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EL RESIDENTE

March

April

2023

TASTE THE TROPICS:

Guaba

ALSO IN THIS ISSUE:

A Purr-fect Place!
Culantro

Can I Have a Pet in a Costa Rica Condo?
Whatever 'in love' means

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

Since 1984 we have 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.

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Editor's Note

Ah, the dry season, when some fabulous tropical fruits abound. Last issue we covered the Mamon Chino, and this issue it is the delicious "Ice Cream Bean." Dig in. No napkin needed.

This issue has a wide range of subjects which extend all the way from tropical fruit to an examination of a relationship between a Prince and Princess in *Paradise We Have a Problem*. Plus, there is a visit to a new Cat Café in *Guest Column* and *On the High Seas* will tell about some personal insights gained on a bodyboard. And, of course, there are the other regular columns for your information and reading pleasure. Enjoy.

If you have encountered a problem with another residency service, remember that ARCR has been in the residency business for over 25 years. Our trained personnel have helped hundreds of expats obtain their Costa Rica residency, and are ready and waiting to help you, just a phone call away. We can also provide expert help with real estate or vehicle purchases, as well as joining the CAJA, getting or renewing a driver's license, and more. Got a question? Just call.

Last, speaking of calling, remember that with the move of the ARCR office to our new location in OFIMALL at Mall San Pedro, the phone number has returned to the old number, 4052-4052.

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ACROSS THE BOARD

Notes and News from the Board of Directors

CANADIAN CR CONSULATE CLOSED

Costa Rican Chancellor Señor Arnoldo André has announced that the Costa Rican Consulate in Toronto will be closed due to fiscal and budgetary constraints. Canadians and expat Ticos have not lost all resources to Costa Rica official services as the Costa Rican embassy in Ottawa, and the Consulate in Vancouver will remain open.

ROAD RAGE The U.S. Embassy has received increased reports of road rage incidents in the metropolitan San Jose area. If you are a victim of road rage:

- Avoid engaging the aggressor if at all possible.
- Remove yourself from the situation as soon as it is safe to do so by driving away.

If you are the target of a road rage incident, be a good witness: Take a mental note describing the aggressor, plate numbers, the make and model of his or her vehicle, the time and location of the incident, and report the information to the police. If you need victim's assistance, contact the U.S. Embassy American Citizens Services (ACS) Section at 2519-2590 or by email to: acssanjose@state.gov.

Tip: Whenever driving in San Jose traffic, ensure your doors are locked and windows are fully closed. It's always a good practice to leave a bit of room

for maneuvering between your vehicle and those around you.

REMINDER FOR U.S. SOCIAL SECURITY BENEFICIARIES

Each year the SSA sends out a questionnaire (aka "Proof of Life" form) to beneficiaries living outside the U.S. It is important that you complete, sign, date, and return the questionnaire in the envelope provided as soon as possible. Individuals who did not return these forms may have their benefits suspended, effective with the payment date of March 3, 2023. If your payments have been suspended, they can only be reinstated once your form is received and processed. *See the Ask ACS column in this issue for more details.*

REAL ID ACT EXTENDED UNTIL MAY 7, 2025.

The deadline for compliance with the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) REAL ID program has been extended two years. The REAL ID program requires anybody flying domestically (between two locations within the United States), to have an approved ID.



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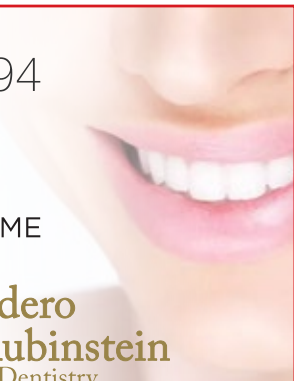
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TASTE THE TROPICS

Alejandro Piercy



Guaba: The Ice-cream Bean

All legumes have their seeds encased in pods. A lot of these pods, like green beans or snow peas, are eaten whole as vegetables, while with others, only the seeds inside are eaten. A few lesser-known legumes produce a sweet, mealy pulp and are eaten as fruits. This is the case for the tamarind, honey locust, and guaba (not to be confused with guava, which is the English name for guayaba).

Guaba, also called pacay or guama, is known in English informally as the “ice-cream bean” (*inga edulis*) for its sweet flavor and the smooth texture of its pulp. It is a product of a legume tree indigenous to Central and South America and is popular in Peru, Ecuador, Brazil, and Colombia, as well as Costa Rica.

This fruit has long been a favorite snack. The Guaba has been around and well known for a long time; the pods and seeds have been found in tombs dating back to 1,000 B.C.E.. There are ancient, pre-Columbian ceramics from the Inca culture that depict guaba pods, which the Incas would transport to their mountain capital of Cuzco; it has been reported that the Inca emperor Atahualpa had sent a basket full of guabas to Spanish conquistador Francisco Pizarro as a gift.

The adult guaba tree can reach 30 meters high and 60 centimeters in diameter at breast height, and the branches form a broad, flat, and somewhat dense canopy. The trees can withstand temperatures up to 30° C, which makes them an ideal crop in much of



Costa Rica. In some places the trees are planted and used as shade for coffee plants, although many people grow them solely for their delicious fruit. The fruit consists of an (about) 18 inch long, 1.5 inch wide, and less than an inch thick, seedpod that looks somewhat like an oversized green bean. Inside the pod are black seeds which can be up to 3 cm, and that are covered in a thick, white, juicy pulp. This pulp looks much like a cotton ball and has a slightly similar taste to vanilla ice cream, thus the name.

To eat the fruit, one needs only to crack open the pod. That sounds easier than it is because the pods can be very tough and take a lot of effort to break open, but the delicious fruit inside makes all the effort worthwhile. Here is a video on how to do it: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zdf64TTfVcw>.

