

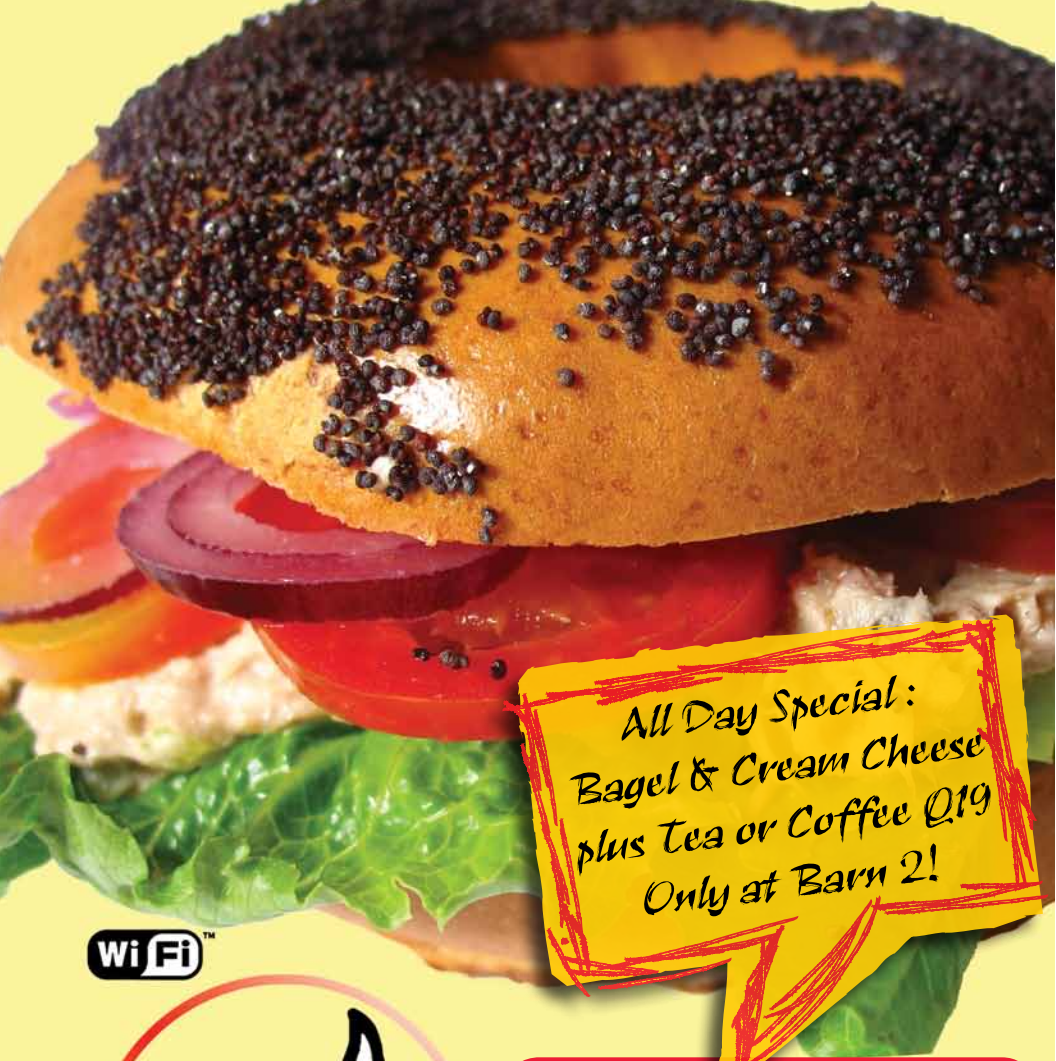
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Guatemala's English-language Magazine
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October 2010
Year 19, No. 8

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► The Noble Peccary
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The kites of October will be flying with messages for the departed - see page 66 (Gonzalo Ticun/John Barrie)

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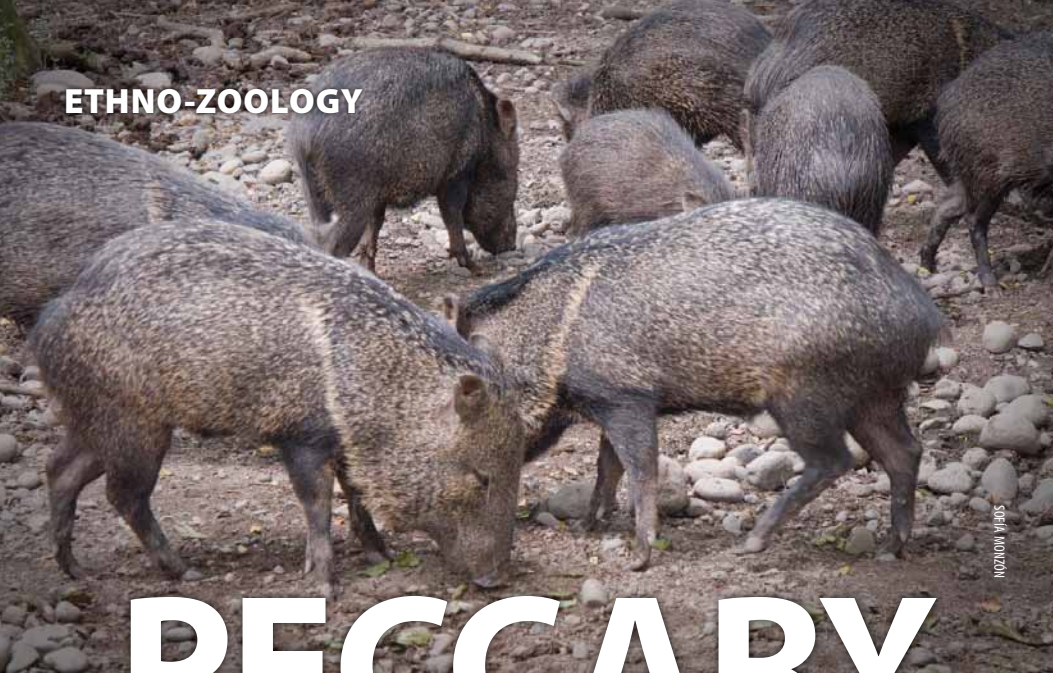


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SHEILA MONZON

PECCARY

This is first in a series of *Sacred Animals & Exotic Tropical Plants* which will cover ethno-zoology and ethno-botany as related to Mayan archaeology by Dr. Nicholas Hellmuth, Director, FLAAR Reports

The art of the 3rd-9th century Classic Maya was filled with renderings of sacred flowers and revered animals. Jaguars, spider monkeys, poisonous toads, deadly snakes and diverse birds are pictured on stone sculptures, murals, ceramics, jade and shells.

The flora most commonly depicted are the water lily and various trees such as *Pachira aquatica*, related to the world tree (ceiba). I have worked on the iconography and cosmology of the water lily (*Nymphaea ampla*) in my Ph.D. dissertation, *Monsters and Men in Maya Art*. I am working with botanist Charles Zidar (Missouri Botanical Garden) on identifying other flowers and plants pre-

sented as effigy containers by the Maya. For the last five years I have directed a small Mayan ethno-botanical garden surrounding my house.

I have been visiting Guatemala almost every year since age 17 (1963), having spent an entire 12-month season excavating at Tikal (1965) while a student at Harvard, and having spent five years developing the Yaxha-Sacnab *parque nacional* in the 1970s that subsequently was turned into a much larger park by interested Guatemalan archaeologists, ecologists and government entities, I have some experience with flora and fauna, though my background is in art history, archaeology and anthropology.

During these decades I have come to enjoy reading the *REVUE* magazine. For years I have thought I should write an article every month because plants and animals are of considerable interest to a broad segment of Guatemala's population as well as to visitors. Plus, we like to encourage eco-friendly research and help protect endangered species and threatened nature reserves.

For this inaugural column I have selected peccary, for several reasons:

Peccary were included in my Ph.D. dissertation 25 years ago and I recently spent two more days face-to-face with over 50 white-lipped and a dozen white-collared peccary at AutoSafari Chapín. Thus logically peccary will be featured first on our www.maya-archaeology.org and subsequently in my upcoming photo exhibits. The final factor is that Maya portraits of cosmological peccary are increasingly found by archaeologists, such as the important find at El Zotz by Stephen Houston and co-directors Ernesto Arredondo Leiva and Edwin Román.

There are two species of peccary in Guatemala, Mexico, Honduras and neighboring countries:

White-lipped peccary, *Tayassu pecari*, which is very aggressive and dangerous.

Collared peccary, *Tayassu tajacu*, not as nasty nor as large.

Actually, the collared peccary is known to make an excellent pet, though the fangs and tusks of an adult white-lipped peccary can tear your leg apart down to the inner bone.



Peccary, ceramic figurine, Museo de Arte Precolombino y Vidrio Moderno, Hotel Casa Santo Domingo

Pecari, or *coche de monte*, is a common name for the white-lipped peccary. Confusingly the same name, *coche de monte*, may be used in Guatemala for the collared peccary.

Both species of peccary are edible, though I vaguely remember from my jungle diet 35 years ago that one species was definitely nowhere near as tasty as the other. Today I prefer to photograph peccary; it is not appropriate to eat an endangered species.

In Yucatec Mayan language, the word for peccary is the same as the word for some turtles, *ak*. In the Bonampak murals the peccary are near turtles; both are considered constellations. Scholars traditionally associate peccary with Gemini but Roeling notes that the peccary is related to Orion among the Lacandon Maya of Chiapas.

Peccary heads as tetrapod supports appear in the same Early Classic centuries (3rd-5th century) as do turtles and water birds catching fish. Since turtles are part of the Underwaterworld cosmology, and since the word for peccary is a pun on the word for turtle, it is not surprising that both are found in similar contexts in royal tombs.

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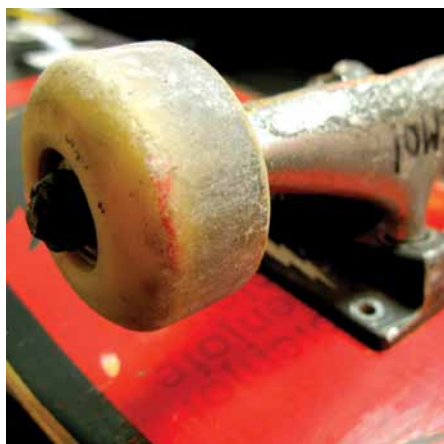
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Landfall

*photo by
Henning
Sac Morales*

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FROM THE PUBLISHERS

As our cover photo suggests, this is the time of year when sea turtles are arriving on the shores of Guatemala's Pacific coast to make a nest on dry land in which to deposit their eggs. Matt Bokor's article on page 14 describes some of the wonder and the perils that exist for these gentle creatures at the Monterrico-Hawaii Natural Reserve.

