

El Residente

Following a Dream:

**Albert
Correia**

Also in this issue:

There are Chinese in China Town
I live in a Ropa Americana

What is it About Samara?
Problems of Happiness

**FREE MAPS
inside**

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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:	service@arcr.net
Insurance Office:	insurance@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

Maybe you noticed it on the cover, we have evolved from being “Costa Rica’s English language newsletter” to becoming “ARCR’s English Language Magazine.” This is the happy result of our growth, expanded coverage, and increased distribution. Nothing is changing, we’ll still be giving you the same high quality information, tips, and interesting content, we have just grown up a little.

Do you know a deserving charity? In the past we’ve run free advertising for deserving charities and organizations such as WCCR, Toys for Tots, Wounded Warriors, and our own Tree of Hope. We are expanding that effort and are looking for a few other charitable organizations for which we can help spread the word in the expat community. If you know a group that could use a little assistance getting their cause out to a larger audience, please have them contact ARCR via email at info@arcr.net with the Subject line, *Attn: El Residente* and maybe we can help.

Submissions of stories to be published in *El Residente* are always welcome. Authors should be aware, however, that their articles are subject to editing to assure the quality of the magazine and that the piece reflects positively on the writer. (Edited articles will be reviewed by the authors for approval of the edits before publishing.) If you have written something you would like us to consider, send it to: info@arcr.net with the Subject line, *Attn: El Residente*.

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: Allen Dickinson.

ACROSS THE BOARD

Notes and News from the Board of Directors

COMING SOON: New membership cards with a magnetic data strip which will allow members to take advantage of advertisers' discounts! Watch for them!

Eduardo, the mail room clerk, is no longer with ARCR. Upgrades to the mail service have been made, including that now ARCR members will be sent a notification by email that they have mail to be picked up. All email communications with the office should still go to: info@arcr.net or service@arcr.net

Mary, the receptionist, has also left. Her replacement is Laura Cerdas. Stop by and say "Hello" and introduce yourself.

IMPORTANT NOTICE: Although the current United States national voting cycle has been completed, in order to decrease the possibility of future voting fraud among absentee voters, the United States Department of Defense (the governing body for absentee ballots) has implemented some new rules for obtaining absentee ballots; voters must now renew their request for absentee ballots EVERY YEAR. For further information on these changes, please read the US Embassy column in this issue.

The Board of Directors suggests that Costa Ricans who have lived outside of the country for a period of time should consider attending the ARCR Seminars to get up to date information about their country. If you know of anyone returning to this country, please remind them of the monthly Seminar.

A REMINDER: The rules regarding minor traffic accidents changed in January, 2016. In accidents involving damage to vehicles only, the new law states: "In cases where both drivers can come to an agreement, the rules requiring an investigation by a Transito officer



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.

have been modified so that an officer need not be summoned if certain conditions exist (no injuries). Both parties DO need to fill out a minor accident declaration to be submitted to their insurance companies (along with any photographs, videos, or other evidence) with their claims, however."

Copies of the Costa Rica Minor Traffic Accident report (in Spanish and English) have been posted to the ARCR Facebook page and the ARCR Forums. Of course, the time to have the forms on hand is when the accident happens, so the BoD recommends printing blank forms and keeping them in the vehicle for when they are needed. (Keeping a blank Spanish language copy for the other driver who may not speak English, might be a very good idea.)

In case you missed the news release in February, AyA, the Costa Rica water and sewer authority, has announced upcoming water rationing in the Central Valley. Rationing, up to 12 hours a day, will take place from March through July. If you didn't see the notice, the Tico Times has an article with more details and a list of affected locations: <http://www.ticotimes.net/2017/02/20/water-rationing-costa-rica>

by Michael Miller

Yes, There are Chinese in China Town

If you have Costa Rican friends who live in San José, and you would like to see them laugh, bring up the subject of Barrio Chino. This is San José's newly created Chinatown, and our Tico friends think it is a *very* funny subject.

San José did not have a Chinatown until 2012, when the city took the very busy Calle 9 and converted seven blocks of it into a pedestrian walkway. At the northern end of that walkway, on Avenida 2, the Chinese government graciously paid for and constructed a grand Chinese "Welcome Gate." The new sign reads "Barrio Chino." Then, the city announced to the world that San José now has a Chinatown.

Many Costa Ricans have been very critical of this move, and for a number of reasons. Foremost among those they cite is that the city took an important north-south thoroughfare and blocked it from vehicular traffic, causing additional congestion and a difficult re-routing of traffic. Businesses owners along this route say they

have suffered because of the loss of traffic. And, during the rainy season, there is constant flooding because of poor drainage. Another, and the most commonly heard criticism, is: "There aren't any Chinese in Chinatown."

Well...not so fast.

At first glance you may think that our Tico friends are correct. The first thing that you see as you approach the Chinese Welcome Gate are two very popular panaderías (local bakeries) that are a prominent feature of Costa Rican life in downtown San José and elsewhere throughout the country.

Then, if you walk a half-block south along the pedestrian walkway, it opens up to the Plaza de las Artes which is famous for the statue of John Lennon sitting on a park bench. Opposite John is the picturesque Soledad Catholic Church, and across the Plaza from the church is a POPS Ice Cream outlet. You can't get any more Costa Rican than that! And it is certainly *not* Chinese.



The grand Chinese Welcome Gate on Avenida 2 welcomes visitors to Barrio Chino, San José's new Chinatown.

But, keep walking. As you continue south along the Barrio Chino walkway you will discover that there are many Chinese owned businesses. Some of them have been part of the neighborhood for a long time, others are brand new.

One of the first Chinese owned stores you will encounter is a new business run by a young Chinese entrepreneur, Tony Wong. Tony's store features Chinese designed clothing for young children. He told me that his products have been very popular with Costa Rican parents and that he has styles that cannot be found anywhere else in the country. When I arrived at his store, Tony was brewing some Chinese green tea on an interesting looking grill in the picture window of his store. He graciously served me some of the delicious tea in an elegant little Asian teacup.

Tony is from Canton (Guangzhou), China, and has been in Costa Rica for three years. He speaks Spanish quite well, and says he plans to brew Chinese tea throughout the day to serve to visitors who come to his store.

On the next block I discovered the store where Tony purchased his tea set. This store, called Asiatica, is chock

full of the kinds of things that are needed to set up a Chinese kitchen, including dishes and tea sets, some of them very fancy. There are pots and pans, ceramic bowls, decorative sets of chopsticks, and knives and cleavers of all sizes. The shelves also display ornate candles that might be used for religious gatherings, and decorative Chinese lanterns for celebrations. They also sell a large variety of herbs, oils, plum sauces, fish sauces, spices, and many, many kinds of teas.

One of the most interesting discoveries in Barrio Chino is the Chinese-Costa Rican Cultural Center. On two floors, the Cultural Center has classrooms, offices, and a large open room where they offer Tai Chi lessons. The main function of the Cultural Center is however, to teach Mandarin Chinese, both spoken and written. It is traditional for Chinese families throughout the world to ensure that each generation of children is fluent in Mandarin. This is where they can come to learn the language.

