cargo
Transfer**

2364 E. Sturgis Rd #A
Oxnard CA 93030
866-529-0497


**Florida
Pack and Stow**

2310 S Dock Street H109
Palmetto FL 34221
866-531-0160


**Main Office
Ship To Costa Rica S.A.**

Alajuela, Costa Rica
by the SJO airport
506-2431-1234

Toll free from USA 866-245-6923

shiptocostarica@racsa.co.cr

Shipping of FULL container loads from any place in Canada and the USA via the closest port of exit • Small shipments pickup ALL OVER the USA • Also shipping back full container loads and small shipments to the USA with door to door service.

by Dr. Anna Herndon, DVM

A Guide To a Long Relationship With Your Pet

Does one (or more) of your family members rate above everyone else and is the king or queen of the house? And does everyone tolerate their behavior, even encourage it? Who is this aristocrat? It is your pet.

Pets are a wonderful source of unconditional love and stability. To insure they have a long, healthy life with you, they need preventive care. This applies to dogs, cats, hamsters, chickens, horses... every pet. Responsible preventive care means getting them their shots and keeping their shots up to date, assuring that they get a regular deworming treatment, and giving them anti flea and tick medication.

Puppies during their first six months need to receive seven shots which include the critical boosters. This is the first step in having a healthy pet. And because their immune systems are not developed, puppies should be socialized inside the house for the first four to five months. After six months of growth and after receiving their shots, there will be plenty of time for socialization with other dogs. Kittens are perfect pets to remain indoors all their lives, but they still need their shots. If you want a long relationship with your pet, keep it in the house when it is very young.

As adults, pets require their annual vaccines of the "multiple" (e.g. a five in one) plus rabies. Even if your pet is an indoor only animal, you can bring parasites inside to them on your clothes or shoes, so vaccinations are important. Be sure to talk with your vet about the proper disease prevention which should include routine six-month inoculations against the Giardia parasite, and Bordetella bacteria which causes kennel cough in dogs. Ask for these.

If your pet is not already spayed or neutered, it is vital to have it done. There are several reasons why spaying/neutering is so important. Overpopulation of dogs and cats is a major problem; just take a look in any street. Unfortunately, if your female gets pregnant, there is little hope you will easily find good homes for the offspring. Plus the cost to properly manage the pregnancy is high.

Spaying/neutering can help reduce the pet's urge to wander which keeps them at home, and greatly lessens the chance they will pick up fleas, ticks or other parasites. This also prevents sexually transmitted infections (STIs). Dogs and cats get them too. The most common STI is sticker tumor or sticker sarcoma, a type of transmissible venereal cancer causing a tumor, often at the base of the male's penis. It is highly infectious to females and a tumor can manifest anywhere in their genital area. The only cure is chemotherapy. The illness can be transmitted to humans through contact with the animal's blood.

Costa Rica is a beautiful, green country, but with the green comes lots of rain and humidity, and the humidity allows parasites to thrive.

The number one illness I see in my clinic is caused by the tick-born bacteria, Ehrlichia. This dangerous organism is everywhere in Costa Rica. The disease can be managed, but once contracted, there is no cure. Usually, the first signs of infection is yellow mucous in the eyes, afternoon temperature spikes, and lethargy. The animal stops eating and drinking water, or eats noticeably less, or eats normally but still rapidly loses weight. Other symptoms may include a pale gum line, a blurry white tint to the eyes resembling a cataract, and possible mood swings.

This is a hard disease to diagnose. Following the bite of an infected tick, symptoms can manifest within seven hours or seven years. It infects cats, dogs, and horses to name a few. Adding to the frustration of diagnosis, Ehrlichia attacks each animal differently, according to the animal's particular weakness. This means it is a copy-cat disease. The symptoms mimic other problems such as kidney or liver failure, for example. Sixty percent of the initial diagnosis relies on the experience of a vet. Inexperience in diagnosing ehrlichiosis can result in an expensive battery of tests and the loss of valuable time before treatment begins. The symptoms and treatment of this illness are almost identical to those of Lyme disease, and time is of the essence.

There are two types of tests. The rapid Snap Test can be done at the clinic, however, it has a higher percentage of false negatives (the results show your pet does not have the

organism when in fact, it does), so I don't recommend it. The more reliable course of action is to send a blood sample to a laboratory to determine if the blood components fall within their normal ranges, specifically looking at the numbers of red and white blood cells and platelets. The diagnosis is based 70% on symptoms and 30% on the blood results. As with many infections, Ehrlichia can be transmitted to humans. It is a nasty, wasting disease your pet does not deserve, and anti flea and tick medication is the best defense when given every 21 days. This regiment keeps the level of medication high at all times.