Another animal gracing our pages is the noble peccary. We are excited to introduce this first of a new series for Revue by Dr. Nicholas Hellmuth, *Sacred Animals & Exotic Tropical Plants*.

For kids who like animals, the Minerva Zoo in Quetzaltenango hosts a Zoo Slumber Party that seems to be quite fun. Find out what it's all about on page 21.

Do you believe in ghosts? Day of the Dead rounds out the month and we have several spirits to introduce you to; *La Llorona*, the *Hungry Ghost* and *The Ghosts of San Juan Chamelco*. Hope we don't spook you.

October would not be complete without Giant Kites and we have photos and an article to prove it. We also have included a Profile and Book Alert, and a Community Enterprise worth checking out.

The Revue staff would like to congratulate two of our long-time advertisers on their 35th anniversary, a very impressive feat. To the **Shakespeare Pub** in Guatemala City and **La Fonda de la Calle Real** in Antigua, we salute you heartily, and please keep up the good work.

Thanks for reading Revue. We hope October finds you in good "spirits."

—John & Terry Kovick Biskovich

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**ASK
ELIZABETH**
by Elizabeth Bell

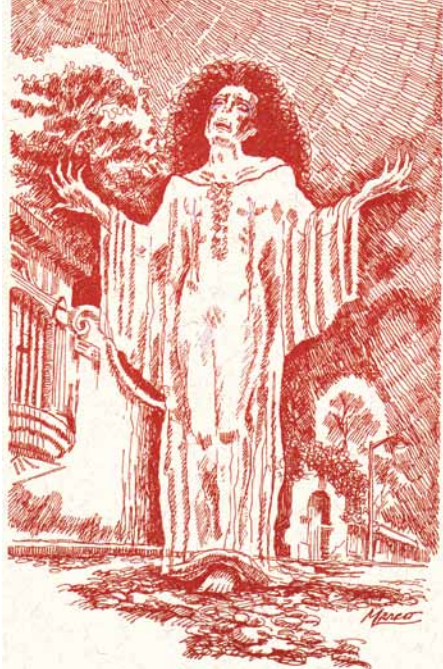
Who is La Llorona?

While I am more familiar with La Antigua Guatemala's "regular" ghosts, spirits and "orbs" (you can see the latter if you take digital camera photos in the crypt at the cathedral), anyone who grew up in Antigua can recite the stories of the folkloric figures. These include *La Tatuana*, *El Sombrerón* and everyone's favorite: *La Llorona*.

It appears that many of these figures originated in Mexico and spread throughout Latin America. Antigua has certainly incorporated them into local folklore with a flair of their own!


La Llorona (the crying woman) is an exceptionally beautiful woman who drowned her children to be with the man she loved. Subsequently, after being rejected by the man, she killed herself and was doomed to wander as a spirit, searching for her children, for all eternity. Her constant weeping is reflected in her name.

Sightings in Antigua? Apparently the most popular are Calle de las Ánimas (located on



the north side of town) and at the Tanque La Unión (sited by 2a & 3a avenidas and 6a calle oriente). Although at night, if you listen carefully, you might hear her roaming throughout all of the old streets of Antigua crying, "*Aaaaaay, mis hijos!*"

While a fearful tale, the cultural symbol is as the archetypal evil woman condemned to eternal suffering and weeping for violating her role as a wife and mother. She is a failed woman because she failed at motherhood.

In the "old days," grandmothers would warn children that bad behavior might cause her to kidnap them. Being outside after dark would definitely result in a visit from this roaming spirit. This favorite tale also warns teenage girls not to be enticed by status and wealth or men proclaiming empty declarations and promises of love! Those who hear La Llorona's wailing might even be marked for death! 

We invite you to discover
the wonders of Guatemala

Guatemala - Flores

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Guatemala - Flores	TA7972	6:30 a.m.	7:40 a.m.	Daily
Flores - Guatemala	TA7979	8:05 a.m.	9:10 a.m.	Daily
Guatemala - Flores	TA7976	9:15 a.m.	10:25 a.m.	Mon, Fri
Flores - Guatemala	TA7977	3:30 p.m.	4:35 p.m.	Mon, Fri
Guatemala - Flores	TA7978	6:02 p.m.	7:12 p.m.	Daily
Flores - Guatemala	TA7973	7:37 p.m.	8:42 p.m.	Daily



(AMA PATRICIA FORERO)

Season For Marvel

Nesting season for sea turtles brings life, challenges to the Pacific coast

One of nature's marvels unfolds nightly this time of year on Guatemala's Pacific coast—a beautiful yet awkward ballet of emerging life that, within minutes of existence, is challenged for survival against natural predators.

And this is the second test. The first was whether the hatchling completed its incubation at all because of human predators.

Raccoons, opossums and some birds are among species that snatch up and eat sea turtle hatchlings soon after they break out of their eggs, which were deposited in sandy nests roughly 45 days earlier by mothers lumbering ashore.

Their little flippers scooting them to sea in an age-old, instinctive march, the tiny creatures are easy prey in these first defenseless hours between sand and surf.



*Criss-crossed by numerous lagoons and canals,
the Monterrico-Hawaii Natural Reserve is home
to a variety of birds and reptiles.*

The much bigger problem, which threatens the very survival of the ancient species, is posed by villagers along Guatemala's and other remote coasts: nest robbers who value *huevos de oro* (eggs of gold) for food and mystical purposes.

"The sea turtle, which for hundreds of thousands of years has inhabited the beaches of Monterrico and the southern coast of Guatemala, is in danger of extinction," explained Thomas Stutzer, director of the *Fundación Eterna Primavera* (Eternal Spring Foundation). "We want to reverse the decline of the sea turtle population on Guatemala's southern coast."

Stutzer estimates 80 percent of sea turtle eggs are stolen from Guatemala's beaches and sold for consumption. "We need to convince the villagers and consumers that Guatemala is losing one of its most important natural treasures," he said.

The Eternal Spring Foundation is organizing a long-term campaign to help save the gentle creatures, which this time of year are the center of attention at the Monterrico-Hawaii Natural Reserve.

"The sea turtle is one of Monterrico's most famous attractions, which allows foreign and local visitors alike to have a unique






All photos are winners from last year's Festival de La Tortuga Photo Contest (thanks to www.clubfotografico.org)

nature experience—once when the adult turtles come to deposit their eggs on shore and another when the hatchlings go back to the ocean,” Stutzer said.

With the turtle nesting season at its peak, October is an ideal time to visit Monterrico's ocean-front hotels and the Monterrico-Hawaii Nature Reserve, a 28-square-kilometer paradise that serves as a significant nesting ground for endangered leatherback and ridley turtles.

Visitors have a unique opportunity to watch and even help release the hatchlings from their nest under the guidance of local environmental experts (for a modest donation).

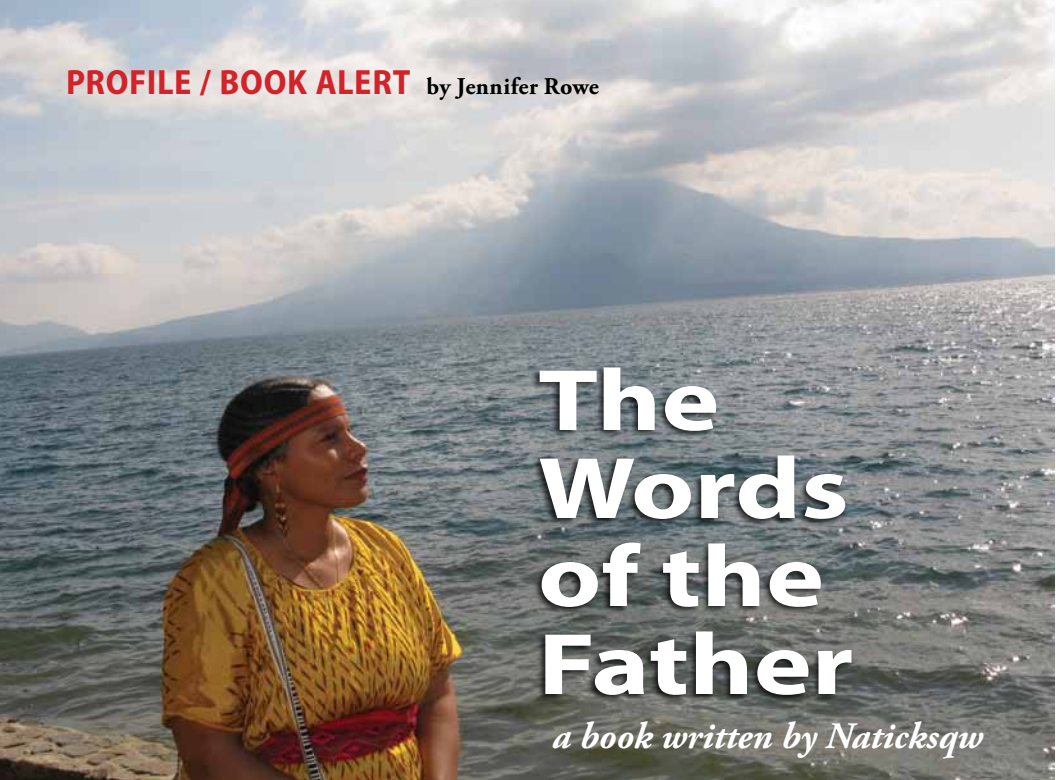
Criss-crossed by numerous lagoons and canals, the reserve is home to a variety of birds and reptiles and serves as a rest stop for wildlife migrating through the Americas. The reserve's dense mangrove islands provide habitat for small fish while guarding the shoreline from coastal erosion.

The reserve's main focus is the turtle-release program, and visitors during turtle season—August through January—are sure to witness a unique moment as hatchlings emerge. 

For more information:

www.festivaldelatortuga.info or
www.arcasguatemala.com. To book your lodging, see www.visitmonterrico.com.

The 2010 Festival de La Tortuga is scheduled for Nov. 26-28... stay tuned for details



The Words of the Father

a book written by Naticksqw

When writing about someone as interesting and multi-faceted as Naticksqw (pronounced *Nah-tick-squaw*) the hardest part is deciding where to begin. Do you start by mentioning she is one of 12 children? That she grew up in rural Massachusetts in a house with no heating? Do you begin by describing the quiet energy that radiates from her? That she is also known as Chief Caring Hands, from the Praying Indian tribe? Or perhaps you start by mentioning that she is a channeler—a person through whom God speaks.

Yes, let's begin with that.

Naticksqw first started receiving words from God when she was just a teenager. At first, she didn't know what was happening. "People

were astounded by the words God was saying to me, so I wrote them down," she says, "and turned them into poetry." The people who read the words considered her an "old soul." She says, "That's nice to hear when you're in your 60s, but not in your youth."