The pulp and seeds are taken into your mouth and the pulp is chewed away from the seed. Caution is advised to be sure you don't swallow the seed! Although delicious, the pulp is not particularly nutritious; it contains about 1 percent protein and 15 percent carbohydrate – mainly sugars.

Guaba trees produce in abundance, which can provide sustenance in hard times. They grow rapidly, are tolerant to diverse soils, and are resistant to diseases and fire. They spread quickly and provide fruit for years. The trees also produce root nodules which fix nitrogen to the soil, rather than taking it away, and in



this way benefit the land and increase fertility levels. The trees generally occur near river banks where they can get year-round irrigation.

In Costa Rica the term guaba is used colloquially for luck. Thus, if a lucky event happens, it is common to hear the expression “Que guaba!” (How lucky!) Additionally, wishful thinkers have adopted the term guaba to refer to the male sexual organ. This expression is vulgar but widely used in Costa Rica.

This delicious snack, which comes in its own wrapper, should become much better known in the coming decades. The trees promote self-reliance and they have potential not only in Latin America but throughout all the tropics.

The big, beautiful fruit trees provide shade and delicious fruit. What else could we ask for? You can find guabas at fruit stands or farmers' markets, but nowadays they are difficult to find in supermarkets. This delicacy is most often available from January to June at about 500 colones per pod. So if you find them, crack one open and enjoy! Also, if you feel like it, take the seeds and plant them, and in a few years you will have an almost endless supply.

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GUEST COLUMN

by Cyndi Mayer

A Purr-fect Place! (or, It's the Cats Meow!)



“**H**ey guys, I want to tell all of you street-kitties out there about the amazing place I just landed, on all four of my paws. This place is great, especially for me, being a more mature cat. It’s called the Coffee Cat Café, and it is located in Santa Ana. Don’t get me wrong, the rescue place was good and a significant improvement from the streets, but here I have nine other friends, all the food I want, and comfy places to take my catnaps. Best of all, I and my friends know we will be adopted! In our new homes we will be the kings or queens

of all we survey, and have a family to dote over us; every one of us are excited and looking forward to that!

I will now have a friend explain more about this for me; I need a snooze!”

Cat cafés originally started in Taipei, Taiwan, in 1998, but really took off when the idea blossomed in Osaka, Japan, in 2004. In Japan, cats represent prosperity and happiness, and Japanese tenants, unable to keep pets in their apartments, wanted a furry experience after work.



So, cat cafés were invented. There are now cat cafés on every continent.

Although these cafés are popular throughout the world, the concept had not been introduced to Central America. The Coffee Cat Café is the first of its kind in Costa Rica, and being the first is not always easy. The owner, Ms. Trisha, originally from Florida, had her hands full negotiating all the regulatory hurdles and bringing the concept to San Jose. As in other countries, these facilities are carefully regulated because of the combination of the sale of food and/or preparation in the same facility where animals are located. In most cases, strict regulations are adopted by the governing health facility in whichever country they have been opened; here in Costa Rica they were adopted from U.S. health regulations for cat cafés.

Many issues were solved by designing the space intelligently and sequestering the cats in a separate “Cat Room”, away from where food is actually prepared. After obtaining your coffee or other beverage, you can carry it with you when you go in to see the cats. There are places to sit and read a book, look at a magazine, or relax and use the numerous cat toys to entice your favorite kitty.

In the “Cat Room,” the kitties have all sorts of “trees,” boxes, and ladders of various sizes and heights to prowl, get exercise, and play. There is also a window on the sidewalk where you can watch them before or after your visit. It is



a delightful space, and the cats seem to enjoy it... and the attention. To add to the atmosphere, there is cat-themed artwork from local artisans displayed and for sale. You can

choose from paintings hanging on the walls, plus mugs, jewelry, and other delightful items.

The Coffee Cat Café works with several cat rescues throughout Costa Rica, and the cats come to them spayed/neutered, with shots, and ready for adoption. The owner limits the number of cats on the premises to ten so they are not overcrowded. Also, she focuses on older/adult kitties. After covering the cost of food, litter, and vets, the proceeds go to the rescues. The owner also hopes to hold donation nights, where a person can have coffee, play with the cats, and make donations to their favorite charity, cat, dog, human, or other animal.

The Coffee Cat Café is located in the City Place complex in Santa Ana, along via Lindora, and is situated at street level on the south side of the building, along with many little shops and restaurants. The place just opened in January, and the hours are 1100 - 1900 daily(?) Currently, the Coffee Cat Café offers coffee drinks, snacks, and postres made especially for cat lovers. Stop by to check out the space, visit the kitties, and make new friends (but beware- you may fall in love with your future kitty!)

For more information you can visit their web site at: <https://coffeecatcr.com/>

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DAY IN THE LIFE

by Allen Dickinson

Culantro

Coming to Costa Rica was one of the better decisions of my life; here, I have found peace and tranquility, love, and happiness.

But not culinary delight.

Only one thing puts a blemish on my happiness... in this country Ticos love culantro. Everything, nearly every food item (except maybe Tres Leche Que Que), gets cooked with culantro in it – and I don't like culantro.

To be clear, Costa Rican culantro, though closely related to the plant known in the USA as Cilantro, is slightly different. In fact, there are two types of the plant here; 'regular' Culantro and Culantro Coyote, the latter being a much stronger version of the former. Naturally, my Tica wife cooks with both kinds. I have not come to like it, but I can endure it.

But that's not the point of this story.

Not long after I arrived here I was corresponding with a friend back in Oregon who runs a community garden (a large plot of land where people can have a small area to grow their own

vegetables) and told him about the ubiquity of culantro and how it is a part of nearly every Costarican recipe. He responded that he'd like to try it. Could I get him some seeds? Sure, I said, and off to the local farmer's store I went.