The administrator for the Cultural Center, Monica Hong, originally from Canton, China, told me that their

Left, above: Oils, herbs, hot sauces and teas are just a small sample of the selection available at Asiatica, a store with virtually anything you would need for a Chinese kitchen / **Left, below:** Exquisite porcelain urns and statuettes, some worth many thousands of dollars, are just a few of the treasures to be found in Barrio Chino / **Middle:** Young entrepreneur, Tony Wong, brews green tea in the picture window of his store. He offers tea to customers who come in to see his selection of children's clothing / **Right:** This statue of the Chinese philosopher, Confucius, marks the southern end of San José's Barrio Chino.



most popular offering is cooking classes. These classes, which teach the basics of Chinese cooking, are attended enthusiastically by both Chinese and Ticos. The Cultural Center currently offers eight classes and charges 8,000 colones (about \$14 US) for each two-hour session.

Another fun stop in Barrio Chino is the Hobby Center. This specialty store, owned by Joanna Fu, features hundreds of different model kits: cars, trucks, battle ships, military tanks, planes, helicopters, and many more. Some of these come from China, but others are from Russia, Japan, Korea, and other countries. Ronald, the Hobby Center's Tico sales guide, helped me learn about the huge selection available. He explained that these are very exact scale models and, because of the prices of many of these models, most of their customers are not children, but grown-ups.

If you want to get a real feel of China, there is one store that sells Chinese art and porcelain. As hard as I tried, I could not figure out the name of this store, but there is no mistaking it. As you walk back through this cavernous warehouse of a store you will see typical Chinese wall-art, small statues, beautiful dishes and serving sets. If you keep going all the way to the back of the store, you will be rewarded with an amazing selection of exquisite porcelain statuettes and urns. I was told that these are from the "porcelain capital of China" along the Yangtze River, where craftsmen have been making pieces like this for centuries. Many are remarkably beautiful, and quite expensive; some of the pieces costing many thousands of US dollars.

As you continue walking south in Barrio Chino, you will come to a statue of the Chinese philosopher, Confucius. At this point, you are at the southern end of San José's Chinatown.

If you are familiar with the Chinatowns in the western United States or Canada, you may conclude that San José's Barrio Chino does not have the look, the aromas, or the feel of the older, more established Chinatowns in other cities. For one thing, there are very few authentic Chinese restaurants in Barrio Chino, and those few that are there are more like the Costa Rican diners that are known as "sodas." Unlike the older, more established Chinatowns, I found no dim sum, no live fish, and no lop chong or Peking ducks hanging in the windows in the area. Nearby, and fairly well hidden along Avenida 2 you can find a couple of very authentic Chinese restaurants featuring all of the specialties mentioned above. When many expats get hungry, two of the city's most popular Asian restaurants, Tin Jo and Don Wang, are conveniently located on the next block over, Calle 11.

There are tens of thousands of people of Chinese ancestry living in Costa Rica. Some are new immigrants and some are from families who have been in Costa Rica for generations, many whose ancestors came to Costa Rica to help build the railway system in the 1870s. They reside all over the country, and those who live in San José have not clustered in any one specific neighborhood; they live and shop throughout the city.

But, to say that there are no Chinese in San José's Barrio Chino is not accurate. Remember, this is the world's newest Chinatown. It is young and growing, and the businesses that you see there today are the pioneers. There is enough to see right now to make it worth your time to take a walk through Barrio Chino the next time you are in downtown San José. It's all part of The Real San José.

Michael Miller is the author of the first and only guidebook that focuses on downtown San José, titled: The Real San José. Paperback copies are available at the ARCR office, and an electronic version is available at Amazon/Kindle.



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by Rómulo Pacheco

Living Trusts in Costa Rica (Part 2)

I hope you were able to catch Part 1 about this very important matter in the January/February El Residente. In this issue I will continue with listing the advantages of the living trust and also describe some of the disadvantages.

ADVANTAGES

Flexibility - A living trust can contain other, separate trusts. For example, if you plan to leave some of your property to your minor children in trust, you could specify that the property will be placed in a separate, irrevocable children's trust. You can then design separate trusts for several beneficiaries, all funded (usually at your death) by the assets in your living trust.

Helps in managing your affairs - If you have a trustee, a living trust can manage your property for you. Say you rent out condos; your trustee can take over the management while you receive the income, minus the trustee's fees.

A living trust can also provide a way to care for you and your property in case you become disabled, which is why many people use them. Typically, you would set up a revocable living trust, fund it adequately (or give someone in whom you have confidence a power of attorney to fund it in the event of your incapacity), and name a reliable alternative trustee (often an adult child) to manage it should you become ill. This avoids the delay and red-tape of expensive, court-ordered guardianship. And, at the same time the trustee can take over any duties you had of providing for other family members.

Protects your privacy - Like all trusts, living trusts maintain the deceased's privacy more than wills, since there's typically no public record required. However, if the trust is funded through a pour-over provision in your will, the items transferred from your probate estate may indeed appear in a public record, especially if the will is contested.

Easy to create and change - It is not hard for a lawyer to create a living trust tailored to your estate objectives, and you don't have to go through the formalities required to execute or change wills; just be certain that you are

dealing with an attorney with expertise in this area of practice and have him write one specific to your personal circumstances.

Good for far-flung family and assets - Say you want your estate administered by someone who does not live in Costa Rica (often a child who's grown up and moved away). A living trust can be better than a will because the trustee probably won't have to meet the residency requirements or stay in the country to be imposed upon by executors.

DISADVANTAGES

Cost - Though there may be some eventual savings in reduced or eliminated probate costs, registration fees and other incidental costs of the trust are incurred up-front, while the savings generally don't accrue until death.

Title problems - Not all items may be easily transferred into a trust. Jewelry can be a problem, and if you transfer title to your car into the trust you may have trouble getting insurance on it, since you don't own it anymore.

Other traps - Revocable trusts, along with other non-probate transfers (like insurance policies) are not automatically revoked or amended on divorce, unlike wills. If you don't amend the trust your ex could end up being the beneficiary. If you're in certain specialized situations, you might ask your lawyer whether a living trust is a good idea.

To reiterate what I said in Part 1, deciding if 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. If you have any questions or want to create a living trust, please give me a call and I will be glad to help you.

Romulo Pacheco

*Attorney at Law, Notary Public
Pacheco, Marin, and Associates*

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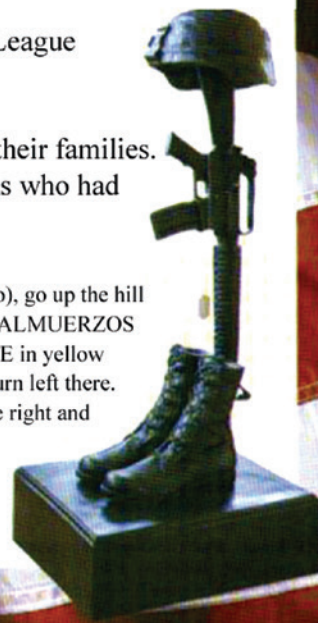
FRIDAY, MAY 26TH, 2017, 11AM.

This year's Memorial Day Ceremony will be conducted by the Marine Corps League Costa Rica at the Campo de Esperanza Cemetery in San Antonio de Escazú.

Everyone is invited to attend, especially veterans and widows of veterans and their families. Admission is free. The names of the United States of America military veterans who had passed on in Costa Rica since the last Memorial Day Ceremony will be read.