Another prevalent parasite is Coccidia, a one-celled protozoa. In its oocyst form, it is extremely hardy and able to survive in most environments. Your pet can pick it up on its feet and ingest the oocysts during self grooming. The main symptoms are usually diarrhea or vomiting for three or four days. Then the symptoms stop for 24 hours and the owner thinks the animal is well – until the symptoms return. Often, if the first symptom was diarrhea, the symptom will switch to vomiting or vice versa. The animal must be treated as soon as possible after the initial onset or the chances for survival decrease dramatically. It is easy to diagnose with a simple fecal smear.

The two most common viral diseases in Costa Rica are in dogs and are canine parvovirus (parvo) and distemper; the cause of outbreaks is lack of proper booster shots. The parvo infection is highly contagious. The virus usually manifests itself most often in the intestines, so symptoms

are vomiting, diarrhea, weight loss, and loss of appetite. Although parvo is curable, it can leave the animal with other major health complications such as heart or digestive problems.

Distemper is highly contagious and there is no cure. In all canines, distemper impacts several body systems, including the gastrointestinal and respiratory tracts, and the spinal cord and brain. Common symptoms include high fever, thick green eye and nose discharge (but the top of the nose is dry and cracked), loss of appetite and lethargy, and hardening of the footpads. The viral infection can be accompanied by secondary bacterial infections and can present eventual, serious neurological symptoms such as seizures. Unfortunately, the animal must immediately be put down.

So, for that long relationship you want with your furry or feathery family member, establish a relationship with your veterinary doctor and welcome your pet to its new home in Costa Rica with a visit to them. In my clinic I see many cats and dogs. However, from your hamster to your horse, I make house calls for all!

If you wish to give us a visit, we have recently moved our office to new facilities in Santa Ana, Rio Oro. Call us for directions. See you soon!

Veterinaria Santa Ana
Dr. Anna Herndon, DVM, 996
2282-1706 / 8980-0606



SHOW YOUR COLORS!

ARCR now has custom made baseball caps with high quality embroidery of the flags of your favorite countries, for sale.

Keep the sun and rain off your head with these premium hats. Available in red for Canadian, blue for United States, citizens.

**Available for
\$12.00 each
in the ARCR office.**

Supplies are limited.



► **Alcoholics Anonymous**

Groups meet daily throughout the country; times and places change frequently. Schedules for AA meetings and their locations can be found at: www.costaricaaaa.com.

► **Al-Anon Meetings**

English language Al-Anon meetings are open to anyone whose life has been/is affected by someone else's problem with alcohol. Alanon meeting information can be found at: <http://www.costaricaaaa.com/category/al-anon/>.

► **American Legion Post 10-Escazú**

The A.L. Post 10 has relocated the monthly meetings to Casa de España in Sabana norte. There is an elevator so those with a handicap will not have a problem entering the building or reaching the meeting area. If you wish to attend please e-mail or call for directions. Terry Wise, cell#: 8893-4021, Claudio Pacheco, cell#: 8876-1394, home#: 2225-4239.

► **American Legion Post 12-Golfito**

Meetings are held 4 p.m. 1st Tuesday every month at Banana Bay Marina. The Golfito GOVETS have been helping Southern Costa Rica for over 20 years. Contact Pat O'Connell at: walkergold@yahoo.com or 8919-8947, or Mel Goldberg at 8870-6756.

► **American Legion Auxiliary**

The Legion Auxiliary meets the second Saturday of each month, at 1300 hours in Moravia. Contact Doris Murillo 2240-2947.

► **Asociación Caritativa Canadiense**

The activities of this charity began in 2000 as part of the Canadian Club of Costa Rica. Our Vision is that every student has access to a clean, secure, well-maintained and healthy physical environment in which to learn and grow. We use our donations to complement what the locals can raise. Our volunteer membership is made up of both Canadians and Costa Ricans, male and female. If you would like to contribute or learn more please contact Fred Boden, fredrick.boden@gmail.com

► **Bird Watching Club**

The Birding Club of Costa Rica sponsors monthly trips to observe local and migrant birds in various areas of the country. For more information, please visit our website: www.birdingclubcr.org

► **Canadian Club**

The Canadian Club welcomes everyone to join us for our monthly luncheons, and at our special annual events, like

our Canada Day Celebration, no passport required. There is no fee or dues to pay, just sign up with your email address and we will keep you informed of Canadian Events. For information visit our website: www.canadianclubcr.com or email Pat at: canadianclubcr@yahoo.com to sign up.