If you've ever tried to grow any vegetable or flowers, you probably know the name Durkee; it's a large company that sells all kinds of plant seeds. They package them in little paper envelopes with a color picture of the plant you want to grow on the front. It turns out Costa Rica has a very similar company, but by a different name. Five minutes of searching the rack of a hundred different varieties of seeds in the farm store and I had one for 'regular' culantro. The cost was about 40 cents.

When I got home, I stuck the packet in a plain envelope, addressed it, and sent it via Costarican mail to my friend. Good deed done.

A couple of weeks went by, and in my mail I found a strange envelope delivered by my Miami forwarding service. Upon opening it, I found the empty seed packet and a note from U.S. Customs telling me that the "product" was prohibited from entry into the USA. (I guess I shouldn't have put my return address on it.) OK, could understand the prohibition; the seeds have a similar size and appearance to marijuana seeds. But I knew what they were and that my friend wanted them, so back to the farm store I went and invested another 40 cents.

This time I used the USPS. And yes, I again put my return address on it thinking that it would look better to the USPS with a TO: and FROM: of U.S. addresses.

Nope. A few weeks later I got it back, same condition, same note. Now they had my goat! I was determined to beat the stupid Customs system. And my friend needed the seeds soon – it was nearing the end of the growing season.





I had a friend flying out of Costa Rica going to Atlanta, so I invested another 40 cents and the price of an envelope, prepared the contraband, and asked him to mail the “package” AFTER he was in the Atlanta airport. Can you guess? This time it took three weeks but, like a bad penny, it was back in my hand in exactly the same condition as the previous two.

I don’t give up easily; pride (and stubbornness) wouldn’t let me quit – one more try.

This time I put an empty envelope addressed to my friend inside another sealed envelope. The new seed packet went in a second sealed envelope. Both had fake addresses on them and, using my previous logic, my return address. I gave them to another friend flying to Mississippi with instructions that, if he made it that far, to open both outer envelopes, combine their contents, and drop it in a “small town” mailbox. We agreed that should work!.

A few weeks later, I got a message from the forwarding service saying they had a package with some seeds for me and that I needed to pay \$4.65 for import duties and to have it sent from Miami to here. It seemed a little ludicrous to pay exorbitant import duties for something I bought in the country for \$0.40 in the first place, so I wrote them back and said, “Discard it – I don’t want it!”

I thought that was the end of it, but a week later I received an envelope from the forwarding service containing the intact package of seeds – no duty or transportation charges, no note from U.S. Customs, just the seeds.

All’s well that ends well, and I eventually got the seeds to my friend. I’m not telling you how, a successful smuggler

doesn’t give up their trade secrets. He planted the seeds the next year and reported to me that they grew fine, but he couldn’t tell the difference between U.S. Cilantro and Costarican Culantro.

P.S. I was never able to find seeds for Culantro Coyote. I still look occasionally.

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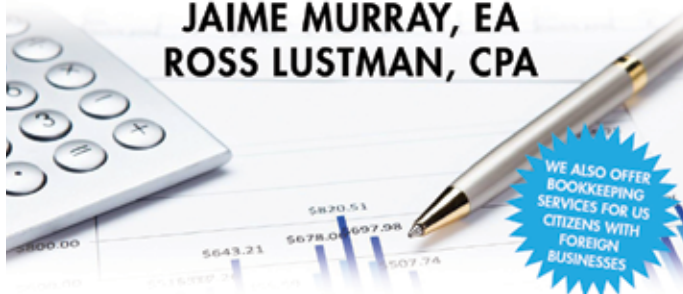
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ON THE GRID

by Ivo Henfling

Can I Have a Pet in a Costa Rica Condo?

If you are wondering if you can buy or rent a condo with a pet in Costa Rica, the answer is “it depends.”

Your pet is probably as important to you as any other family member, and you don't want to find out there is a prohibition in the condominium bylaws until it is too late: you don't want to look at a condo, fall in love with it, put down the security deposit, and then find out you are not allowed to bring your pet.

So what can you do to make sure your pet is allowed?

If you are in the market to purchase or rent a condo here and have a pet you want to bring with you, you should

tell the realtor what kind of pet you have **BEFORE** looking at any properties. When listing a condo for sale or for rent, the realtor should get that specific information from the owner. This is quite often not done.

To avoid this problem, ask your realtor the following questions before going to a showing:

Are pets allowed in the condominium?

- What kind of pets are allowed?
- What are the restrictions?



The answers to these questions are always clearly described in the bylaws for Costa Rica condos.

Here is an example (the bylaws will be in Spanish. The following is a general translation):

Each owner or tenant may have household pets in their condominium with the understanding that the owner cannot breed them for commercial purposes. It is important that the pet does not cause a nuisance to neighbors. Dangerous pets are not permitted, under any circumstances, in any part of the condominium or its units. (Dangerous pets are any kind of reptile or other animals that are considered wild by their behavior.) The pet may not endanger the physical or emotional health of any person who lives, labors in, or visits the condominium.

Therefore, it is often expressly forbidden to have or introduce some dog breeds, such as Pit Bull Terrier, German Shepherd, Doberman, or Rottweiler, into the condo unit.

For those breeds allowed, each owner or authorized resident is responsible and is required to clean or pick up their pet's feces. When pets are in the common areas, they must be on a leash and accompanied by an adult at all times to prevent accidents.

Under Costa Rican law, any violation of the above authorizes the condo Administrator to require the pet owner to remove the animal from the premises. Additionally, if the owner of the pet does not clean up waste produced by the pet in the common areas, the administration can give them a written reprimand AND fine them, an amount which will be billed in the maintenance fee. A tenant who ignores or continues to break the rules can be fined a multiple of up to two times the maintenance fees per billing period.

These limitations do not include fish in an aquarium or caged birds (as long as the birds are not in the common areas and/or constitute a nuisance to neighbors).