Directions to the Cemetery: From behind the Catholic church in San Miguel de Escazú (Escazú Centro), go up the hill on Calle 132 following the curves in the road. At about two kilometers, you will see a red TIQUICIA ALMUERZOS sign by a street on the right. About 50 feet past that, you will see a sign INTERSECCION ADELANTE in yellow and black with green graffiti. At the next road on the left there is a sign Dr. Elizondo with an arrow. Turn left there. Go over a little bridge with a yellow fence on both sides of the road. Turn right at the first street on the right and go straight up the hill on the curving road until you come to the Cemetery on your left.

MARINE CORPS LEAGUE COSTA RICA





Love

in translation
LETTERS TO MY
COSTA RICAN
DAUGHTER



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FROM THE EMBASSY

11



Just voted in November? Still traveling or living overseas? You should register and request your absentee ballot to vote again in 2017, to ensure your election office knows where to send your ballot for any upcoming special elections for federal office. Some states are also holding gubernatorial or other statewide elections this year.

The Federal Voting Assistance Program (FVAP) recommends all overseas U.S. citizens send in a completed Federal Post Card Application (FPCA) early every year. The FPCA is the registration and ballot request form accepted by all states and territories. You can use the FPCA online assistant, complete the fillable PDF version, or pick up a hard copy version from the U.S. Embassy. Be sure your contact information is accurate in case your election office needs to reach you.

If you'd like more information on the Federal Voting Assistance Program or need help with the absentee voting process please go to FVAP.gov or call FVAP at 703-588-1584 (toll free 1-800-438-VOTE or DSN 425-1584) or email vote@fvap.gov. Toll-free phone numbers from 67 countries are listed at: FVAP.gov. Find FVAP on Facebook at: facebook.com/DoDFVAP and follow on Twitter: [@FVAP](https://twitter.com/FVAP)

If you have a need for services from the American Embassy Federal Benefits Unit (FBU) you must request an appointment. The San José FBU is a regional office that provides services to 48 countries and is responsible for over 60,000 beneficiaries. Therefore, you may experience some delays in responses from the Federal Benefit Unit.

To ensure that the FBU has all the information it needs to assist you, you are encouraged to submit your request using their online fillable form: <https://costarica.usembassy.gov/fbu-inquiry-form.html>

Users of the fillable form should be aware that this form is not secure and any information you send via this form is not guaranteed to be safe from potential loss or interception.



Did you know that about three years ago, the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) stopped keeping records

of its citizens abroad? It has been a longstanding practice for Embassies worldwide to keep records of their nationals living overseas, and up until 2013, the FCO also maintained an online consular registration system for British nationals. But we found that the system didn't work particularly well, because although many residents and visitors would register with their local Embassy upon arrival to the country, a much smaller number of people would remember to advise the Embassy once they decided to leave. Lists became very difficult to keep updated and were not very helpful in times of a crisis, when they were most needed.

The FCO and its network of Embassies, High Commissions and Consulates are highly committed to providing British nationals with an efficient consular service, but the way in which those services are delivered has been transformed, taking into account the tools available to us today.

FCO Travel Advice

For the latest updates on travel and security information for Costa Rica, Nicaragua and other countries you may wish to visit, check out: www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice where you can read the latest guidance and subscribe to receive updates by email. You can also follow FCO Travel News on Facebook: [/fcotravel](https://facebook.com/fcotravel) and on Twitter: [@fcotravel](https://twitter.com/fcotravel)

What should you do in the event of a crisis?

In a crisis, our latest advice will be published online at: www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice/costa-rica and will be further promoted on our social media channels. In some cases, the Embassy may signpost you to information from local authorities, like the Cruz Roja or the Ministry of Health, since they will be the ones managing the situation on the ground. But we will also issue our own messages for nationals, so it is a good idea to follow us on Facebook: [/ukincostarica](https://facebook.com/ukincostarica) and Twitter: [@ukincostarica](https://twitter.com/ukincostarica) where you can read our latest guidance and even message us, if necessary.

And what if technology fails?

If we find ourselves unable to reach out to nationals via our online channels, we'll make use of traditional communication outlets like radio stations and our consular agents' networks. And of course, you're always free to give us a call at 2258-2025.

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by Allen Dickinson

I live in a Ropa Americana (and other current topics)

What is a Ropa Americana? Basically, it is a clothing store, though they often sell other fabric goods like towels, sheets, or curtains, and few other things. From whence comes that name you might ask? It's from the goods they sell (clothing = ropa) most of which comes from the USA. Much of the stock is used (slightly) and occasionally may be damaged – rips, stains, etc. But more often the items are name brands which are close-outs from big name stores; new items with the original price tags still affixed. They may have gone out of season, weren't "popular" sellers, or are for different reasons, not salable in the USA.

Ropa Americana stores usually receive their shipments in large containers which were loaded in the traditional "stuff-in-as-much-as-you-can" method. Therefore, the items found in these stores are often wrinkled. But, don't let that deter you, careful evaluation can unearth some prime, high fashion, and eminently serviceable items at minimal prices – think \$4.00 for an Izod shirt or an I. Magnin dress in perfect condition (after

ironing) for \$10.00. I need to note most items sold at Ropa Americana stores are for women and it is more difficult to find mens clothes in sizes for a larger person, but a diligent search can turn up some excellent, larger-size men's clothing from time-to-time.

So, how did I come to live in such a place? My wife and daughters have brought several of those stores home, one piece at a time. At the going prices, who can blame them? The only bad part is that we live in a typical Tico house with little storage area, and there has become so many pieces of clothing in the house that they have resorted to stuffing some of the older items into bags. If only I could convince them to sell a few...

After over ten-years here I made my first foray into a Costa Rican movie theater. It was at the insistence of my wife and kids who wanted to see some new horror movie I had never heard of (Ticos seem to love ALL horror movies.) I had heard tales of what such an adventure was like and so, with some trepidation, off we went. And it wasn't bad! The movie dialog was in English with Spanish subtitles, the half-capacity crowd civil and quiet, the seats clean and modern, and the ticket price was MUCH better than back home; about



\$5.50/person. (But, like the North American cinemas, popcorn, drinks, and candy are sky high.) I (we) will go again.

I may have been in CR too long because, in the words of one person, I have apparently “Gone full Tico!” Maybe it’s just me, but three things happened recently, over which I had full control, that may be indicators of my transition. (I prefer to think these things happened because I am in the Cat Herding business; being married to a Tica got me into that profession.)

So, what happened?

1) Me, the guy that provides a service of obtaining annual Riteve vehicle inspections for others, forgot my own. No big deal. Well, at least it wasn’t until a week into the month following expiration when I was stopped and issued a ticket for driving with an expired inspection. 50,000 colones! I got the inspection the next day.

This would have only been mildly embarrassing (and an unnecessary expenditure) except for the fact that I am also the guy who has publicly railed about the fact that local, municipality Fuerza Publica don’t have the power to issue such minor traffic violation citations and, I think, should; it might help some of the poor traffic and parking situations. I’d even written letters and articles promoting such a change. Then, when the process was changed (noted in the Across the Board column of the September / October 2016 issue of El Residente) I became one of the offenders they caught. Now, THAT’S embarrassing!

But, okay, we’re all entitled to a little mistake occasionally (and at my age, they are bound to happen now and then.) But then #2 happened:

My Costa Rican Cedula had expired. I knew it but had been putting off renewal, dreading the Migracion experience (because, as I noted previously, I am married to a Tica and she and I both have to go do the dance amongst 1,000 others at Migracion.) It’s time consuming, a bother, and my wife hates it. But three months had past since expiration and the time had come. So, with ARCR’s help, I got an appointment to renew it. Because I was late, they gave me one immediately - for the next business day.