She never knows when she will receive messages. "I keep paper with me all the time," Naticksqw says with a smile. "I never know when The Father will speak to me."

When asked why she was chosen to receive these messages, Naticksqw replies, "I never ask 'why me' but instead, 'why *not* me?' He chose me to speak to a world in need of healing." Her ancestral background with the Praying Indian tribe of ...continued on page 38

The Ghosts of San Juan Chamelco

Like many towns in Guatemala, San Juan Chamelco, Alta Verapaz, used to have a *la llorona*, a female spirit who wails in the night. The llorona's cries often can be heard near a house where someone had just died.

Indeed, since *Chamelqueños* usually knew which of their neighbors were gravely ill, it was common to remark, "Oh, Fulano de tal must have died!" whenever they heard the llorona's cries. The children would quake in terror and stuff their ears with cotton when they heard the cries; the more rational adults claimed it was nothing more than a bird calling. An attempt was once made to run the llorona down, but the only thing visible at the spot from which the cries were heard was a dust devil.

Another apparition that Chamelco shares with many other Guatemalan towns is a temptress who lures lustful men to their deaths. In Chamelco she is called Siguanaba, and she is often encountered at night beneath the giant ceiba tree in front of the

church or near the bridge of Nani in barrio Chitubtu (the southeast end of town on the road to Concepción).

She appears as a young girl with long, shiny black hair and a beautiful figure, though her face is always veiled in shadow. She carries a bar of soap in a golden bowl in her hands. Some men—the lucky ones—foam at the mouth and faint from fear at the sight of her. But the bolder and lustier men are captivated by her; she flirts with them and invites them to bathe with her beneath the bridge. If they accept, she strangles them to death with her long hair.

Once, a long time ago, a widower was courting a woman in Concepción. As he crossed the bridge of Nani one night he thought he saw his beloved approaching. He had a bottle of *trago* with him, and the apparition invited him to sit down and drink with her. He got

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...continued on page 104





José Mario Gutiérrez (center), president of Amor Ch'orti', also grows gourds and makes gourd crafts in a Camotán aldea. Magdaleno Ramírez Pérez (right) heads up a ceramic group in a Jocotán aldea. The products in the photo are maguey bags, baskets, mats and honey.

Chiquimula, Ch'orti' and Crafts

Chiquimula is a department in Eastern Guatemala and shares a border with Honduras. It is inhabited by the Maya Ch'orti', who are related culturally and linguistically to the lowland Maya of Yucatán and Belize (Chol) rather than the highland Maya of Guatemala (Quiché-Pokam). Copán is their ancestral capital.

Like the rest of Guatemala, textile traditions prevail, but back-strap and treadle looms are not found here because *traje* (traditional clothing) is not woven in the region. Instead, horizontal looms, unique to Olopa,

and vertical-frame looms in Jocotán are used to weave maguey fiber bags. Hammocks are another maguey product, made between two upright poles.

Other textile items include *carrizo* (cane), *tule* (reed), pine needle or palm leaf *petates* (woven mats, once considered royal art, and thus only leaders were allowed to sit on them, and became known as the “lords of the mats”), *sombreros* (hats), *escobas* (brooms), baskets and *sopladores* (fans). Many of these items are sold in Jocotán's Sunday market or local shops. In addition, a few organizations are developing contemporary ...cont. on page 100



Minerva Zoo, Quetzaltenango

Zoo Slumber Party

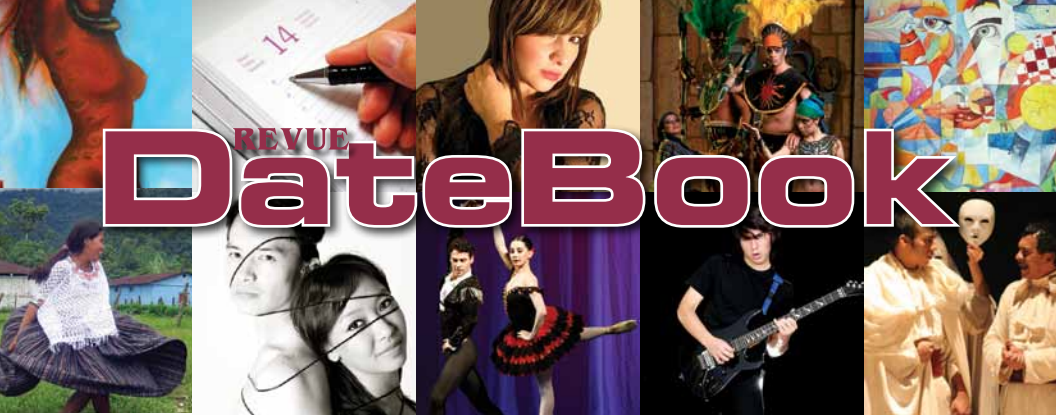
Camping can be scary for littler kids, especially if, the night before, they watched *The Wizard of Oz*, and big sister hints at the lurking presence of “lions and tigers and bears—oh my!”

Yet each November, Guatemalan youngsters do sleep within eating distance of Central America’s premier feline, the jaguar. And lions—even African lions—have been spotted at the campground. But no kids wind up as kitty kibble. In fact, not only are steps never taken to avoid these big cats, but the cats themselves are hunted. So are barbary sheep, monkeys, and griping macaws.

The “hunters” are attendees at one of Guatemala’s surrealist events: the big *pijamada* (sleepover) at Quetzaltenango’s Minerva Zoo.

One might think that this zoo was named for longtime curator Lucy Guzmán, who with Olympian wisdom rescued it from neglect and mismanagement. The name really comes from the presence, nearby, of a Minerva “temple” erected by President Estrada a century ago to inspire *quetzaltecos* to excellence in education. But something—if not the temple—did inspire Guzmán in this direction, as she proved in 1990.

That was the year the mayor gave her the keys to the zoo, where she found 15 male employees who, well, needed work. With farcical earnestness, they were attempting to feed bananas to snakes, among other sitcom-grade antics. Guzmán’s emergency reforms were not well received, and the men conspired to draft a kiss-and-tell ...continued on page 98



REVUE DateBook

OCTOBER Guide to culture & upcoming events Compiled by Mercedes Mejicanos

2 Sat. — (Spanish) **BOOK PRESENTATION/ART** *Presentación de libros y exposición de pintura*: Libros testimoniales sobre la Revolución de 1944, conferencia dictada por el maestro Roberto Carrera. Así mismo exposición de pintura de la época. Colegio Mayor de Santo Tomás de Aquino, 1a av. norte #23, **La Antigua**.

6 Wed., through Sat., 30 — **ART**: *Hablando en Plata* by artist Fernando Valdiviezo. Galería El Attico, Salón Principal (tel: 2368-0853) 4a av. 15-45, z. 14, **Guatemala City**. ▼



5 Tues., 5:30pm — (English) **TALK**: *Los Patojos, Forming Leaders for Guatemala* with Director Juan Pablo Romero. Donation Q25. Rainbow Café (tel: 7832-1919) 7a av. #8, **La Antigua**.

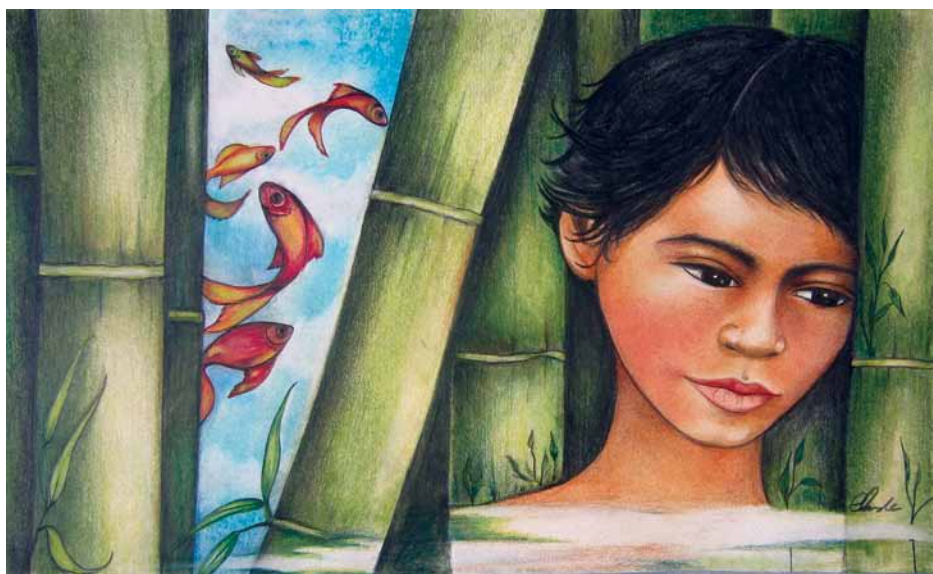
5 Tues., through Mon., 11 — **ART**: *Exposition of works by students from Colegio Montessori Internacional*. Free. Museo Ixchel (tel: 2361-8081) 6a calle final z. 10, Centro Cultural UFM, **Guatemala City**.

6 Wed., 7pm through Sun., 31 — **ART**: *Estados de Conciencia*, works by artist Alfredo del Águila. Galería de Arte Alianza Francesa, 5a calle C 10-55, z. 13, Finca La Aurora, **Guatemala City**.

8 Fri., 8pm — **MUSIC**: Victoria Valenzuela sings a selection of Latin romantic music. No cover. Café Flor (tel: 7832-5274) 4a av. sur #1, **La Antigua**.

8 Fri., 8pm — **MUSIC**: *Evert Taube* by Norwegian singer-songwriter Lars Klevstrand. Q60/Q50 students with carnet, includes vin d'honneur. Sponsored by Embassies of Norway and Sweden. El Sitio (tel: 7832-3037), **La Antigua**.

Revue is not responsible for event cancellations or date/time changes.



13 Wed., 5pm — ART: Inauguration of *Sueños Naturales* by Claudia Tremblay. Mesón Panza Verde (tel: 7832-2925) 5a av. Sur #19, **La Antigua**.

9 Sat., 9am-3pm — (English) WOMEN'S MINI CONFERENCE: *God's Emotional Healing*. Tickets available at the Church office. Union Church of Guatemala (tel: 2361-2037) 12 calle 7-37, z. 9, Plazuela España, **Guatemala City**.

9 Sat., 11am — (Spanish) CONFERENCIA: *La Iglesia Católica durante la Revolución del 44*, por José Antonio Móbil. Colegio Mayor de Santo Tomás de Aquino, 1a av. norte #23, **La Antigua**.

9 Sat., 1pm — CULTURAL EVENT: A glimpse at indigenous culture, a Maya sacerdote (priest) presents an authentic ceremony/ritual. Free. La Peña de Sol Latino (tel: 7882-4468), **La Antigua**.