If you have a pet and are interested in buying or renting a Costa Rican condo, hire an experienced agent. A good agent will find the answers to your questions about the rules and will be happy to assist in your search for a condo that will allow your pets.

Ivo Henfling is a Dutch expat who has lived in Costa Rica for forty years. He founded the American-European Real Estate Group, the first functioning MLS with affiliate agents from coast to coast, in 1999. He is the broker/owner of GoDutch Realty and can be reached at (506) 2289-5125 or (506) 8834-4515 or email to: ivo@american-european.net

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Address: A022, San José, Curridabat

Hours: 7:30 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Email: a.m.bafrcr@gmail.com

Spanish Embassy

Phone: (506) 2222 1933

Address: Calle 32, San José

Hours: 8:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

Email: emb.sanjose@maec.es

Emergency assistance: (506) 6050 9853

Venezuelan Embassy

Phone: (506) 2220 3704, 2220 3708

Address: San Pedro, Los Yoses, 50 metros antes de finalizar la avenida 10.

Email: embv.crsjo@mppre.gob.ve and embavenezuelacostarica@gmail.com

Hours: 9:00 a.m. – 12:30 p.m., 1:30 – 3:30 p.m..

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Centigrade × 1.8 + 32 = Fahrenheit

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FROM THE EMBASSIES



ASK ACS

Important Message to U.S. Social Security Beneficiaries in Costa Rica

In addition to relying on beneficiaries (a retired person or family member) to report events that may affect their benefits, the Social Security Administration (SSA) contacts beneficiaries residing in Costa Rica biennially (every two years) to verify their status if they have a foreign address on record.

In 2022, SSA mailed the questionnaire to beneficiaries receiving benefits whose social security number under which they receive benefits ends in 00-49, beneficiaries over the age of 90, those that were scheduled to receive a form but did not respond in 2019, and those who have representative payees (person receiving benefits on behalf of a minor or other person). Beneficiaries received the form in the mail with a return envelope to the SSA processing facility in Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania. If the first form was not received, a second form was mailed in late October 2022 and should have been returned by mail before December 2022. Individuals who did not return these forms could have their benefits suspended effective with the payment date of March 3, 2023. If your payments are suspended, they can only be reinstated once your form is received and processed.

It is important that you or your representative payee complete, sign, date, and return the questionnaire in the envelope provided with the questionnaire as soon as possible. If you do not, your payments will stop. If you fail to report or deliberately make a false statement, you could be penalized by a fine or imprisonment. You also may lose some of your payments if you do not report changes promptly.

You can download the forms here:

SSA-7161 (<https://uploads.mwp.mprod.getusinfo.com/uploads/sites/24/2023/01/SSA-7161.pdf>), and mail the original directly to one of the following addresses:

Social Security Administration

P.O. Box 7161

Wilkes Barre, PA 18767-7161

US Embassy San Jose (Attn: FBU)

Apartado Postal 920

Pavas 1200 10109 San Jose, Costa Rica

We cannot accept forms submitted electronically. If you would like to make an appointment to drop off the form in-person or would like to verify your form was received and processed, please email: FBU.CostaRica@ssa.gov and write: "Attn: FEQ" in the subject line.

You may read this message on the Embassy website (<https://cr.usembassy.gov/u-s-citizen-services/security-and-travel-information/>) or contact the Federal Benefits Unit directly at FBU.CostaRica@ssa.gov for more information.



One of the great things in life is the willingness of people, sometimes complete strangers, to help others. This is demonstrated by the over 400,000 organisations in the UK charity sector. Many of those organisations are dedicated to helping people in the UK, and sometimes overseas, who have run into difficulties. So, if you, or someone you know, is struggling, there may well be help available out there.

As an example, many British Citizens will have served in the military at some point. Indeed, males born before 1946 are very likely to have carried out National Service in the Army, Navy, or Air Force. If a military veteran needs support, there are many service charities. Here are just some of them:

Royal British Legion – <https://www.britishlegion.org.uk/>

Army Benevolent Fund (Private to Sgt-Major) – www.soldierscharity.org

The Officer's Association (2nd Lieutenant and above) – www.officersassociation.org.uk

Royal Navy and Royal Marines Charity – <https://www.rnrmc.org.uk/>

Royal Air Force Charity – <https://www.rafbf.org/>

Veterans UK (Pensions, links and more) – <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/veterans-uk>

Gulf War Veterans – <http://www.ngvfa.org.uk/>

Help for Heroes (wounded in recent conflicts) – <http://www.helpforheroes.org.uk/>

Soldiers Sailors and Air Force Association (SSAFA) – www.ssafa.org

What if there was no military history? There are charities that cover many different connections that people may have had. Here are some of those:

The Charity for Civil Servants – <https://foryoubyyou.org.uk/>

Solicitors Charity – <https://thesolicitorscharity.org/>

Nursing – <https://www.rcn.org.uk/Get-Help/Member-support-services/Financial-wellbeing/Charitable-funding-and-other-help>

Or, search for a particular specialist charity here:

<https://findthatcharity.uk/>

<https://register-of-charities.charitycommission.gov.uk/charity-search>

<https://www.gov.uk/find-charity-information>

Not all charities will help British people overseas, but many will. So check the web page and if in doubt get in touch with them. You may be surprised at what is available.



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ON THE HIGH SEAS

by Christine Monteith

Personal Reflections (from a bodyboard)

“Waves are a mirror of life – they’re only temporary, ephemeral, always mundane, and never eternal. They live while they move and die when they break or crash.” – SurferToday.com, 2023

My favorite moment, after I have battled through the crashing surf near the shore, is when I have reached the smoother water farther out. There, I relax in the warm sun as I watch the waves approach the shore where the shallow seabed causes the water to climb to a peak. As the sea swells gently carry me over their undulations, I think

about how the struggle of physically and mentally digging deep to power through that oncoming force is like how my life experience often unfolds.