Which leads to #3.

While gathering and preparing all the documents for my Cedula renewal (I was required to also write Migracion a letter of apology/explanation about why I was late) I discovered that my American Passport had also expired -

eleven months ago! OMG! I was in Costa Rica completely illegally.

That turned out to be easily resolved – the next morning, rather than go to my Migracion appointment, I high-tailed it to the Embassy (in a state of mild panic) without an appointment, seeking an “Emergency Passport” so that I could renew my expired Cedula and get legal. After explaining my predicament, I was allowed in and over the course of about two and one-half hours was issued a one-year Emergency Passport. (Normally those are only given out to those who are traveling out of the country, but they made an exception for me due to the circumstances.) I have to say that the total experience with Embassy American Citizens Services was very pleasant; I was handled promptly and with understanding. I couldn’t have asked for anything more.

But, because of the unscheduled trip to the US Embassy, I had missed the appointment with Migracion. Again, off to ARCR. And again, now with a new passport in hand, with their help I quickly got an appointment for the next day.

A side note: It costs \$98.00/year for Cedula renewal. My cedula was three months “overdue” for renewal so there was a penalty of \$3.00/month (total \$9.00) for the overage. By my calculations, that comes out to \$36.00/year; I could have waited another nine months and saved \$62.00! Only in CR does it cost less in penalties for not doing something than it does to do the thing on time! (Except for traffic tickets.)

Anyway, to my surprise, with only one small glitch, the Migracion experience was efficient and almost painless. (Is this the country to which I emigrated? Sure seems different!) Two hours and we were back on the street - and I was legal again.

What’s the take-away from all this? Well, it’s pretty obvious: 1) stay on top of the expiration dates for your important documents and inspections! And, 2) if you go even a little bit Tico like I did and need help getting yourself out of a hole, there’s no better place to get it than ARCR!

So now I’ve got a couple new shirts in the closet, the car inspection is up to date, and my passport and cedula have been taken care of. I’ve gotten all my ‘cats herded’! (Or at least so I thought, until I got a 104,000 colones ticket for talking on a cell phone while driving a few days later!) Pura Vida!



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URGENT HELP NEEDED

Some readers may know Dra. Anna Herndon, an American veterinary doctor in Santa Ana, and have used her services. Others may recognize her name from an article she recently wrote for this magazine. She has suffered a tragedy and needs some help; her business partner, Robert, was recently killed in a car accident.

Anna has decided to close her business and move back to North Carolina. She is leaving Costa Rica on March 20th, so please act quickly.

Both Anna and Robert took in lots of dogs and cats from the street and, as a result, there are numerous animals that need a new home.


If any of our readers can help find a home for a few of these animals, which you can be assured are in good health, it would be greatly appreciated. The selection is good—they come in all sizes and colors!

Anna is a generous and loving person and has never turned someone with a sick or hurt animal away because they couldn't afford to pay a vet bill; she has done a lot of good things for a lot of people, for free.

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She also owns some horses that she wants to take back to the USA but she can't afford to do this right now. If there is anyone with deep pockets who can donate or lend her money to help her do that, she will be forever be grateful. Anna already has a position in a vet practice in North Carolina and is a good financial risk.

If you can help Dr. Herndon, you can contact her at 8980-0606 or 2582-1706. Her Facebook page is: <https://www.facebook.com/anna.herndon1>

Her vet page is: <https://www.facebook.com/pages/Veterinaria-Santa-Ana/156157751135745>

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Map of downtown Heredia

Places of interest

1. Parque Central
2. Parque de los Ángeles
3. Parque del Carmen
4. Plaza de Fátima
5. Parque de Perros
6. Municipalidad de Heredia
7. Mercado Central
8. Mercado Florense
9. Correos de Costa Rica
10. Hospital San Vicente de Paul
11. Fortín
12. Tribunales de Justicia
13. Estadio Rosabal Cordero

14. Palacio de los Deportes
15. INS
16. Estación del Tren Urbano
17. Universidad Nacional
18. Universidad Latina
19. Univ. Hispanoamericana
20. Liceo de Heredia
21. Liceo Manuel Benavides
22. Liceo Samuel Sáenz
23. Colegio Técnico Profesional
24. Escuela Braulio Morales
25. Escuela Rafael Moya
26. Antiguo Hospital SVP

27. Mall Paseo de las Flores
28. Plaza Bratsi
29. Plaza Heredia
30. Britt Coffee Tour
31. Pricesmart
32. Automercado
33. Walmart
34. Parroquia Inmaculada Conc.
35. Iglesia del Carmen
36. Iglesia Corazón de Jesús
37. Iglesia Sra. de los Ángeles
38. Gasolinera Delta
39. Bomba del Cristo



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 / Gofito / 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

Map of downtown Alajuela



Places of interest

1. Parque Central
2. Parque Juan Santamaría
3. Parque Palmares
4. Parque Calían Vargas
5. Parque El Arroyo
6. Parque Cristo Rey
7. Plaza Tomás Guardia
8. Plaza Iglesias
9. Polideportivo Monserrat
10. Municipalidad de Alajuela
11. Museo Juan Santamaría
12. Correos de Costa Rica
13. Aerop. Juan Santamaría
14. Hospital San Rafael
15. Cementerio Stsma. Trinidad
16. Corte Suprema de Justicia
17. Mercado Central
18. Estadio Morera Soto
19. Escuela Juan Rafael Meoño
20. Colegio El Carmen
21. Colegio Científico de Alaj.
22. Univ. Técnica Nacional

23. INS
24. City Mall
25. Plaza Real Alajuela
26. Outlet Internacional
27. Ctro Com. Corazón de Jesús
28. Walmart
29. Automercado
30. Catedral de Alajuela
31. Iglesia de la Agonía
32. Iglesia de El Llano
33. Radial Fco. Orlich
34. Bomba La Tropicana

ARCR

by Charlie Zeller

Act Now Before It Is Too Late!

As of January 1, 2018, the importation of vehicles manufactured before 2006 will be forbidden; an official notice of the change to the law was published in the newspaper La Gaceta at end of 2016. So, if you want to import an older car into Costa Rica, the time to do it is now!

If you are considering importing a vehicle, you must determine if it is really worth the cost, compared to buying one locally. Here are some things to ask yourself before you make the decision:

Do you know what restrictions there are on importing vehicles?

Do you know where to find a reliable and honest shipper that will bring the vehicle here at a reasonable cost?

Do you know how to find out what it would cost to ship, pay duties, pass safety inspection, obtain registration and license plates, in order to prepare the vehicle to be driven in Costa Rica?

That information is available on line, in Spanish, for those who want to hunt it down and do the translation and math. But, there is an easier way.

Ship to Costa Rica SA, will do the research and compile the numbers for you! All you have to do is provide **Ship to Costa Rica** (see our advertisement elsewhere in this issue for contact information) with the following data: brand name, model year, and VIN number. We'll also need information on trim, transmission type (stick or automatic), and if it is a 4x2, 4x4, or AWD. Once we know that, we'll send you all the information you need.

With that information you can to decide if it is worth paying the expenses to bring your vehicle here.