9 Sat., 7pm — ART: *Caminos II*, painting and drawing exhibition by Edwin José Bixcuil. Cocktail. El Sito (tel: 7832-3037), **La Antigua**.

11 Mon., through Sun., 17th — MULTIMEDIA & ART: *A Tres Bandas*, material, aural and visual narrative of musical mestizaje present in Latin America since the 16th century. Centro de Formación de la Cooperación Española (tel: 7832-1276) 6a av. norte entre 3a y 4a calle poniente, **La Antigua**.

12 Tues., 5:30pm — (English) TALK: *Partnering with the Poor: Inequality, Education and Opportunity in Guatemala*. Donation Q25. Rainbow Café (tel: 7832-1919) 7a av. #8, **La Antigua**.

15, 22, & 29 Fri., 9:30am — ART WORKSHOP: *Artistic Expression* by Sergio Valenzuela. Q740, limited seating. Museo Ixchel (tel: 2361-8081) 6a calle final z. 10, Centro Cultural UFM, **Guatemala City**.

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16 Sat., 1pm — DANCE & MUSIC: The Niños de San Antonio Aguas Calientes, dancing and playing the marimba, flutes and bombas. Donations benefit educational pursuits. Free, La Peña de Sol Latino (tel: 7882-4468), *La Antigua*.

16 Sat., 7pm — MUSIC: *El Canto de las Libélulas* by Magda Angélica. Q60. El Sito (tel: 7832-3037), *La Antigua*.

18 Mon., 8pm — MUSIC: Thibault Cauvin, French classic guitar player. Galería de Arte Alianza Francesa, 5a calle C 10-55, z.13, Finca La Aurora, *Guatemala City*.

19 Tues., through Fri., 29th, 9am-1pm — ART: *Inuit weavings* brought to Guatemala by the Canadian Embassy. Q15. Museo Ixchel (tel: 2361-8081) 6a calle final z. 10, Centro Cultural UFM, *Guatemala City*.

19 Tues., 5:30pm — (English) TALK: Friends of the Deaf: LAVOSI (Las Voces del Silencio) Donation Q25. Rainbow Café (tel: 7832-1919) 7a av. #8, *La Antigua*.

20 Wed., — HOLIDAY: *Día de la Revolución* (Revolution Day). Banks and some businesses closed, plan ahead.

DATEBOOK HIGHLIGHT

Central American Travel Market 2010 to take place in La Antigua

Fri., 15 through Wed., 20th — CATM FAIR: The Central American Travel Market (CATM) 2010 fair is a technical and professional encounter, during which tourism offices from Central American countries have the opportunity to establish commercial relationships between the tour operators and the wholesalers of the main tourist-issuing markets at an international level including Europe, Asia and Latin America.

The main objectives are to promote the region as a tourism multi-destination—a highly competitive market in the international tourism industry—and to achieve an increase in the number of international tourists that visit Central America. More visitors to the region will generate benefits such as job creation, increased revenue, and local development in Central America.

CATM 2010 will take place in La Antigua Guatemala, one of the most important tourism destinations of the Central American region. According to CATM, La Antigua is “One of the most emblematic cities of the world. It’s historic inheritance will be the principal seat for this touristic and professional encounter of the Central American region.” The fair will be held at Hotel Casa Santo Domingo. For more information and complete calendar, visit <http://www.catmcentralamerica.com/index-1.php> Hotel Casa Santo Domingo, 3a calle oriente #28, *La Antigua*.



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—David Herbert Lawrence



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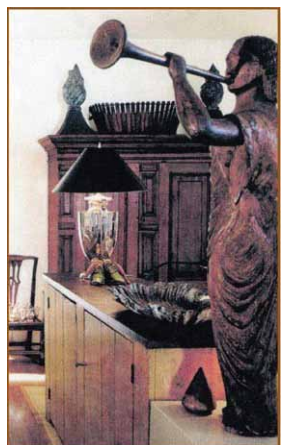


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MUSIC

THROUGHOUT THE MONTH

La Cueva de Panza Verde (tel: 7832-2925)5a av. sur #19, *La Antigua***Mondays** — New Orleans Blues with Nelson Lunding. Piano & vocals.**Wednesdays** — Live Jazz Trio; sax, piano, bass.**Thursdays** — Buena Vista de Corazón; Cuban Jazz. Conga and vocals by Ignacio.**Fridays** — Latin Trio; guitar, conga and piano.**Sundays** — New Orleans Jazz with Nelson Lunding. Piano & vocals.**La Peña de Sol Latino** (tel: 7882-4468)5a calle poniente #15-C, *La Antigua***Mondays, 7-10pm** — Carlos Trujillo, Classical & Latin Guitar music to complete your intimate dining experience. Free.**Tuesdays, 7-10pm** — Ramiro plays Trova Cubana. Free.**Wednesdays through Sundays, 7-10pm** — Sol Latino plays Andean music (pan flutes). Free. ▼**Sundays, 12:30-3pm** — Ramiro plays Trova Cubana. Free.**8, 22, Fri., 8pm** — Victoria Valenzuela sings a selection of Latin romantic music. No cover. Café Flor (tel: 7832-5274), *La Antigua*.

MUSIC

Rainbow Café (tel: 7832-1919)7a av. sur #8, *La Antigua***Mondays, 7:30pm** — Don Ramiro will serenade you with some beautiful Latin folk music. Free.**Tuesdays & Fridays, 7:30pm** — Sergio, reggae music.**Wednesdays, 7:30pm** — *Open Mike Night* hosted by Juan-Jo and friends. A complimentary drink for all performers. Free.**Thursdays, 7:30pm** — Güicho will astound you with his guitar skills and improvisation of Latino and pop classics.**Saturdays, 7:30pm** — At.One.Ment. Come and listen to Luke and his band. You cannot miss it. Enjoy a few drinks and relax to some classics.**Sundays, 7:30pm** — La Raiz: Luis, Juan-Jo & Choko, great improvised classics. Free.**Posada de Santiago** (tel: 7721-7366), 1 km south of Santiago Atitlán, *Lake Atitlán***Fridays, 7:30pm** — Mark Weinstein's Marco Trio will perform a variety of jazz, blues & rock 'n' roll.**Saturdays, 7:30pm** — La Trova del Lago featuring Juan Sisay, Carlos Rangel and Noe Vásquez.*I still need practice in enjoying the fruits of success. —Neil Diamond*If your bar or restaurant has live music on a regular schedule, send info to: publicidad@revuemag.com

CHECK DATEBOOK CALENDAR LISTINGS FOR MORE CONCERTS AND SPECIAL MUSICAL EVENTS

MUSIC

THROUGHOUT THE MONTH

Circus Bar (tel: 7762-2056)
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Mondays — The fabulous piano master Chris Jarnach plays jazz and favorite tunes; Circus Bar Latin Ensemble plays boleros, salsa, son cubano and other Latin rhythms.

Tuesdays — Nayno Flamenco, Rumba and Latin Ensemble, Trova del Lago.

Wednesdays — Nayno, Latin Ensemble.

Thursdays, 7:30pm — Carlos and Carlitos, swing and Latin rhythms. Trova del Lago, trova.

Fridays — A fascinating show of Circus Bar Allstars.

Saturdays — Los Vagabundos, hot rhythms in a fusion of Rumba, Flamenco and Guatemalan traditional elements.

Sundays — Latin Ensemble.

Café Flor (tel: 7832-5274)
4a av. sur #1, *La Antigua*

Sundays through Thursdays, 8pm — JB plays Romantic and New Age music on the baby grand piano.

Fridays and Saturdays, 8pm — Blanco y Negro play Boleros and Latin Ballads, with the vocals of Victoria Valenzuela.

The Sound of Music

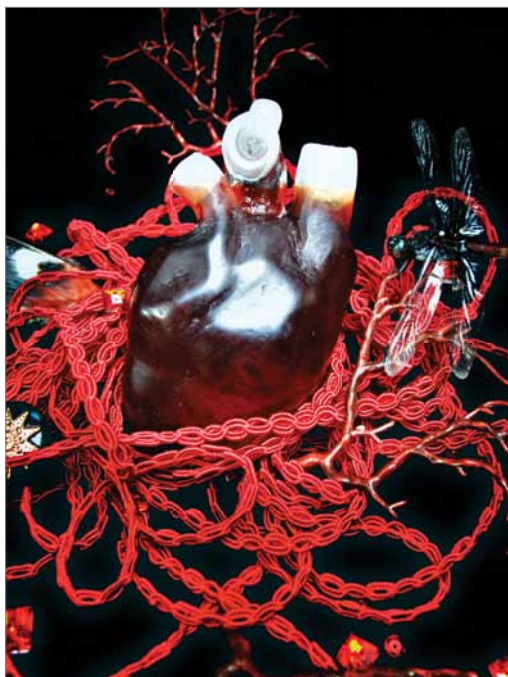
text and photos by Pinar Istek

As I was wandering the streets of La Antigua on a Saturday afternoon in search of photographic opportunities, I heard a wonderful melody coming from the central park.

Surrounded by an appreciative crowd, a group of musicians known as Grupo Sol Latino, were playing Andean music, which originated in the Incan Empire before the European conquest. Argentina, Bolivia, Ecuador, Chile, Colombia, Peru and Venezuela are among this music's native countries. Some of the traditional instruments are the *charango*, a 10-stringed instrument, which looks like a tiny guitar; the *siku*, in different sizes, made from bamboo shoots; the *antara*, made from a type of cane; and the *quena*.

You can hear Grupo Sol Latino Wednesday through Sunday from 7 to 10 p.m. at La Peña de Sol Latino Restaurant & Bar in Antigua, located on 5a calle poniente #15-C.





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21 Thurs., 5pm — (Spanish) BOOK PRESENTATION: *Literatura Feminista y Ciudadanía*, realizando un conversatorio en torno a los aportes desde la literatura al ejercicio ciudadano de las mujeres. Centro de Formación de la Cooperación Española (tel: 7832-1276) 6a av. norte between 3a & 4a calle poniente, **La Antigua**.

22 Fri., 8pm — MUSIC: Victoria Valenzuela sings a selection of Latin romantic music. No cover. Café Flor (tel: 7832-5274) 4a av. sur #1, **La Antigua**.

26 Tues., 5:50pm — MAYAN DANCES: By indigenous children from Nuevo Amanecer. K'a k'a' Saqarik - Nuevo Amanecer, sponsored by a local NGO dedicated to helping more than 30 indigenous children in San Andrés Itzapa. Donation Q25. Rainbow Café (tel: 7832-1919) 7a av. #8, **La Antigua**.