► **Cooking Class Club**

Meets the first Wednesday each month from 10am to noon. Learn how to create memorable dishes from a culinary expert. Each class will be followed by a four-course lunch and beverage at a special price. For location, directions, and more information, contact Barry Blazer at 6008-9944. (Reservations recommended.)

► **Costa Ballena Women's Network**

Costa Ballena Women's Network (CBWN) started in Ojochal with a handful of expat ladies almost 10 years ago. Our focus is networking, community, business, and social activities as well as offering an opportunity to meet new people. Monthly lunch meetings are held the 3rd Saturday of each month at various restaurants with guest speakers talking on interesting topics. For more information please contact: cbwn00@gmail.com and see our FB page - www.facebook.com/CostaBallenaWomensNetwork

► **Costa Rica Writers Group**

Published authors and writers; newbies, and wanna-bes make up this group, dedicated to helping and improving all authors' work, with resources for publishing, printing, editing, cover design; every aspect of the writing process. Third Thursday, January through November, Henry's Beach Café, Escazu, 11:00 a.m. Contact: bbrashears@gmail.com, 8684-2526.

► **Democrats Abroad**

Democrats Abroad meets on the last Saturday of every month at Casa LTG (Little Theatre Group). Contact Nelleke Bruyn, 2279-3553, e-mail: cr.democratsabroad@yahoo.com. Join Democrats Abroad at: www.democratsabroad.org. Register to vote absentee at: VoteFromAbroad.org

► **First Friday Lunch**

Each month ARCR sponsors a "First Friday Lunch." All are invited to join ARCR Officers and others for an informal lunch and BS session. There is no RSVP or agenda, just food and meeting new and old friends. Attendees are responsible for their own food and drink expenses. The FFL takes place at 12:00 PM on the first Friday of the month. Gatherings are at the Chinese restaurant, Mariscos Vivo, located behind the Mas x Menos grocery store (located across from the Nissan Dealer) and not far from Hotel Autentico (the former Hotel Torremolinos, where the ARCR Seminars are held).

► Little Theatre Group

LTG is the oldest continuously running English-language theatre in Central or South America and currently puts on a minimum of four productions a year. The group's monthly social meetings are held in the theatre on the first Monday of the month from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. and everyone is welcome. Membership: Student C2,500, Adult: C5,000, Family: C8,000. For more information Call the LTG Box Office 8858-1446 or www.littletheatregroup.org

► Marine Corps League

Meets at 11 a.m. the 2nd Saturday of every month, at Tres Hermanas Restaurant on the service road opposite Hospital Mexico. Look for the big bull statue in front. For information call Bill Enell at 8812-0126 or write to mcleaguecr@gmail.com

► Newcomers Club

Newcomer's Club of Costa Rica (for women) meets the first Tuesday of every month, September through May. Contact: 2588-0937, email us at: costaricaporo@yahoo.com or visit our website at: www.newcomersclubofcostarica.com

► PC Club of Costa Rica

The PC Club meets the third Saturday of each month; social, coffee, doughnuts at 8:30 a.m. The meeting starts at 9 and ends at 11 a.m. Guests are allowed one free month before joining. Meetings are held at the Pan American school in Belén. For information call Dick Sandlin at 2416-8493, email him at d_sandlin@email.com or visit our website at: www.pcclub.net

► Perez Zeledon International Women's Club

PZIWC was formed in November 2009 to promote friendship between English speaking women in Perez Zeledon and, through friendship, to make positive contributions to our local community. The PZWIC meets for luncheons on the SECOND Tuesday of the month, hosts Walkers Day on the THIRD Tuesday of the month, and has a Games Day (board and card games) on the FOURTH Tuesday of each month. Event sites change frequently, so call or check our website for locations. More information can be obtained from Jane Gregson at 8899-6859 or Cathy Carrolan at 8384-8281, or email to: pzwomansclub@gmail.com. Please visit our website at: www.pzwomansclub.org

► Professional Women's Network

PWN provides its members with opportunities to network with other professional women with the goal

of aiding personal and professional development of entrepreneurs, students, and professionals. PWN sponsors service and outreach programs to "give back" to the community. The meeting charge is 4,000 colones for visitors, members 3,000. Membership fee is 12,000 colones and includes listing in the business directory, if desired. Meetings schedules vary. For info on the speaker for the month and to register, call Helen at 2280-4362. Location: Tin Jo Restaurant in San José, Calle 11, Av. 6-8. Or email us at: pwn.costarica@gmail.com. PWN website is www.pwnrcr.com

► Radio Control Sailing Club

Meets at Sabana Park Lake. For information write Walter Bibb at: wwbbsurf40@yahoo.com

► Wine Club of Costa Rica

The wine club usually meets at 1 p.m. on the last Sunday of each month. Join us to tantalize your taste buds and expand your education. For more information on upcoming events please contact us at 2279-8927.