Here are some additional points to consider in making that decision:

IMPORTING PROS:

1. You already own the vehicle and know its condition and history.

2. If you are going to purchase a vehicle there to bring here, it is easy to find out the history of the car with online services such as CarFax. (There is no CarFax equivalent in Costa Rica.)
3. Miles driven in the USA are less harsh than those miles driven in Costa Rica.
4. Saves you the hassle of selling your vehicle in the USA and buying one in Costa Rica.
5. It could be less expensive to import than to buy, in many cases.

IMPORTING CONS:

1. Vehicles sold in Costa Rica are of unknown origin. (It could be a flood car "salvaged" after Hurricane Katrina or Sandy, or it could have been stolen.)
2. Buying a used vehicle in Costa Rica can be dangerous; many buyers have had their money stolen by crooks posing as car sellers.
3. Some vehicles in Costa Rica have phony papers and false license plates.
4. Some older vehicles in Costa Rica have had their odometers "rolled back" and don't reflect the actual use the vehicle has received.
5. Used vehicles in Costa Rica are sold "as is" with little or no warranty.
6. You have to pay the transfer taxes and fees to a lawyer.
7. Many vehicles manufactured for sale outside Costa Rica, but imported here, may use parts or components which are not easily available.

So, before making a decision to import or not, the best thing to do is get the numbers on what it would cost to bring the car you want from the USA, then compare them to what it would cost to buy the same type of vehicle in Costa Rica. With that information you can then evaluate the numbers, weigh the risks, and make an informed and intelligent decision.

Feel free to call us with any questions.



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United Kingdom Embassy

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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

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Email: sos@international.gc.ca

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Email: ambafrcr@gmail.com

Spanish Embassy

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Address: Calle 32, San José

Hours: 8AM-4AM

Email: emb.sanjose@maec.es

Emergency assistance: (506) 6050 9853

Venezuelan Embassy

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Email: embavenezuelacostarica@gmail.com

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GUANACASTE... FROM A HAMMOCK (23)

by Geoff Hull

What Is It About Samara?



Photo by Georgia Hull

I love living in Samara. But when asked why, I still haven't come up with a short answer; it takes me at least twenty minutes and lots of exuberant arm waving to explain the reasons.

It doesn't matter who you are or where you're from, when you visit Samara you will likely find yourself standing barefoot on the white sand with the warm Pacific Ocean lapping at your toes inviting you in. The horseshoe shaped bay is partially protected by a reef, visible at low tide, but enough waves sneak in to keep the surfers happy.

Palm trees and tidal pools line the west end of the beach area, the main town takes up the middle, and deserted beaches, fishing boats and Isla Chora lay invitingly to the east end. Families and lovers alike enjoy the calm waters for playing.

Out in the bay you may see ocean kayakers paddling hard on their way to Isla Chora, earning a deserted island beach picnic with great snorkeling as their reward. Sun-kissed, certified surf instructors all along the coast will get anyone up and surfing within an hour. Whales,

dolphins, turtles, and great sport fishing are plentiful outside of the reef.

When you can pry yourself away from the beautiful ocean view and turn around, you'll see that inland, beyond the town, there are green low-lying mountains of thick jungle, full of tropical life: howler monkeys, coatis, Blue Morpho butterflies, fireflies, and birds of every color and size abound there. I have personally sat on a surfboard in the warm waters of Samara, so hypnotized by the beauty of this town and surrounding hills, so lost in its magic, that I've let perfectly good waves pass me by. (I've been known to exaggerate so I won't swear to it, but I'm pretty sure once or twice I've witnessed a unicorn or two, prancing under a brightly colored rainbow up in those hills.)

Samara has a glow about it that is palpable. It is the quintessential Central American tropical beach town; it is the photo that adorns the postcards hung on the cubicle walls of office workers to dream about as they toil away in stuffy grey buildings throughout the cities of this increasingly corporate world. We, who have escaped that concrete jungle for the green one here, are a grateful bunch who give thanks daily for the gift that is this town.

And you can't help but smile and feel good from the vibe. Friendly people, great varieties of restaurants, creative artisans, shops and boutiques, all contribute to the easy going, laid back lifestyle. There are many adventures and tours to choose from, including zip-lining, horseback riding, scuba diving, fishing, hiking, cycling, and ultra-light flights. All of these make Samara a great place to visit.

The area is a melting pot of languages which can be heard just walking a short distance around town. And, because of these different backgrounds, there are restaurants that serve Italian, German, French, Mexican, and local dishes. Some energetic live music and DJ's have been attracted to the town too, and the nightlife will go on as long as you can keep up.

In the middle of town is a center that houses an organic market/restaurant, a gym, a food court, and small businesses, all surrounding a concrete pad that is always busy hosting yoga, Pilates, Zumba, and mixed martial arts classes.

Need a place to stay? Samara has something for everyone, from clean inexpensive hostels for travelers on a light budget, to five-star hotels that will cater to your every need. You can even stay with a local family for Spanish immersion classes.

There are also two world renowned schools: Intercultura, for Spanish language instruction, and The Samara School of Massage, which offers an intense certification program in the many modalities of body work. Both schools are located within a stone's throw of the beach.

There is much to see and do here, but perhaps the best thing I can recommend is to grab a cold pipa fria, hang up a hammock between two of the many palms, and just relax, remembering that life is meant to be enjoyed at a slower pace. Samara will help you get back in touch with who you really are, away from the hustle and bustle that is the rest of the world.

Maybe from this you can see why it takes me twenty minutes of talk and gestures to extol the virtues of Samara; I love it here. It's a great place to visit, but living every day in this little corner of paradise is even better!

<<>>

Geoff Hull is a retired fire service Captain and Paramedic from California. He and his family have lived in Playa Samara since he retired in 2010. He spends his days beach-bumming, surfing, gardening, and wrestling his memoirs into a future book. Read excerpts from them at: www.fireflashbacks.wordpress.com



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by Bettye Brown

Albert Correia, Author, Artist

Al Correia didn't have a childhood dream of becoming a writer, but a high school teacher developed a budding ambition by telling him "he put words together well" and encouraging him to seek a college education. So, after a term of military service, he attended Fresno State University and earned a degree in journalism. While a student he worked as a reporter in a Fresno newspaper, but after graduating he chose to follow a different professional pursuit. It was mid-life and he had retired to Costa Rica before he wrote the first of his seven published books.

Like various other writers, Al says his characters appear to him; he does not create them. They act out the plot and, if he tries to manipulate the plot and tell the story himself, the outcome is not as successful as when he just relaxes and transcribes what the characters communicate to him.

Where does his inspiration come from? Mr. Correia says he has had varied life experiences that he describes as bringing him in touch with some of the most intriguing personalities imaginable; personalities who find their way into everything he writes. He has worked in dynamic situations, sailed in dangerous ones, and tramped through countries in hostile environments. Those situations, and the people who inhabit his memories, have found their way into his books and everything else he writes.

Al grew up in Tracy, California. During his college years he interned at the Fresno, Oakland, and San Leandro Chambers of Commerce and worked as a reporter. By his final year he had acquired a wife and two young sons, with another one on his way, and his GI Bill benefits were running out. Fortunately, he was offered a position as Assistant Manager of the San Bernardino Chamber of Commerce, which started him on a lifelong career path. Later he moved on and served as assistant manager of the Berkeley Chamber of Commerce. He then went on to be the Chief Executive Officer of the Greater San Fernando Valley Chamber of Commerce. Among the many honors he received in the field was the 1986 "Russell E. Pettit

Executive of the Year Award," presented by the California Association of Chamber of Commerce Executives.