29 Oct through Fri., Nov. 5 PHOTOGRAPHY WORKSHOP: *Portraiture / Exploring the Soul of Indigenous Guatemala during Todos Santos* with Nance Ackerman, offered by Art Workshops in Guatemala. For more info email: info@artguat.org

30 Sat., 11am — (Spanish) CONFERENCE: *La Música y Otras Disciplinas Artísticas Durante la Revolución de Octubre 1944* con el Maestro Jorge Sarmientos. Colegio Mayor de Santo Tomás de Aquino, 1a av. norte #23, **La Antigua**.

30 Sat., 7pm — MUSIC: *Salsa en una noche bailable* by Fernando Pérez and his Latin band. Q60. El Sito (tel: 7832-3037), **La Antigua**.

Please submit your DATEBOOK entry for the NOV. 2010 edition of the REVUE by Monday, Oct. 11

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"El secreto" by William Kalwick Jr.



30 Sat., 3pm — (Spanish) **CONFERENCIA: Apiterapia**, ahora hay una forma natural, a través de la apitoxina de las abejas de aliviar y sanar muchas molestias y dolores que afectan a nuestros huesos, articulaciones, musculaturas y sistema nervioso central así como las enfermedades auto-inmunes. Ven y entérate de cómo se aplica esta práctica y otros productos como la miel, polen, propóleo y jalea real. Conferencista Vicente Arévalo. Free. Vivero y Café de La Escalonia (tel: 7832-7074) 5a Av. sur final # 36-C, **La Antigua**.

31 Sun., 7:30pm — **HALLOWEEN PARTY**: Live music, a free Creepy cocktail, bonfire & marshmallows, prize for the best dressed and much more! Come shake your pumpkin and be part of the fun! Rainbow Café (tel: 7832-1919), **La Antigua**.



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THROUGHOUT THE MONTH



ART — La Antigua Galería de Arte presents in an ongoing show the latest works by renowned Guatemalan artist César Barrios and other national and international masters. La Antigua Galería de Arte (tel: 7832-2124) 4a calle oriente #15, **La Antigua**.

Mondays, 4:30pm; **T**uesdays, 2:30pm; **W**ednesdays, 2:30pm; **T**hursdays, 4:30pm — **BRIDGE TOURNAMENTS:** Year round at the Guatemalan Duplicate Bridge Association. Need a partner or more information, contact Deni: 2478-1649, Lucy: 2369-0103 or Eva: (La Antigua) 7832-4327. 12 av. 2-59, z. 15 Colonia Tecún Umán, **Guatemala City**.

Through Sat., October 9 — **DIGITAL ART:** *Precaución: El Amor Puede Causar Serios Daños a su Salud* by artist Monajera (Mónica Nájera). La Casa Azul (tel: 2368-2178) Diagonal 6 14-83, z. 10, edificio Oakland local #3, **Guatemala City**. ▼



Tuesdays, 6pm (no show on the 12th) — (English) **SLIDE SHOW:** *Antigua, Behind the Walls* with Elizabeth Bell. Q30 benefits educational programs. El Sitio (tel: 7832-3037) 5a calle poniente #15, **La Antigua**.

Tuesdays, 3:30-4:30pm — (Spanish) **READING CLUB:** *Mi Primer Club de Lectura* for kids 4 to 6 years old, directed by Karla Arévalo. Librería Infantil El Hormiguero (tel: 2368-3855) 20 calle 25-96, z. 10, C.C. La Plaza, L-15, **Guatemala City**.

Tuesdays, 4:40-5:30pm — (Spanish) **READING CLUB:** *Club de Lectura* for kids 6 to 9 years old, directed by Karla Arévalo. Librería Infantil El Hormiguero (tel: 2368-3855) 20 calle 25-96, z. 10, C.C. La Plaza, L-15, **Guatemala City**.

Dante Alighieri Society presents Italian music at the Italian Club in **Guatemala City's** zone 10, free admission. For more information call 2331-0829 or 2361-6717, or visit www.danteguatemala.com. See related article on page 58.

DATEBOOK continues on page 46

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The evil that is in the world almost always comes of ignorance, and good intentions may do as much harm as malevolence if they lack understanding.
—Albert Camus

A pious man explained to his followers: "It is evil to take lives and noble to save them. Each day I pledge to save a hundred lives. I drop my net in the lake and scoop out a hundred fishes. I place the fishes on the bank, where they flop and twirl. "Don't be scared," I tell those fishes. "I am saving you from drowning." Soon enough, the fishes grow calm and lie still. Yet, sad to say, I am always too late. The fishes expire. And because it is evil to waste anything, I take those dead fishes to market and I sell them for a good price. With the money I receive, I buy more nets so I can save more fishes.

—Amy Tan, *Saving Fish from Drowning*
G.P. Putnam's Sons, N.Y.

The safest course is to do nothing against one's conscience. With this secret, we can enjoy life and have no fear from death. —Voltaire

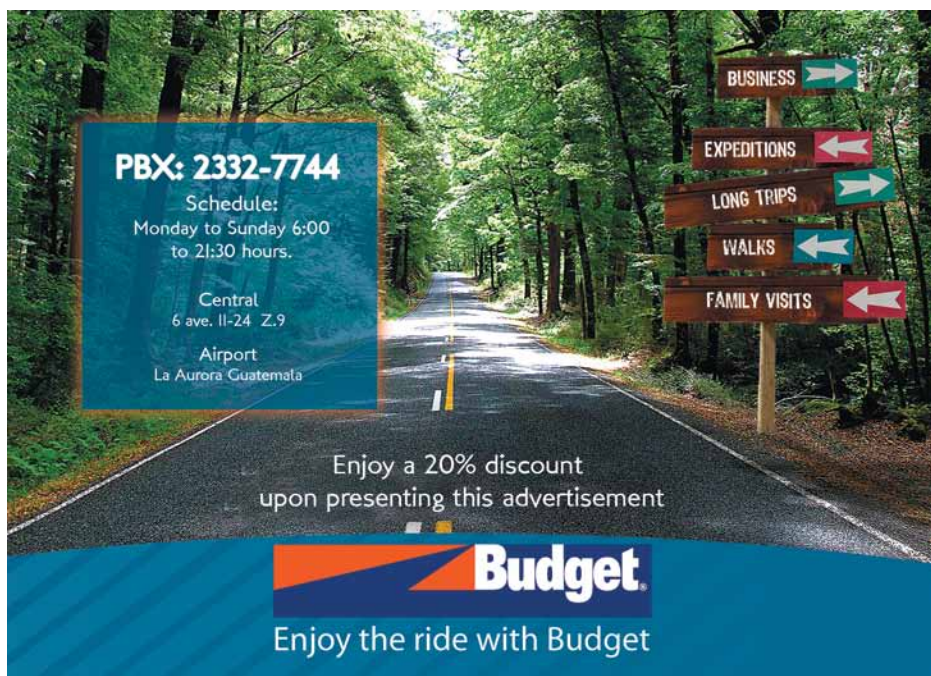
I see no reason to keep silent about my enjoyment of the sound of my own voice as I work.
—Muriel Spark



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 if these were to be banished, we should infallibly
 enjoy perpetual peace. —Petrarch*

*My mother enjoyed old age, and because of her
 I've begun to enjoy parts of it too. So far
 I've had it good and am crumbling nicely.
 —Lionel Blue*

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You better pray that will come out of the carpet.
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If you don't straighten up, I'm going to knock you into the middle of next week!
3. My mother taught me LOGIC.
Because I said so, that's why.
4. My mother taught me FORESIGHT.
Make sure you wear clean underwear, in case you're in an accident.
5. My mother taught me IRONY.
Keep crying, and I'll give you something to cry about.
6. My mother taught me about the science of OSMOSIS.
Shut your mouth and eat your supper.
7. My mother taught me about STAMINA.
You'll sit there until all that spinach is gone.
8. My mother taught me about BEHAVIOR MODIFICATION.
Stop acting like your father!
9. My mother taught me about ANTICIPATION.
Just wait until your father gets home.
10. My mother taught me about my ROOTS.
Shut that door behind you. Do you think you were born in a barn?
11. My mother taught me WISDOM.
When you get to be my age, you'll understand.



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When you dance, your purpose is not to get to a certain place on the floor. It's to enjoy each step along the way. —Wayne Dyer

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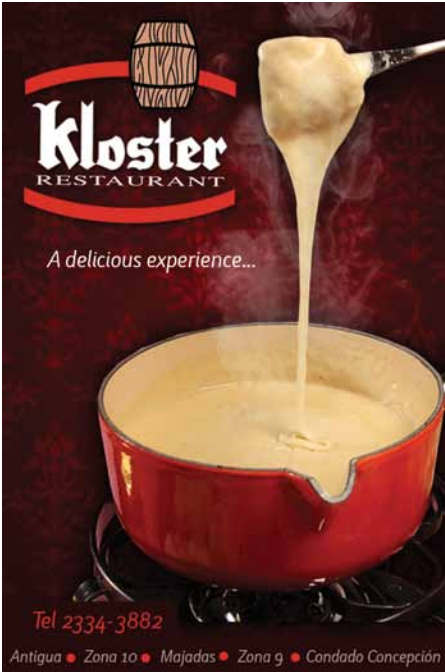
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see page 40




I don't know why I did it, I don't know why I enjoyed it, and I don't know why I will do it again.
—Matt Groening

One of the most adventurous things left us is to go to bed. For no one can lay a hand on our dreams. —E. V. Lucas



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Words of the Father cont. from page 18

Massachusetts—the first Native American tribe to convert to Christianity—taught her to see God in everything. She says, “The hand of God created all that we see—the trees, the rocks, the animals, the wind. All indigenous people recognize one God. He may go by different names in each language but it is the same God.”

Growing up extremely poor in rural Massachusetts taught her not to take anything for granted. “Poverty leaves a horrible mark on you,” she says. “A scar is a scar, whether it’s physical or emotional.” She and her 11 siblings learned not only to live off of but also to love the land. “I was in touch with the ground and the grass and the dew. Dancing on that ground was even better.”

Naticksqw is married to Lyn Hovey, a world-renowned stained glass artist who spends several months a year in La Antigua Guatemala. They met at a Native American Pow-Wow where Naticksqw was giving a presentation. As Lyn says, “I saw her and heard her speak and I knew I had to meet this amazing woman.” And the rest, as they say, is history.

Lyn had a difficult time persuading Naticksqw to travel to his beloved La Antigua. For the first 60 years of her life, Naticksqw refused to leave the United States. It was not due to a fear of flying. She says, “I thought if I left my native soil I would be betraying my people, my roots.” However, God spoke to her and explained that all of the Earth is one piece of land—just that certain parts are under water. It was that conversation that convinced her to get a passport and travel.