► Women's Club of Costa Rica

The Women's Club of Costa Rica is the oldest, continuously operating, philanthropic organization for English-speaking women in Costa Rica. The Club is focused on serving community needs in Costa Rica, particularly on children's needs. Along with its philanthropic fundraising activities, WCCR also hosts regular lunches, teas and many special interest groups. Guests are welcome and further information and a calendar of planned events can be found at: www.wccr.org

► Women's International League for Peace and Freedom

Open to men too. English language group in Cariari de Belén, English-Spanish group in Heredia, Spanish language group in San José. We work on peace and human rights issues. Call Mitzi, 2433-7078 or write us at: peacewomen@gmail.com

"Club members should review the contact information for their clubs and make sure it is up to date. Send any changes or corrections to: info@arcr.net, Subject line; El Residente."



BUSINESS DIRECTORY (35)

Holidays and Observances of Costa Rica

Sunday January 1st
New Year's Day
National Holiday

Tuesday April 11th
Battle of Rivas
National Holiday

April 9th - April 16th
Easter Week
National Holiday

Funniest One Liners

Some thoughts on aging.

Your kids are becoming
you... but your
grandchildren are perfect!
Going out is good. Coming
home is better!

If you forget names it is OK,
because some people forgot
they even knew you!

You realize you're never
going to be really good at
anything like golf.

You sleep better on a lounge
chair with the TV 'ON'
than in bed.

You tend to use more 4
letter words... "what?"...
"when?"

What used to be freckles are
now liver spots.

Everybody whispers.

You have 3 sizes of clothes
in your closet... 2 of which
you will never wear.

First Realty Costa Rica

Right Country

Right People

Right Time

COSTA RICA

- Office 506-2220-3100
- Cel. 506-8374-5050
- USA 954-306-1510

Mercedes@FirstRealtyCR.com www.FirstRealtyCR.com

For all your Real Estate needs



Mercedes Castro

Coopealianza

Your number one
Credit Union in Costa Rica

SAVINGS AND INVESTMENT ACCOUNTS

*We have the best interest rates
accounts in Colones or Dollars
VISA debit card and web site*

We have 52 branches

*Personalized attention door to door
Guarantee Deposits and Income Tax Exempt*

For information, contact account executive:

RONNY VALVERDE

Telephone: 4800-2861

email: rvalverde@coopealianza.fi.cr



Prisma Dental

• Implants • Laser Bleaching • Porcelain Crowns • Veneers

(506) 2291-5151 Dental Emergencies: (506) 2282-5400

clinic@prismadental.com www.prismadental.com

300 mts east of Plaza Mayor, Rohrmoser

Josef Cordero
Telma Rubinstein
Cosmetic Dentistry



Are you a member of ARCR? Join today!

Discover the benefits of membership

Complete residency application services include:

- Translation of necessary documents into Spanish.
- Personal assistance with the application process.
- Legal assistance from attorneys.
- Application for residency from outside Costa Rica.
- Personal escort to Immigration.

Seminars on relocating to Costa Rica.

Discounts on:

- Insurance (auto, homeowner, trip.)
- Group health insurance.
- Legal services packages.
- International mail and courier service.
- Over 200 hotels, resorts, restaurants, and businesses.

Personal escort services for:

- Enrolling in the CCSS (CR Social Security).
- Opening a bank account.
- Obtaining a Costa Rican driver's license.
- Obtaining or renewing cédulas.

EN-SP-EN Certified Translation of documents.

Bi-monthly newsletter containing the latest updates on living in Costa Rica.

Enroll now and receive all these benefits and more!

For more information, or to enroll online, go to our website at: **www.arcr.net**, email us at: **info@arcr.net**, call ARCR Administration at: **(506) 4052-4052**, or drop by our offices on Calle 42, Avenida 14, San José, Costa Rica (the ARCR office is on the right.)