There are many days, weeks, even months when my husband Ben and I happily float in the rippling rhythm of the day-to-day. Surrounded by the cycle of nature, we have our routines with the dogs, hens, and



the abundance of our garden. We work in harmony to meet the needs of the creatures in our care and enhance the growth of the fruit trees, plants, and vegetables spread across our property. In this endeavor (a life's dream), Ben and I spend a lot of time together. We have neighbors and friends we see a few times a week, but he and I are together, literally 24/7. Neither of us has spent that much time with a partner, friend, or family ... ever.

Even after five years, navigating that much togetherness sometimes has its challenges. Usually, the tension builds when we compete over whose method of completing a task is superior. The fractious energy of who is "right" begins to rise like the swell of a wave. And like that wave, when my adamance to be right increases, my usual equanimity shallows out, leaving me only the space to rise upward in frustration.

At those times of conflict, when the tide of emotion approaches its crest, it is only a nanosecond between the formation of a searing retort in my brain and that retort's emergence from my mouth. In that nanosecond, just like at sea as the wall of roiling foam approaches, I can decide to fight its power, or dive and let the churning flow pass over me so that I can emerge safely behind it. From there

I can watch as the growling force crashes harmlessly on the shore.

It is at that critical juncture I need to make a decision: is it more important to "be right" and thereby face the full force of the conflict, or is it better to release the grip of my pride? In that instant I can escalate, or I can stand down and, like the wave, let the tension of our disagreement pass over me and evaporate.

I choose the latter.

Recognizing that we have ways to navigate through our conflicts is valuable. Even though Ben and I often fall back on ingrained patterns, we know that we are family, and sometimes family members disagree. And once the tension clears, I know that the strength of our connection will keep us buoyant in the roughest seas.

Christine has had the good fortune to live, work, and travel around the world, and now is happily ensconced in tropical tranquility near the Golfo Dulce with one husband, two dogs, and four hens.



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LEGAL UPDATE

by Romulo Pacheco



Costa Rica SA Corporations Part 2: The Corporate Books

In the last issue I discussed the annual tax reporting requirements for owners of SA (Sociedades Anónima) corporations in Costa Rica. In this article I will address the three corporate books that all SA corporations are provided at the time of incorporation and how to maintain them.

REGISTRY OF SHAREHOLDERS BOOK

This is the first of the three legal books that every corporation must have and keep up-to-date. This book records who the company's shareholders are and who serves on the Board of Directors. Legally, this book is a register and is governed by the laws of registry.

If there are any changes to the distribution of shares for any reason, the change must be recorded in this book. It is the best way to prove who is a shareholder and, as a legal document; it determines who has

the right to vote in that corporation. This can be important if one person owns the title but other persons are registered as shareholders.

BOARD OF DIRECTOR'S BOOK

This book records all the meetings and decisions that the Board of Directors make. Each corporation should hold at least one meeting per year, and those meetings, and any actions taken at them, should be recorded in this book. **Do not ignore this book;** it should be kept current with any information, particularly about any financial activities, because of increasingly complicated and changing tax issues.

SHAREHOLDER'S MEETINGS BOOK

This is the most important corporate book. It is the vehicle through which the shareholders control the company. In basic companies, it is normally used to change the

corporate by-laws. For example, the shareholders decide to hold their annual meetings in another country. This is something that must be recorded in this book. This book should also be maintained with at least one shareholder meeting annually to record the company's financial activity.

These obligations are mainly for Sociedades Anónimas; other types of corporations, such as corporations that are publicly held or have certain government concessions or those with special activities, could have less or more requirements and could be subject to special legal requirements. The other common type of corporation is the SRL; this can be related to an LLC for the United States and Canada. This one only has two books because there is no board of directors, only managers.

AN IMPORTANT REMINDER

When, after the initial incorporation takes place, the owner decides to permanently or temporarily return to their country of origin but chooses to retain their assets in Costa Rica, there must be a resident agent for

the corporation. Because the owner cannot be notified, that agent must be an attorney in order for them to receive any administrative and judicial notifications on behalf of the corporation.

NOTE: If your SA corporation was formed before 2010, you may have been issued six corporate books. Due to changes to the law, the books for Mayor, Diario, and Inventarios y Balances are no longer required; they are kept electronically.

For more information, please call or send an email to:

Rómulo Pacheco, Attorney at Law, Notary Public

Pacheco, Marin, and Associates:

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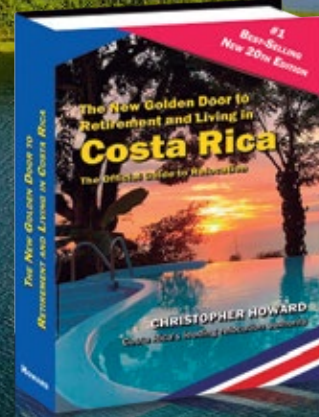
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WILD SIDE

by Ryan Piercy



Water Opossum

In the modern world, most marsupials are found in the Australian region. However, approximately 70 species can also be found in the Americas, with eight in Central America. All eight are opossums belonging to the order Didelphimorphia, and all can be observed in Costa Rica.

Locally known as the Yapok, the Water Opossum is a singularly interesting specimen usually found near freshwater lakes and streams from central Mexico to Brazil. (The name Yapok apparently originates with the natives in Guiana and the river Oyapok.) The *Chironectes minimus* is the only true semi-aquatic marsupial living today and the only existing marsupial of which both sexes have watertight pouches (a trait shared with the now-extinct Thylacine, the Tasmanian

tiger). The Greek name originates from *cheir* (hand) and *nektos* (swimming), which references the creature's specialized, webbed hind feet.