He says he has retired twice, the first time at forty-four years of age in 1979, and at that time decided to try to become a writer. His initial effort was rejected by a publisher, but he was encouraged to continue writing. While continuing to write he tried sailing, twice helping a Mexican skipper deliver boats between California and Acapulco, Mexico. After four years he returned to the chamber of commerce field, assuming the position of CEO of the Pomona Chamber of Commerce.

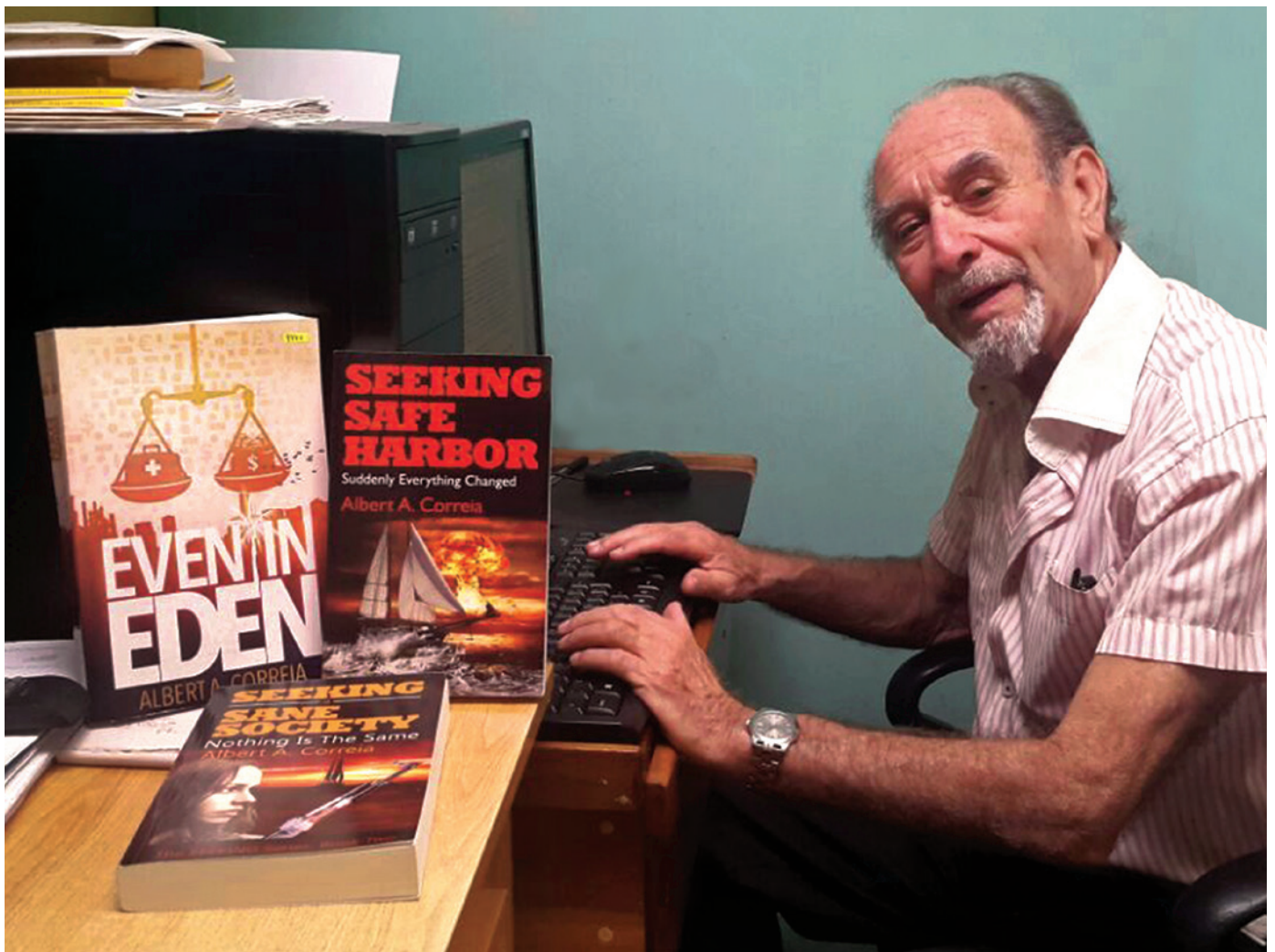
In 1991 glaucoma compromised his eyesight so that he is now, after several surgeries, considered legally blind. That illness ended his professional career as a chamber of commerce executive because he was no longer able to drive. His reading skill had also deteriorated but, as an avid reader and with the help of magnification, he can still read, although very slowly.

After leaving his chamber of commerce career the second time, he became interested in international trade. He attempted to set up a hotel/golf resort in Subic Bay, Philippines, but later determined the project was better suited for Costa Rica. His partners, however, lacked the capital to bring the idea to fruition.

While visiting Costa Rica he came across a good deal on a condo in Jacó Beach and bought it. Shortly thereafter he met a nice young lady and after three years they married; a move that he says was "a great decision." He now lives in San José with his wife, daughter, a stepdaughter, and other relatives who "come and go." Through his marriage he is part of a large, extended Tico family. Two of his sons from his previous marriage live in California and the third lives in Alaska.

Since arriving in Costa Rica in 1995, Mr. Correia has devoted much of his time to the arts. In addition to his writing he paints, and a number of his oils have hung in prominent buildings in and around San José.

His first love, however, is writing and he started out to write a single book about life, love, and intrigue in Costa Rica. His motivation was, after living in here for several years,



it had become obvious that Ticos, although a bit more tranquil than most, have the same dreams, aspirations, and weaknesses as people everywhere. Toss in the fact that there are really dedicated people trying to do good, and others who are adept at making people think they're trying to do good while they're actually ripping them off, and an idea was born. With the characters talking to him, the story flowed easily and the result was *Even in Eden*.

He luckily found a publisher who liked his work and not only edited and published his book, but promoted it and paid him royalties. That success led to his writing and publishing two sequels, *Health, Politics, Rage* and *A President for Eden* which together make up *The Eden Trilogy*.

He sums up what the Eden Trilogy offers his readers: "A theme that runs through the books is that people should look for what really is there, not what they're told is there, or what they want to be there. And, of course, that life is really pretty humorous. Laughter, or even a little chuckle, beats a sourpuss every time."

He has also written the "Seeking" series, fictional books about survival in a post-apocalyptic world, which were also accepted and published by the same company. The first, "*Seeking Safe Harbor*," reached number-one best-seller status on Amazon, and stayed in the top 20 for several weeks. The second, "*Seeking a Sane Society*," was published last summer. Number three, "*Seeking Life and Liberty*," will be coming out in May, 2017.