On her first visit to Guatemala, Naticksqw was fascinated by how the indigenous people hold on to their culture. “It reminded me of what happened to my people. Language, culture, dress—it was all stolen from us. If I walked around in my full regalia dress in my country, I might be made fun of.” She finds the Guatemalan women to be especially beautiful. “To see these women with their traditional clothing, carrying baskets on their heads—walking as regally as a queen—they have the old souls of their an-

BOOK ALERT

Title: *The Words of the Father*

Author: Naticksqw, Chief Caring Hands

Photographs: Lyn C. Hovey

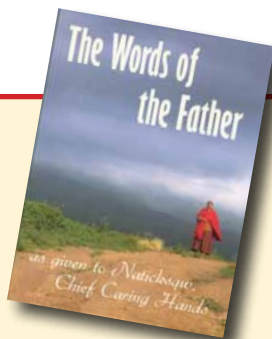
Book & jacket design: Klegraphics Design Studio

Hardback, 428 pages, 14 chapters

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Be About My Father’s Business Publishers

ISBN: 987-0-9844316-0-1



Chapter 7: “You are in the lands of sounds and smells, watch for the signs. Do not look, do not search, the way will show itself. The path is well worn ...” — March 7, 2008

From the book jacket:

Naticksqw is the contemporary descendant of the Praying Indians of Natick and Ponkapoag who were martyred for their faith in Jesus Christ by the English Colonialists of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts in the winter of 1675.

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cient selves by staying true to their culture. I just want to tell these women it is beautiful and they should not give this up."

Naticksqw created a book, *The Words of the Father*, from the messages spoken to her. She refused to let the book be edited, for obvious reasons. "If someone were to edit it, they would no longer be His words," she explains. During our interview she read a few passages from the book. As she spoke, I found myself leaning forward and holding my breath, not wanting to miss anything. "I love God with all that I have—that is what I know," she says emphatically. "Each time I speak, I am speaking for the Father to his children. God has only one voice, but people have forgotten what it sounds like."

Naticksqw will be conducting a workshop and a book reading at El Sitio on **November 5 & 6**. Whether you are interested in Naticksqw for spiritual, historical or cultural reasons, I encourage you to meet this fascinating woman in person. For more information on her book, visit www.thewordsofthefather.org. To learn more about the Praying Indians of Massachusetts, visit www.natickprayingindians.org 

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“One man told me he “bit the head off a live armadillo” on his first date with the lady he eventually married. Another man was stabbed by his wife, poisoned, then

she poured gasoline on him, and he was on his way to Panama to try and reconcile with her. The plethora of weird is never boring.”

Any famous faces come through from time to time?

“Not a lot... Barry Sadler in the old days, several ambassadors and Alvaro from *Alux Nahual* is an amazing guy.”



Come celebrate the anniversary with the Shakespeare Pub family; Val, Maby, Karina, Erik and Lautaro on **October 29 and 30**. Music, fun and gifts will be provided.

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Moments of Mindfulness

by Dr. Karmen Guevara
HOLISTIC PSYCHOTHERAPIST

HUNGRY GHOSTS



We all like a bit of a scare. As children we've gathered under blankets with flashlights and spooked each other with ghost stories.

Even while in diapers and growing sea legs we threw on a sheet and screamed "Boo!" As far back in human history fairytales have been scary. On All Saints Day we satiate the desire to scare and be scared. At other times we indulge in films like *The Shining*. There's nothing like a good scare!


This strange enjoyment comes from the primal nature of fear. Probing the hidden part of us that lives in fear has always been an important human experience. As the author Lovecraft wrote, "The oldest and strongest emotion of mankind is fear and the oldest and strongest kind of fear is fear of the unknown." Ghosts are the embodiment of this fear and since imagination is part of being scared, ghosts can be whatever we want them to be.

One definition of a ghost is someone who hasn't quite made it. They died, but don't

know that yet, so they wander in a confused state. Regardless, whether they're malevolent or benevolent, ghosts are the principle of life: the spirit of a departed person.

In Buddhism they're called "Hungry Ghosts" and are portrayed with a large belly and a very skinny throat. They want to eat and feel full, but cannot. No matter what they eat or how much, they're always hungry. They didn't adequately provide themselves with what they needed to flourish in the afterlife.

The Zen Master, Thich Nhat Hanh uses the Hungry Ghost to describe a psychological condition that plagues many. When there's a disconnection from our source of life, we begin to wither and become a hungry ghost, wandering and looking for something to revive us.

As much as we like to be scared, we also enjoy a good laugh. Ghost stories and jokes are similar—both lead up to the point where either you laugh or shiver! 



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Thursdays, 8:30-11am — (Spanish) **WORKSHOP:** *El Arte de Leer y Escribir* for adults. Librería Infantil El Hormiguero (tel: 2368-3855) 20 calle 25-96, z. 10, C.C. La Plaza, L-15, **Guatemala City.**

Thursdays, 6pm — **FILM:** Every week a new movie will be presented. Centro de Formación de la Cooperación Española (tel: 7832-1276) 6a av. norte, **La Antigua.**

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PLAN AHEAD

November 1 — **CELEBRATION:** All Saints Day. Guatemalans prepare *fiambre* and special sweet dishes like *molletes* and *manzanillas en dulce*. Many visit the cemeteries and take flowers to departed family members and friends. Also, special celebrations in different towns incl. Santiago and Sumpango Sacatepéquez where huge kites are flown. Since it is a national holiday, most banks and businesses will be closed. See page 66.

Nov 5 & 6, 7-9pm (English) *An Evening with Naticksqw*, Chief Caring Hands. Come meet Naticksqw of the Praying Indians speak about her historic tribe along with readings from her new book, *The Words of the Father*. El Sitio (tel: 7832-3037) 5a calle poniente #15, **La Antigua.** See related article on page 18.

Nov., 19, 20, & 21 — **WORKSHOP:** Signature cell healing, facilitated by Rev. Mel Morishige. For details contact: Jackie at Guatemala@krael.com or visit our web site: www.krael.com

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Plenty of people miss their share of happiness, not because they never found it, but because they didn't stop to enjoy it. —William Feather

Every man is rich or poor according to the proportion between his desires and his enjoyments. —Samuel Johnson



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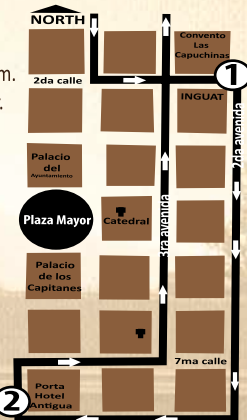


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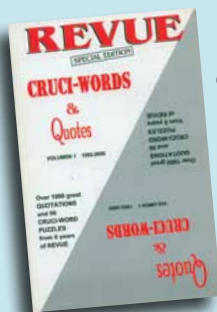
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—Ben Stein

One of the most tragic things I know about human nature is that all of us tend to put off living. We are all dreaming of some magical rose garden over the horizon instead of enjoying the roses that are blooming outside our windows today.

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—Philippe Perrin



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50 Years of Divine Comedy in Guatemala

One summer in my adolescence, I went to the library and checked out Dante Alighieri's voyage to the other side of the world, a trip that preceded that of Columbus by nearly two centuries. It was Dante's imagination, rather than prevailing winds, that took him (and me) there.

The trip, whose itinerary included Heaven, Hell and Purgatory, was a long one; Dante needed nine years to write the 14,000 couplets of *The Divine Comedy*—about four a day. Like Columbus, however, Alighieri traced a heritage from that nation with the most charming of cartographies, the boot of Italy.

I spent some of my childhood in Europe—literally, not just vicariously—where my uncontested favorite of the dozen countries we stayed in was Italy. Decades after my last departure, I remain stricken with things Ital-

ian, and understand what drives the worldwide Società named in Dante's honor.

You may start with the cars, the eats, the history, the marbled fountains, or the lore of culture that Italy, as the locus of Western Civilization, has contributed to humanity. But you end with the literature and language. Italian (and its Florentine dialect, the lingua franca among Italians worldwide) is to my ear the loveliest of tongues. Sweet, musical, expressive—yet threatened with under-appreciation.

In 1889, Italian businessmen and scholars, anticipating this, founded the Società Dante Alighieri. The original mission was to bolster ties between the pioneers of the Italian diapora, by then underway, and the old country. When you disembarked in New York or Melbourne or Tripoli, the local Società *comitato* ("committee") was your first stop.

Today there are over 500 committees in Italy and abroad, although their mission today is more to advance consciousness of Italy among non-Italians, through language courses and cultural events. ...continued on page 76

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Young entrepreneurs work on a business strategy

GOOD WORKS by Jennifer Rowe

Not Your Ordinary Lemonade Stand

How CasaSito is teaching the entrepreneurs of the future

Thanks to a grant from the World Bank and the Global Fund for Youth Investment, many children will now learn what it takes to be a successful entrepreneur.

Children who are lucky enough to attend school are only in class for half a day. It is financially difficult for Guatemalan families to send their children to school because it not only means paying for their education, but it also means there will be one less family member working and making money. CasaSito, an Antigua-based NGO, provides partial scholarships to children in Guatemala, and devised a plan for the students to be able to work while attending school.

In April of this year, CasaSito was chosen as one of only 44 finalists out of more than 300 applicants for a grant from the World Bank and the Global Fund for Youth Investment for their idea to provide business classes and microloans to teenagers. As a finalist, they were invited to attend the Development Marketplace Competition held in Bogota, Colombia. Amanda Turner, Operations Manager at CasaSito, attended the event with fellow employee Sisi Gonzáles Monroy and her new husband, Victor Castillo—who hopped on a plane to Bogota just hours after their wedding. During the conference, Turner and Gonzáles attended educational and informative workshops and

...continued on following page

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The winning business plans will be granted a loan to start their business and the teams can request anywhere from 100 to 1,600 Quetzales

met with other nominees from throughout Latin America. After presenting CasaSito's vision and ideas to a panel of judges, CasaSito was the first of 12 winners announced at the conference.

Turner explained that the money from the grant will be used to support CasaSito's student microfinance and entrepreneur classes. Children who receive scholarships from CasaSito are eligible for the program. The first step of the process involves the students attending weekly business classes for three months. Local business leaders from a myriad of industries including banking, manufacturing, tourism, food exporting, and non-profit organizations volunteer to teach the weekly classes.

After attending the classes, the students break into groups of either three or five and are assigned a mentor. The students form their groups based on the location of their schools or communities, and similar business interests. Mentors are assigned to groups of students who are interested in their area of expertise. The students and mentors work together for an additional three months and the mentors help them decide what types of businesses could succeed in their town.


When the three months of mentoring are complete, the groups write their business

plans. After they have finished, the students present their plans to a panel of judges. The judges rate the students' business plans on factors such as feasibility, cost, and return on investment. Turner says they are planning to choose up to five winning business plans. The winners will be announced in January 2011.