In addition to the aforementioned webbed feet, other characteristics that Yapoks have developed include thick, water-repellent fur, long stout whiskers which serve as tactile organs, and long-toed forefeet with rough palms that aid them in gripping slippery prey. When swimming, they dog-paddle with their hind feet while using the front paws to search for or carry their prey, which includes crustaceans, insects, fish, frogs, and similar small vertebrates.

The fur of the Yapok is marbled in black and grey, though they appear black when wet, and their black tail has a white or yellow tip. They are on the small side for



opossums, weighing less than a kilo, with a body length of about 28cm plus a tail of 30-40 cm.

This uniquely semi-aquatic marsupial is generally nocturnal and solitary, exiting its den (usually located just above a riverbank) during the night as it hunts for creatures or, in some cases, vegetation or fruits. Litters typically consist of just two or three pups, rarely up to five, which are carried in the mother's distinctive pouch.

Found on both coastal slopes of Costa Rica, the mythology of the indigenous Bribri indicates that if you place a right rear foot of a water opossum in a pregnant woman's hut, her child will be bestowed with superior fishing and shrimping skills. Fortunately, the Yapok has a conservation status of Least Concern, so this practice probably won't threaten their existence.

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PARADISE, WE HAVE A PROBLEM

by Tony Johnson



"Whatever 'in love' means"

– *Prince Charles*

The Crown”, Netflix’s richly appointed docudrama, takes us to the summit of regal opulence and, at the same time, destroys any illusions of a “perfect life” or royal fairy tale romances. While the series’ primary focus is on the monarchy of Queen Elizabeth II, it provides many revealing glimpses into the reality of royal lives, especially those of Prince Charles and Princess Diana. We fondly recall how that fairy tale romance began and still mourn its tragic ending. The TV series takes

us where no commoner could possibly go, admitting us into the couple’s private lives. As imagined by the program, it shows what happened in between those milestones and may illuminate why things turned out so badly.

Hundreds of thousands witnessed the “Wedding of the Century” firsthand, and millions more saw it on TV. The attraction? The bragging rights to say “I was there,” and the opportunity to see what’s normally hidden behind palace walls, the astonishing luxury of

the lives of the royals and, for many, a confirmation that a fairy tale romance is not a total fantasy but can, in the right circumstances, be a reality.

After all, everyone thought that their lives must be perfect, right? Everything is provided for them at the most astonishing level. All problems and concerns are solved by servants and secretaries, no one says NO! to them, so what's left for them to do? Lives of leisure and pleasure and a few public appearances where the crowds go crazy about the chance to be near them. What's not to like?

Held up as role models for the rest of us, is there anything we can learn from their actual lives? Are there any downsides to living up the highest realms? Might it be the case that, after all is said and done, we commoners are the fortunate ones?

Clothed in incredibly sumptuous uniforms and the most expensive suits, Charles still had a bit of a goofy, off-kilter look about him. But he was a genuine prince, THE Crown Prince, destined to become the King of England after the passing of his mother. And, while Diana was "only an aristocrat's daughter" and worked as a teachers' aide and house cleaner, she was astonishingly beautiful, graceful, warm, and giving. She alone pushed the couple's attractiveness quotient to the highest level. If she fell short in wealth and status, she brought the couple a veneration Charles alone could never reach. Ultimately, they had what many commoners believed were the ingredients for a successful marriage; looks and loot. Looking that good, love must be easy to sustain and that their wealth removed any of the problems other marriages face daily. At the time of the wedding, the dazzled crowds could not have foreseen how unhappy the couple would become, how tragically things would turn out.

On that gloriously sunny day, magnificently curated, total happiness was the only outcome we could imagine. While none of us could ever hope to enjoy their pinnacle of perfection, we could dream that if only we found the right partner, if only we could strike it rich, our fantasies of marital bliss would also move from fantasy to reality. Our vision of what the royal couple's marriage would be like were "confirmed"; our dreams were not foolish but were, indeed, possible.

As Bob Dylan famously wrote, "What Looks Large in The Distance, Close Up Ain't Never That Big." What the bystanders didn't see, couldn't see, was the inescapable human frailty behind the facade of royal perfection. Both

Charles and Diana were all too human, each bringing relationship-destroying baggage to the union.

CHARLES: A PRINCE, BUT STILL HUMAN

Charles' deficit was the huge hole the Queen had left in his heart. Devoted entirely to the success and preservation of her monarchy, little time was left for raising her four children. Although his birthright was to become King, Charles never felt he was given a king's degree of love and attention. From his mother he heard that he was spoiled, immature, and a disappointment, maybe not of monarchical quality. From his father, Prince Phillip, Charles heard that he wasn't manly enough, strong enough.

The second-ranking person in all of Great Britain heard that he might not be up to the top job. If only he'd grow up and settle down with a woman suitable to be Queen, maybe he'd finally measure up. So he entered relationships seeking what he didn't get at home; the feeling that he was the undisputed first in someone's heart. If he felt that someone was entirely devoted to him, it would reassure him of his "maestic" qualities.

Enter Camilla, a married woman whom Charles had dated. She was more than willing to devote herself entirely to Charles' happiness, even at the expense of her own and her family's well-being. But the inconvenient reality of being married and having a sexual past disqualified her from being Charles's consort; only a pure, virginal beauty could fill the bill as a mother of royal heirs. Diana checked all those boxes.

DIANA: PHYSICALLY PERFECT BUT EMOTIONALLY BROKEN

Diana, like Charles, also had a hole in her heart. Ignored by her aristocratic parents who were consumed with their marital conflicts, raised by nannies, Diana, like Charles, craved to be deeply loved and needed. Some day, she must have thought, someone will love me as I need to be loved – as my parents never did. Neglected and ignored, she didn't feel she had much value to anyone. No Prince Charming would ever want her.