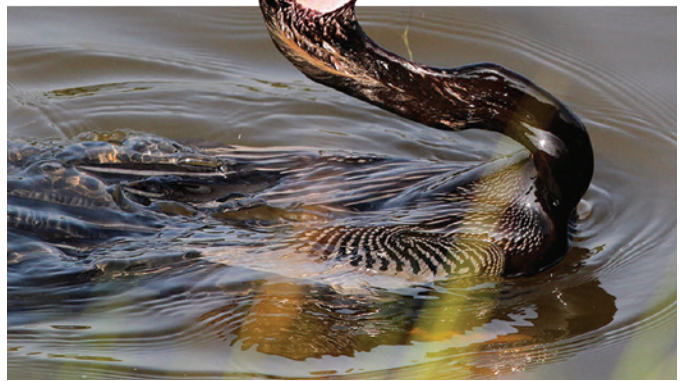
Despite his impairment, Al has maintained a jovial personality and it is his "the glass is always more than half-full" approach to life that keeps him busy and an inspiration to other writers and his family. His positive attitude, combined with his fondness of classical music, which he considers an inspiration to his creativity, has led him to become deeply involved in some other writing projects, including several books which are compilations of short stories and humorous anecdotes. His books can be purchased from the ARCR Local Authors library, or can be acquired from Amazon.com and other book distributors.

It's a Bird, It's a Snake... It's a...

It has been some time since the last Wild Side was published, and we are very pleased to have it back, bringing the wilds of Costa Rica into your home... in a safe way of course. There are so many species to cover, thanks to the amazing diversity found in Costa Rica, we could take years going through all the possibilities from A to Z. We'll try to cover some of the more interesting, starting with "A" for the Anhinga.

Waterfowl are interesting inasmuch as they appear so similar, yet actual abilities and habits can be very different. Take the Anhinga for example, a long-necked bird that is easily mistaken for a species of cormorant, but is actually a darter. Due to its lack of buoyancy, it is nicknamed the snakebird, a name obviously appropriate when seen swimming, appearing as a snake poised to strike its prey. Its actual name is derived from the Brazilian Tupi language, meaning devil or snake bird.

The species is found globally where there are warm, shallow waters. They rarely wander out of fresh water areas, except in cases of drought and, like many water birds, they breed near fresh water. The ones that migrate tend to be those



who live on the edge of the species range, as they seek the warmth of the sun towards the equator. Extremely large, they can boast a nearly a four-foot wingspan, and be almost 35 inches in length, yet weigh a mere two to three pounds. Generally they will be seen spreading their wings in a semi-circular fan, appearing as a *meleagrine*, leading to its other nickname, the water turkey.

This large dark water bird is really quite colorful; they have feathers from white to black, mixed with shades of blue, green, purple and gray... quite a pretty spectrum. Even though they are waterfowl, their feathers are not waterproof, as one would assume. Because of this they can easily stay underwater for long periods while fishing. The *Pato Aguja* (Needle-duck) uses its long yellow pointed bill to spear its catch. They will eat various amphibians as well. If the Anhinga attempts to fly with its wet feathers, it will face great difficulty and must gain momentum by running over the water.

When in flight they can soar gracefully at high altitudes, easily gliding without the need of flapping their wings, so that they appear to be gliders or black paper airplanes drifting along in the skies. The oldest known Anhinga reached over twelve years of age.

In Costa Rica a good place to search for these birds year-round is along both coasts, especially along the Caribbean coast, in the areas of Tortuguero, Puerto Viejo, and the shores and rivers in between. They are often found in small groups foraging and fishing, providing a good opportunity to view several individuals at a sitting.



by Tony Johnson

The Problems of Happiness

Isn't happiness a purely pleasurable experience? How could happiness involve any sort of problems?

Happiness is so ardently desired because it feels so good. It's essential to our well-being. But, because there are many common misunderstandings that create problems for its realization, it is sometimes not easy to attain.

We seek happiness from Day 1. Our lives began with zero input from us. No one asked if we wanted to be born, but born we were. And quickly we hunger for happiness in the form of comfort, nourishment, and love from others. Slowly we take increasing responsibility for our own wellbeing and happiness.

Until we were able to communicate and think for ourselves, we relied on others and our own innate "GPS" to seek pleasure and avoid pain. We also came equipped with an enormous memory and a huge capacity to learn what brings pleasure or pain in our particular environment. Through much trial and error, we gradually

begin managing our own life and direct it toward that special feeling called happiness.

A strong case can be made that happiness is our "North Star," the ultimate goal of all our efforts. We study, for example, to develop skills which will open up good jobs which will provide security, fulfillment, and happiness. You are probably reading this article to learn some useful way to better understand and increase your happiness. I suggest that if you trace any of your efforts to their maximum expected outcome, you're likely to ultimately find a desire for happiness.

Unhappy With the Idea of Happiness

But some people deny happiness as our peak experience. They claim it's overrated and that salvation, or reputation, or honor, are more valuable. But we can always ask, "Sure!



They have... but ARE they happy?" No one would ask the reverse: "Sure! They're happy, but do they have...?" because when we're happy we have it all.

Some can be conflicted about being happy. Not everyone is happy about being happy, regardless of how essential it is.

Consider the snotty Yale professor who proclaimed "I don't want to be happy. I want to be GOOD!" implying that he's not like the rest of us rabble who eagerly seek happiness. But, I'll betcha being "good" would make him happy, even though he denies that goal.

Others regard happiness as a silly, adolescent pursuit. Some think it's a selfish goal when so many are suffering. But, you can safely predict that what they regard as "more worthy than happiness" will make them... yes—happy!

Clearly Happy

For those of us unconflicted about our desire for happiness, clarity about what we're seeking and how to find it may be the problem.

Happiness is not only a goal, but also a life map; a guide to tell us what to focus on, what to pursue, and what to avoid to have a happy life. But guides can be misleading. We may mistakenly consider only a certain level of feeling good to be genuine happiness.

It's important to realize that a high level of elation, like falling in love, is correctly regarded as a type of happiness. Who doesn't like that feeling? But, it takes too much energy to sustain and can distract us from other mundane necessities. Do you remember falling in love and being so besotted that you forgot about a test? Or neglecting paying your bills...until the phone was disconnected?

The ultimate happiness that we are exploring here is less intense than love, but still very important. We need to feel both joy about important life moments and also to be happy about our overall life quality. That's the foundation of good mental health, physical wellbeing, and life meaning. Happiness is a natural feedback system, telling us that we are living well; it says, "Keep up the good work... and these good feelings that work brings." Even when our life is far from perfect, and not ecstatic, we can feel content with who we are and how we live. Happiness does not require a perfect life, but one good enough to produce a sense of overall satisfaction, contentment, peace.

"Booooooooooooooring!" the teenager might snark. How little does she know about what she needs?

The How of Happy

So far it may seem that we merely need to choose pleasure and avoid pain to attain that wondrous state of happiness. BUT, our quest for happiness often becomes complex and confusing.

Many choices we make can bring immediate pleasure, and eventually devolve into pain and unhappiness; overeating luscious chocolate brings instant joy, but a whole box can guarantee stomach pain and unhappiness. Exercise involves immediate pain, but promotes long-term health, which is a contributor to our happiness. To successfully navigate the choices we encounter we must learn to consider not only the short-term rewards but also the long-term consequences.

For example, remember the test you blew off for time with your beloved? What if the professor teaching that course suddenly became gravely ill and could no longer teach. It's near the end of the semester, so the department decides the class's final grades will be based on their performance so far. And you, by not showing up for that test, were left with an "F" in the calculation of your final grade. Ouch!