The winning business plans will be granted a loan to start their businesses and the teams can request anywhere from 100 to 1,600 Quetzales. The loans must be repaid within one year at 20% interest and the students must work as a team to repay the loan. The idea is to teach the students teamwork and responsibility. No one team member is the sole breadwinner and all members share the responsibility of repaying the loan.

During the implementation of the business plan, mentors are available for students to ask questions. However, it is up to the students to approach the mentors to ask for assistance—not the other way around. This will teach the students to ask for help when they face obstacles and need advice.

Turner has heard some of the proposed student business plans and they include a painting business, running a small paca, teaching Spanish to Maya-speaking adults, offering computer classes at the community center, and running a small office supply store.

CasaSito will report back to the World Bank in July 2011 to let them know how they spent the grant money, including details on the entrepreneurship courses. Turner says that although the students will still be working on repaying their loans when the report is due, she is confident they will have a successful program. 

To learn more about CasaSito visit their website: www.casasito.org



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Flying Messages to the Departed

Communication and contact with ancestors is an important part of life for people throughout the world. Communities often put aside a time each year to honor this connection; in Guatemala, as in much of Latin America, this commemoration occurs on the first and second days of November, with the first *El Día de Los Muertos* (Day of the Dead) being the focal point.

Among many activities that take place across the country, one of the most striking can be found in Santiago Sacatepéquez, 25 kilometers from La Antigua Guatemala.

An amazing spectacle appears in the first days of November: Gigantic circular kites, up to 15 meters (50 feet) in diameter, bearing designs of breathtaking intricacy and color, are exhibited by their proud creators. Other kites of up to 5 meters (16 feet) in diameter fly high above the crowds.

The giant kites are constructed over a period of three months by groups of *barri-leteros* (kite makers), who compete on November 1st for prizes presented by the Santiago Association for Cultural Development (*La Asociación Santiaguense para el Desarrollo Cultural*, or ASOSDEC) for the best design, theme and size. The prizes are modest, but the honor and respect gained by winning are great. Prizes are also given in the categories of kites that fly and of those made by children.

The practice of building giant kites in Santiago Sacatepéquez is now in its 110th year, and—while its origins are somewhat hazy—many people view the tradition as symbolizing the communication between this earthly realm and the elevated sphere of the dead.

Another popular view is that the flapping of the kites' tails in ...continued on following page



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*If all mankind were to disappear, the world
 would regenerate back to the rich state of
 equilibrium that existed ten thousand years ago.
 If insects were to vanish, the environment
 would collapse into chaos. —E. O. Wilson*

Flying Messages cont. from previous page

the air scares away evil spirits, giving good spirits the freedom to enjoy the day with their living relatives.

The majority of those involved with building and flying kites in Santiago Sacatepéquez are Kaqchikel-speaking indigenous people, and many traditional Mayan spiritual ceremonies take place around the creation of the kites each year.

The process of building, showing and flying kites has become an integral part of the identity of the indigenous people of the town, something that is rightly regarded with enormous pride.

The residents of Santiago Sacatepéquez are happy to share this tradition with outsiders, both Guatemalan and from farther afield, and every November 1st the town is filled with visitors eager to witness the spectacle. Visitors are also welcome to attend the wider range of events leading up to November 1st. The people of Santiago Sacatepéquez invite you to witness their colorful festivities first hand! 

PUBLISHER'S NOTE:

Kites from Santiago Sacatepéquez will be on exhibit at the Fundación Nahual (2a. av. norte 6 B, La Antigua Guatemala, tels: 7832-0167/5985-4954) throughout the month. Since 2004, the Fundación Nahual has conducted public kite-making workshops led by young kite builders from Santiago Sacatepéquez. One of the Nahual Association's goals is to strengthen local Kaqchikel youth groups by giving them opportunities to teach about their cultural traditions. For more information, visit or call the Fundación.



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or we suffer in soul or we get fat.*

—Albert Einstein

*In avoiding the appearance of evil, I am not sure
but I have sometimes unnecessarily deprived
myself and others of innocent enjoyments.*

—Rutherford B. Hayes



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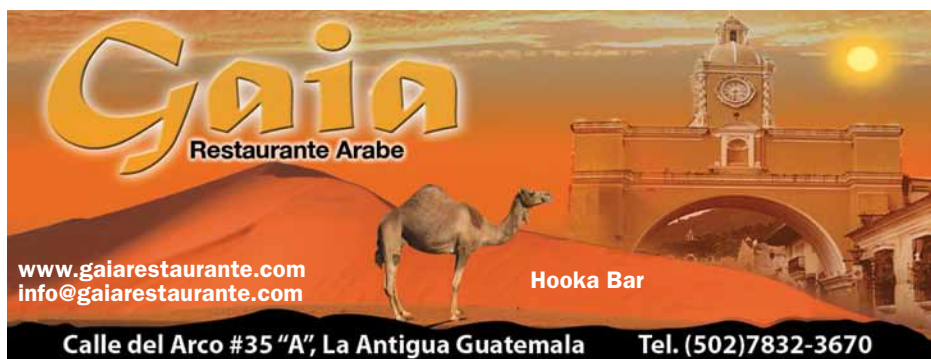
When you first arrive, spa manager Alejandra Salazar welcomes you and helps you decide which of the many available treatments to partake of. The list is extensive which gives a good excuse for multiple visits. Their variety of massage treatments includes Swedish Anti-stress, Therapeutic Hot Stones, Holistic and the signature

...continued on following page



PHOTOS BY CESAR TIAM/REVUE

Choices include a traditional Temazcal for either a couple or a group of 6 with optional energetic cleansing ceremony, or, work up a sweat by exercising on state-of-the-art equipment in the gym.



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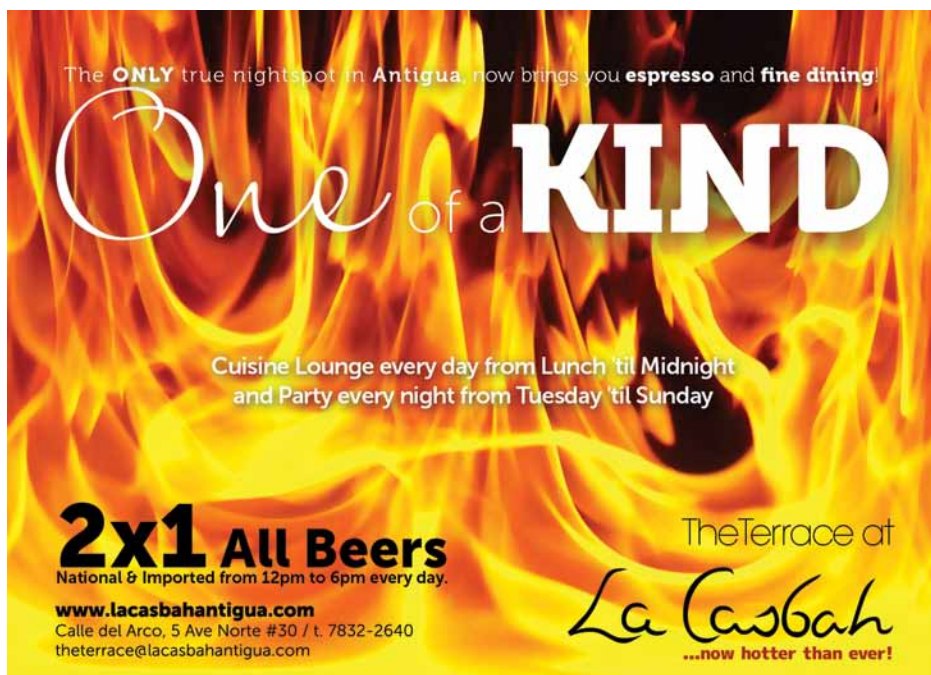
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—Lao Tzu

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—E. B. White



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...continued from page 72

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I don't visit my parents often because Delta Airlines won't wait in the yard while I run in.
—Margaret Smith


Dante Alighieri Society cont. from page 58

This is easy enough in, say, Argentina, where over half of the population has an Italian surname. There, every self-respecting city has a *comitato*, and the stamp of Italianity, from manners to neoclassical architecture, is profound.

But the Dante Alighieri Society is also in Guatemala, where the stamp, though lighter than in Argentina, is deeper than you might expect. This month, it is celebrated as the Society marks its golden anniversary on the 13th. You need not be a veteran Italophile to attend the events.

Canadian-Guatemalan opera maven Barbara Bickford, vice president of the Guatemala *comitato* from 1972-1974, was instrumental (along with then-president Angela Paniagua) in broadening the committee's emphases by adding music and opera to literature, language and the visual arts. One of her latest projects has been to develop, on her own nickel, a chorus of 12-14 Mayan operatic voices of Italian music, a group set to perform later this year during Christmas events.

Bickford, like the Society itself, is strictly "non-profit." Not surprisingly, the presentations of Italian music this month at the Italian Club in Guatemala City's zone 10 will have free admission.

"But arrive early," she says, "there's always a crowd, and you may have to stand." 

For event information, call 2331-0829, 2361-6717, or www.danteguatemala.com

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Think for yourselves and let others enjoy
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—Jerome K. Jerome

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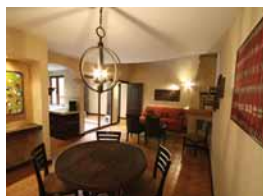


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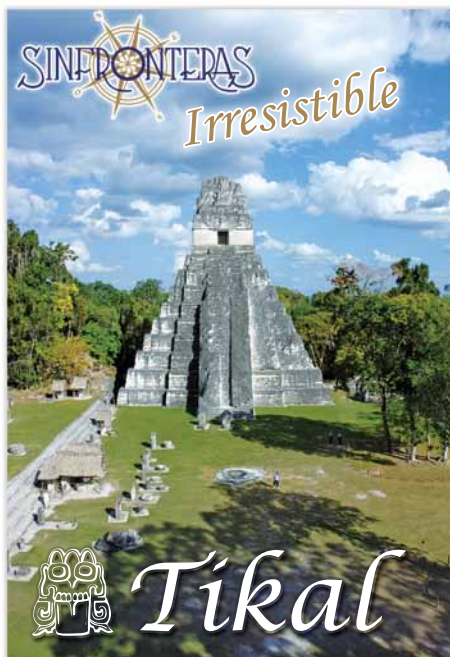


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—Winston Churchill

*Psychiatry enables us to correct our faults
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—Laurence J. Peter

*A good government remains the greatest of
human blessings and no nation has ever enjoyed it.*

—Dean Inge

*Disbelief in magic can force a poor soul into
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Peccary cont. from page 5

Peccary associated with Early Classic basal flange bowls or tetrapods are found in Petén, Belize, Campeche, Quintana Roo and potentially traded into neighboring Yucatán or Tabasco. Indeed, the most ornate peccary tetrapod head found so far is reportedly from Tabasco (Brooklyn Museum).