But then, for the all-important sake of appearances and the monarchy's survival, the royal family pressured the Prince to marry her, despite his deepest wishes to be with Camilla. But why couldn't he, like so many Crown Princes in the past, have it all; the

public illusion of a marriage to a suitable queen and a private, hidden real love?

THE COLLISION WAS INESCAPABLE

Can you see the inevitable problems? When both partners need to be the most loved in the relationship, someone has to come in second and suffer unhappiness. Could a King-To-Be accept anything less than what he most needed, to be THE most loved? Could a 19-year-old girl, starving to finally be recognized as lovable, accept sharing her role with another woman? What's wrong with me? she must have screamed at the heavens when she discovered Charles cheating on her.

Could anyone see on that glorious wedding day, or even imagine, the ugly reality ahead? The intractable problems waiting to emerge from behind the deep, deep layers of royal theater?

There were early hints that all was not as it seemed. Interviewed about their engagement, the journalist notes what everyone expects to be obvious; "You look very much in love." Diana instantly replies, "Yes. Absolutely." But Charles hesitates and gives a puzzling reply, "Whatever 'in love' means."

Clearly unprepared for what should have been expected, Charles cannot lie, nor can he tell the truth, which might have been something like, *"As you can easily see, Diana is a wonderful young woman. But I am being forced to marry her. My first choice was not approved by the Queen so I plan to continue my secret relationship with the woman I love most of all and have heirs with Diana."*

Telling the truth would have exposed the fraud he was perpetrating, so he disassembled instead. Neither being truthful nor outright lying, he quibbled about the definition of love. He certainly knew what the word love meant; he loved Camilla.



RATHER THAN TRANSCENDENT, THEIR MARRIAGE WAS A TRAP

Although Diana correctly read the signs that Charles loved another woman, she felt preparations had gone too far for her to back out. And she seemed to believe that he would eventually come to love her.

Charles had his own illusions. He appeared to believe that, like previous Crown Princes, he too could have a wife for royal appearances and another woman to meet his personal needs. He would have a wife that met the Queen's approval, a wife that, like past Royal Consorts, would accept his affairs. Maybe even have a wife that would accept his true love was another woman. Raised to be King, he felt entitled to such accommodations.

So the "fairy tale marriage" held within it a hidden conflict that would destroy it. And that conflict explains why, when those problems emerged, the public was so baffled by them. We thought things really were perfect. It was said that "everyone loved Diana except Charles." Why? Why? we thought? How could he not see that he, the goofy Prince, had hit the jackpot, the power ball lottery, in Diana?

Why didn't he love Diana the way we did? Simply put, because she didn't love him the way he needed; the way Camilla loved him, as the first and most important one in the relationship.

The pair were trapped in the marriage and that marriage became a standoff; he couldn't love Diana the way she needed, and she couldn't love him the way he needed. Neither could surrender what they needed to give; what the other most needed.

In "The Crown," Charles admits to Diana (we don't know if this actually happened) that he was "forced" to marry her. Once again, like with her parents, Diana was an afterthought – if thought of at all.

Diana was a loving and emotionally generous person. Think of her hugging kids with AIDS. But she could not/would not be that generous with Charles. If, once again in her life she "wasn't good enough," if she "fell short" somehow, then why should she give him the love she gave to AIDS kids? Especially when all signs pointed to Camilla still being in his life in spite of his promise to the contrary?

When Diana couldn't deny that excruciating injury any longer, the war was on. He rubbed her nose in the

existence of Camilla so she would rub his nose in the public's greater love for her. Already wounded, they would damage each other even more. While Diana may seem totally innocent, she could play dirty too, telling the world about the real, unfaithful, deceitful Charles ("there are three people in this relationship"). But her reality was far from perfect, given her moodiness, eating disorders, suicide attempts, and her own affairs.

The lie at the base of their marriage and the re-wounding of their core injuries by each other destroyed the emotional stability of the marriage and undermined the very reason for the union: the nurturing of the heirs.

Where does this leave we "commoners"? These two model humans proved themselves to be very much standard issue, all too prone to being hurt and ready to take revenge, neither getting what they needed from the other. Sadly, in the end Diana may have gotten none of what she needed, while Charles eventually got the Queen's approval of Camilla.

In the glare of a blinding spotlight and under crushing expectations and scrutiny, Charles couldn't see that, Crown Prince or not, inside the marriage he was just a flawed, weak man. Deluged with public adoration, Diana couldn't see that she could be a problem for Charles. (The moral: Be careful about marrying princes, they may actually be frogs, and be careful about marrying wounded beauties, they may insist on their needs being met too.)

After all is said and done, no one can transcend their basic human nature and past. No amount of jewels and furs and crowns can change that, although it's a comforting fantasy to think so. In truth, we may actually be better off in the real world rather than in a royal fantasy land that encourages irrational delusions. The reality is, regardless of status, the rules of healthy relationships (honesty, trust, commitment, etc) still apply. And what impact may all of this have had on the hearts of "the heir and the spare"?