Making the right choices isn't easy. All choices are made under circumstances that are unpredictable, constantly changing, and mostly out of our control. Our plans often rely on assuming the stability of unreliable conditions, and to attain and maintain a happy state we must be able to adapt to unchanging change.

But why do we face so many disasters, mishaps, and tragedies in the first place? Why does life contain so many problems or disappointments? We didn't ask to be born! Why can't the life we've been forced into at least be smooth and problem free? That not a lot to ask, is it?

"This ain't fair! This sucks!"

Ahem...we must remember that the universe was not made for us. WE were made to adapt to the unchanging change of reality as effectively as possible. As the Buddha said, "Life is suffering, but we CAN be happy." That's the good news; the better our "life map" is, the better our chances for well being, survival, and happiness. The bad news? The worse our map is...

Common "Happiness Map" Navigation Errors

Our destination, happiness, is more than possible. Just look around. But sometimes we get lost because of map

errors. We can improve our chance of arriving at our goal by improving our “life map” and correcting these common map errors.

A) Vague Destination

Picking on average teenagers again, when asked what they want from their life, they’re sure to say, “I just wanna be happy.” The happiness they seek is, however, often the constant high of ecstasy. They have a limited idea of what happiness involves and usually almost no idea of what would make them happy.

If we tell Expedia, “Send me to some real cool place. I’ll be adventurous” it may turn out Expedia thinks the Iceland is REAL COOL—but not in the way we meant. Having a vague idea of what happiness is, and what gets us there, may end in disappointment.

Happiness, the long-term, peaceful type, is the payoff for the overall quality of our life. Happiness is the positive emotions, short and long-term, both the intense and the more peaceful, that reward us for living well in-the-moment and overall; a reward given us for living a good life. We need both types. And a strong sense of what will give US, the unique individuals that we are, some of both.

To better appreciate the long-term, peaceful type, imagine prolonged peace and contentment routinely in the background of your daily experience. Setbacks are disappointing, but less upsetting when our overall life is good. Overall happiness is a “shock absorber” for life’s unavoidable bumps.

B) Refusal to Accept Happiness’ Limits

As said, happiness does not require a perfect life, so don’t bother wasting time and energy trying to achieve what’s impossible to attain; you’ll just make yourself unhappy.

Instead, recognize that happiness itself is not perfect. We can be truly happy and still feel sadness, disappointment, loss, pain, and suffering. They’re all inevitable, given the nature of humanity and the universe. In spite of the presence of these negative realities, our overall life can feel good enough, well-lived, satisfying. It’s an existence that we want to protect, sustain; enjoy rather than flee.

C) Being Unprepared For The Destination’s Unavoidable Adjustments

For those of us who relocated to Costa Rica for happiness, we quickly learned that happiness is more the result of HOW we live than where. For, once we arrived at our destination, as happy as it made us, the struggle to maintain our happiness began all over again.

Yes, it feels great to be in CR. “We did it!” Against big odds and a lot of skepticism about our dream, we pulled it off, and that’s a wonderful feeling. But, “NOW WHAT?” Our external conditions may be as delightful as we had hoped, yet there will be surprises and adjustments to be made. And when those things rear their ugly heads, do we move again, seeking that ever elusive goal—perfection? Or, do we ACCEPT there’s nowhere that completely free of problems and make the best of our situation?

Happily, happiness depends more on our “inner world” than on our outer circumstances. Happily, because we usually have much more control over our perceptions, feelings, and mind-set than over our outer reality. We can make an “attitude adjustment” that rescues and restores our tropical dream. How many expats have you found to be unhappy with their relocation because they expected CR to adjust to them?

D) Imagining That We’ve Left Our Problems Behind, Back In...

Many of us decided on CR as our “dream destination” following a dream vacation. We may have failed to see that the small “snapshot” of life in CR we had gotten from a vacation here left a LOT out of the picture... a lot that we didn’t expect or prepare for. Like bringing some of our problems with us.

What happened? Were we the victims of false advertising? Bait and Switch? Or was it our own misreading of what adjustments such a change would take? We didn’t have those problems on vacation, we protest!

Consider a fundamental fact of life: To live is to need. To need is to be denied. To be denied is to be frustrated, upset, unhappy. And to be unhappy is to need...

So life catches us in a terrible bind; we are not self-sufficient or self-reliant, and we are continuously needing something and continuously being refused. Depending on how we cope with those denials,

our happiness may be severely diminished or lost entirely.

How do we break this need-unhappiness cycle? Living in a completely new world will arouse needs we never knew we had. Needs that may be hard, if not impossible, to meet, like daily contact with children and grandchildren. When they were easily available we may have never realized how important they are to us. Do we give up on the dream and return to our “old country?” Do we deny our need? Or do we learn to change what we can; our inner world? While on vacation, our tour guide, our hotelier made us happy. Now it’s our job. How do we proceed now? What “attitude adjustment” is required during this stage of our quest?

E) Expecting Happiness To Be a “One and Done” Life Event

Happiness is not a once and for all goal, like a college degree or an appendectomy. It’s an ongoing

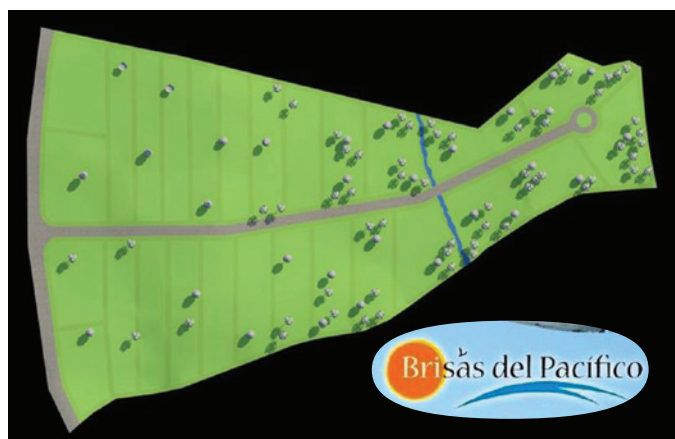
effort. Something we have to work to attain and maintain. The good news? We become more skilled at happiness the more we practice being happy.

IN SUMMARY: While we have no control over our birth, we have considerable input into our happiness. We need both short and long-term happiness; intense but brief and prolonged, but peaceful. We reach this Mount Everest of life goals by living a meaningful, effective life. And, by being prepared to restore happiness when it subsides.

NEXT TIME: We just did a “map study.” After reading this, hopefully you’ve gotten a better picture of the lay of the land and what’s ahead. Next time we’ll “ruck up...” pack our rucksack with some of the life’s pretty-sure things on our way to Happiness.

If you’re happy OR unhappy with these ideas, let me know at: paradise.we.have.a.problem@gmail.com

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► **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, 8614-2622, 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

April 9th - April 16th
Easter Week
National Holiday

Tuesday April 11th
Battle of Rivas
National Holiday

Monday May 1st
Labor Day
National Holiday

Sunday June 16th
Father's Day
Observance

Funniest One Liners

Sex is not the answer. Sex is the question. "Yes" is the answer.

We live in a society where pizza gets to your house before the police.

The last thing I want to do is hurt you. But it's still on the list.

Patient: - Oh doctor, I'm just so nervous. This is my first operation.

Doctor: - Don't worry. Mine too.

What do you get when you cross a bunny and a Rottweiler?
Just the Rottweiler.

What's brown and very bad for your dental health?
A baseball bat.



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