Tony Johnson is the child of Detroit factory workers. Definitely not a dream world. But he's glad he's been living in reality.
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CLUB CORNER

Due to the pandemic, many groups and clubs previously listed in this section have suspended meetings or have dissolved. We have attempted to contact each one, but due to a lack of response some listings were removed. If any corrections are needed, or your club or group is missing, please contact us with the name, a description of the group, and meeting and contact data, and we will include you in the next issue. Send the information to: service@arcr.cr Subject; El Residente Club Corner,

► Alcoholics Anonymous

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

► Al-Anon

English language meetings open to anyone whose life has been/ is affected by someone else's problem with alcohol. Meeting information can be found at: www.costaricaaa.com

► American Legion Post 10-Escazú

Meets on the second Wednesday of the month at 12 noon at the Tap House, Escazú Village, Escazú. If you wish to attend please call: 4034-0788, or email: commander@alcr10.org or visit our website at: www.alcr10.org

► American Legion Post 12-Golfito

Currently inactive. For information contact Mel Goldberg at 8870-6756

► Amigos of Costa Rica

A US-based non-profit organization established in 1999. Amigos of Costa Rica has the mission of connecting global resources to Costa Rican Organizations. Amigos currently works with over 120 Costa Rican nonprofits and is happy to connect with donors who wish to explore how they can contribute to Costa Rica. U.S. Government tax-payers donations are deductible. For more information go to: www.amigosofcostarica.org or email to: admin@amigosofcostarica.org

► Birding Club Costa Rica

A private group that travels around Costa Rica to observe and identify the 900+ species of birds found here, learn about different parts of the country, and enjoy the

company of like-minded and interested people. For more information, visit the website: www.birdingclubcr.org or email to: info@birdingclubcr.org.

► Canadian Club

Canadian Club welcomes everyone to join us for our monthly luncheons and at our special annual events. No passport required. There are no fees or dues to pay, just sign up with your email address and we will keep you informed of Canadian events. For information and to sign up, email Renée-Claude at: canadianclubcr@gmail.com .

► Central Valley Golf Association

Meets every Tuesday morning between 6-7 a.m. at the Valle Del Sol golf course in Santa Ana. Both individual and two person events with different formats every week. We invite all men and woman with all handicaps to join us and enjoy golf on a picturesque course. No membership required. For more information, contact: Larry Goldman 8933-3333, or email to: nylarryg@yahoo.com.

► Costa Rica Writers Group

Writers, authors, and anyone who would like to write can benefit from this group. Members read and evaluate or critique each other's work, or present what they write. Any aspect of writing can be discussed. We have access to resources for editing, publishing, and the whole writing process. We meet by ZOOM on the 1st and 3rd Thursdays of each month at 11:30 a.m. For more information contact Edie Bakker at: edierainforest@yahoo.com

► Democrats Abroad Costa Rica

Provides information about voting in the US and voting issues of interest to US citizens living in Costa Rica. For more information or to join email: or visit our website at: www.democratsabroad.org/cr Register to vote absentee at: votefromabroad.org

► First Friday Lunch

The popular expat gathering, the FFL, is an informal meeting of expats who enjoy a good meal and the camaraderie of others expats. Meets the first Friday of the month and all are invited. There are no dues, reservations, or other requirements, just bring you and your smiling face. The meal starts at 12:00 and ends when it ends. Come early and meet new and old friends. Call the ARCR office (4052-4052) for details of the location and directions.

► Marine Corps League

Meets the second Saturday of the month at 11 a.m. at the Tap House in City Place Mall in Santa Ana. We are looking for new members. Former Marines and Navy Corpsmen can be regular members. All other service members are welcome to join as associate members. For information call Andy Pucek at: 8721-6636 or email: andy@marinecorpsleaguecr.com or andypucek@live.com

► Newcomers Club of Costa Rica

(For Women) The Club, in existence since 1980, promotes friendship and support among members, mostly expats in Costa Rica, through conducting a variety of social and recreational activities. Meetings are held from September to May, interest groups meet year-round. For more information go to our Facebook page at: <https://www.facebook.com/newcomers.org/> or email to: newcomersclub.costarica@gmail.com

► Pérez Zeledón International Women's Club

Formed in November 2009 to promote friendship between English speaking women in Pérez Zeledón and, through friendship, to make a positive contribution to our local community. The Club meets for lunch on the second Tuesday of each month in different restaurants around the canton. We also host a Ramblers group, a Games group and currently have a team working in the Municipal gardens. For more information, please send an email to: pzwomansclub@gmail.com or visit our web site at: www.pziwc.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. Meeting schedules vary. For info on the speaker for the month and to register, call Sarah Joy at 8868-6990 or email us at info@pwncr.com The PWN website is: <http://www.pwncr.com>

► San Vito Bird Club

A community based birding/nature group centered in the diverse southern zone of Costa Rica. We also facilitate nature education to local elementary schools through Cornell University's Bird Sleuth program. Twice monthly bird walks through the Wilson Botanical Garden and other sites are open to all; binoculars available as needed. Please visit our website: www.sanvitobirdclub.org or email: eltangaral@gmail.com for more information.

► Women's International League for Peace and Freedom

Open to men too. We work on peace issues and against violence. The Spanish speaking group in San José works through ZOOM but new members can be accommodated in English. The San Ramon group is also active. Contact itzstar@gmail.com or call Mitzi at 2433-7078 for information.

NOTICE: Club officers should review the contact information for their clubs and make sure it is up to date.

Send any changes or corrections to: service@arcr.cr subject line; Club Corner, and post them on the the ARCR Facebook page at: www.facebook.com/ARCR123.



BUSINESS DIRECTORY

Important dates in Costa Rica:

19 March, Sunday

Saint Joseph's Day
Observance

10 April, Monday

Battle of Rivas Day
National holiday

NATIONAL HOLIDAY:

Non-essential businesses will be closed. These are paid holidays for Costa Rican workers. A worker who is required to work on a national holiday must, by law, be paid double wages.

FYI, NO SEMINAR ISSCHEDULED FOR FEBRUARY

April 28th and 29th.

ARCR seminar for expats
Location; Park Inn Hotel,
health conditions permitting.

Contact the office for
updates and reservations.
Seating is limited.

Funniest One Liners

If Barbie is so popular, why
do you have to buy her
friends?

Eagles may soar, but
weasels don't get sucked
into jet engines.

Why do psychics have to ask
you for your name?

My mechanic told me, "I
couldn't repair your brakes,
so I made your horn louder."

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