In the Mayan mythic epic history of the *Popol Vuh*, the “Great White Peccary” was one of the early deities. In the Late Classic period (AD 600-850) the peccary is pictured on vases or other art associated with God D or with deer, monkeys, or sometimes with jaguars. I would estimate that the larger, more vicious white-lipped peccary is pictured more than the collared peccary.

The Mayan word *ak* is also used for a dwarf. Dwarfs were kept in the royal courts and were often pictured together with rulers or deity impersonators who were dressed as the Holmul Dancer version of an idealized young noble. But the main punning for peccary is with turtle and constellations.


So the next time you see a peccary, try to avoid thinking only about its unpleasant stink and its mud-encrusted body from constantly rooting with its nose in the dirt for scraps. Also try to avoid thinking of this as merely a “wild pig.”

Peccary are noble animals, are revered as patrons of constellations in astrology, and are deemed of sufficient value so as to be featured in royal burials of the rulers of Early Classic Mayan kingdoms. Baby peccary are also cute little mascots. Indeed people who have had

them say the main complaint is that a tame peccary will constantly follow up directly under your feet, and will beg for attention and to be scratched day and night (with constant grunting of pleasure when scratched on the belly, or of displeasure when you are not paying due attention to it).

I hope you have enjoyed this introduction of animals of importance to the Mayan symbolism, iconography, cosmology and archaeology. Every month I will bring the results of my many decades of studying the achievements of Mayan civilization, especially the remarkable works of art produced by Maya artists of a thousand years ago. Let us hope that we can respect the natural environment and protect both endangered species as well as endangered archaeological sites.

If you wish to see peccary tetrapod supports in more detail, I still have a few leather-bound copies of the coffee table edition, published in Graz, Austria, of my Ph.D. dissertation available for benefactors. Plus the text is available in English, Spanish and German.

We appreciate the cooperation of Zoológico La Aurora, AutoSafari Chapín, photographer Ricardo Mata, as well as entities mentioned in the article itself. 

Dr. Nicholas Hellmuth and FLAAR (Foundation for Latin American Anthropological Research) provided courses on digital photography at Universidad Francisco Marroquín in past years; today 430,000 people a year read their web site www.digital-photography.org



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Lake Views

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Good Izotes Make Good Neighbors



In the absence of fences and walls, Central Americans have found a good way to mark property lines. I learned what it was when I became landed myself in 1997, having bought a patch of property in the nosebleed-zone mountains above Lake Atitlán. Not that I have ever done much with it; the point was to get my wife's name on a deed so that, as a property owner, she could get visas to countries that do not want her to stay too long. Well, the land served this purpose well enough. And, I can still trace its boundaries, thanks to the *izotes* at its four corners.

Usually, one hears this name in association with an edible flower, and not property lines. And, indeed, the flower is bitterly delectable, going well with beans and chilis in any permutation (but what does not?). I was surprised to learn recently that this flower is the national flower of El Salvador, while at the same time being named, taxonomically, after Guatemala: *Yucca guatemalensis*.


Actually, taxonomists are still arguing over its christening; there are some who still call it *Yucca elephantipes*. I doubt that the plant itself much cares. Either way, they are, surprisingly, the same plants that, in the

southwest United States, can soar to six meters, rivaling the banana “tree” as the tallest plant anywhere that is not really a tree.

Maybe I would have named it *Yucca giraffetipes*. But whatever you call it, it should not be confused with another plant that is completely dissimilar but has the same name, which we call casava, an edible, starchy root. You find it in any *mercado*, and it is as yummy as the izote flower.

Being from the southwest, I remember growing up around this plant. You found it in deserts and in locations of the apparently defunct motor home park chain, Jellystone Park, where some joker between jobs and wearing a Yogi Bear suit would snatch goodies from picnic tables (yes, really). By the time my family first “camped” there, I was old enough to be sophomorically humorless about such things, and rather thought that “Yogi” should know his place.

If Yogi were a Central American creation, rather than a Hanna-Barberan one, he might have hesitated to run past all those towering izotes. Down here, they never seem to get big enough to tower, but that does not stop them from being good property markers. They have ...continued on page 106



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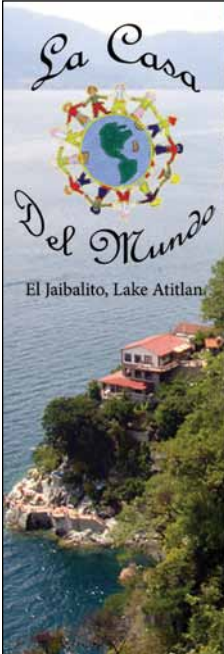
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Zoo Slumber Party cont. from page 21

letter to the mayor. There was one problem: none of them could write.

Guzmán rewarded her enemies by securing volunteers to teach them literacy. She would go on to further professionalize them with uniforms and training. Today, all of them swear by her.

In 2000, however, another complaint surfaced against Minerva Zoo and its mistress.

“People saw what they thought were empty cages,” she recalls, “giving the impression that the zoo was impoverished in its collection, or just a shell.” This has been one objection to the zoo’s continued existence by detractors who consider it a white elephant.

“But those cages were not empty,” Guzmán says. “No, they house nocturnal species, which visitors can spy if they come often enough.”

To prove her point, she conceived the idea of the *piyamada* (a word deriving from the Spanish word for pajama). This now annual event culminates another brainchild of Lucy Guzmán and her assistant, her son Carlos.

Every November, the Guzmáns offer a morning, four-week course in zoology and “zoo-ology.” Aside from being educational

and fun, the course and its all-night conclusion increase a sense of ownership and civic pride among quetzaltecos. This is vital, since the zoo is a threatened oasis in the city’s booming zone 3 commercial district. Its four hectares encompass not only the exhibits, but gardens, picnic facilities, a playground, and a gazebo for open-air events. If zone 3 is Quetzaltenango’s Manhattan, the zoo is its Central Park. As such, it needs protectors.

“And what better protectors,” Guzmán asks, “than adults who retain fond childhood memories?” She adds that kids love the daytime course so much that “they often get here before we do.”

For Q100 per child, kids “camp” for four hours each day while studying animals and ecology. They are also put to work trimming foliage and even painting cages. But it hardly ends there; a program of dances, skits, singing and workshops is in place before the visitors arrive. Many activities are led by “graduates” — older children and young adults driven by nostalgia to return.

The most exciting and poignant event might be the puppet show, ...continued on page 117

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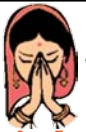
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We won't have a society if we destroy the environment. —Margaret Mead

For sleep, riches and health to be truly enjoyed, they must be interrupted. —Jean Paul


Ch'orti' and Crafts cont. from page 20

products to expand markets and provide sustainable economic stability for the Ch'orti'.

One of these is *Amor Ch'orti'*, which officially became a cooperative on May 15, 2009. Thirty women and six men from the municipalities of Jocotán, Olopa and San Juan Ermita receive technical assistance from *Acción Contra el Hambre* and *Mancomunidad Copanch'orti'* with financing from the *gobierno de Navarra*. A small shop located at the entrance of Jocotán sells their woven bags,

shoes with loom-woven fabric and bags made from the linking technique commonly used for hammocks.

Non-textile items, such as local honey, coffee, natural medicine, pottery and *tecomate* (calabash) key-ring adornments are also sold. As well, analysis for reintroduction of *añil* (indigo), a blue dye processed from a plant, is in the works. It was cultivated extensively in Chiquimula before synthetic replaced natural dyes and has been referred to as "blue gold" due to its high economic value.

Another organization working with artists is *Nativos*, and their products are sold in a shop in the bus station on the Guatemalan side of the border. So, if you are one of the many travelers passing through Chiquimula en route to Copán, Honduras, take a break in Jocotán. Get to know the Ch'orti', their homeland and their beautiful crafts. 



Sample from the "Artesanía Ch'orti'" catalog including bags made from maguey, other items are made from cane, reed and cotton.

Info: Sandra Marcela Bulla (tel. 5039-4152) or sandramarcelab@gmail.com; The head of *Acción Contra el Hambre* is Carlos Lazara (lazaraborja1@hotmail.com).



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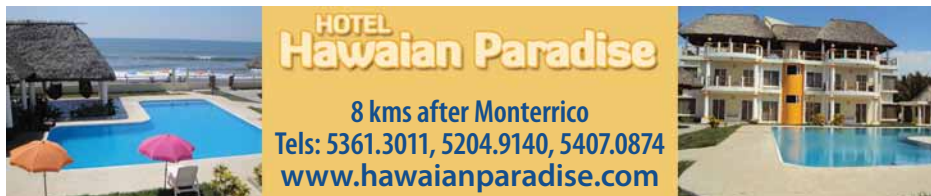
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Beyond passion...

See Sea Turtle story on page 14 (PHOTO: CARLOS VEGA)




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The apparition appears as a young girl with long, shiny black hair and a beautiful figure, though her face is always veiled in shadow.

Ghosts of San Juan Chamelco cont. from page 19

drunk and passed out, and when he awoke the next morning he found himself in a patch of brambles on top of a nearby mountain, with no notion of how he'd gotten there.

Not all of Chamelco's ghosts are maleficent. In Barrio Santo Domingo (the north end of town) there is a *barranca* near which a little boy can sometimes be seen around 3 a.m. He is about a foot and a half tall, dresses in rags, and carries a little bag. If you are nice to him—offer him food and help or embrace him—he will give you his bag, which contains a map showing where a great treasure lies buried.

Many of Chamelco's ghosts are associated with certain mountains or caves. Saktzoxul (white rooster) is a mountain on the road midway between Cobán and Chamelco. At midnight travelers on the road returning home from Cobán often hear a ghost rooster crowing on top of the mountain.

The hill Chank'an (where Chamelco's school now sits) is said to be alive, and to be very resentful of people. In the old days Chamelqueños had to keep their animals from straying on this hill because to go over there looking for them was to invite all sorts of trouble. The spirit of the hill would frighten people with noises like snarling wild cats by night and with hordes of snakes by day.

The snakes came out of a cave (now blocked up) located beneath the sacrificial rock, near the entrance to the school, on top of which is now built a staircase leading to a lookout point. This rock, which affords a nice view of the church and town, was formerly the site of human sacrifices, and at night screams and groans can still be heard issuing from it. After the conquest, when the church was being built, this rock was the place where disaffected K'ekchis who refused to work on the church were executed.

On the south side of the hill Chank'an lies the hill of Saxa'an, where the apparition of an old woman used to be seen gathering firewood in the distant woods. There is a spring between these two woods (across the street from what is now Chamelco's kindergarten) where in the old days the neighbors would draw their water. It is said that the ghost woman of Saxa'an used to wash her clothes in this spring at night, since in the mornings it would often appear turbid and foamy.

The cave of Saquic is located in a pasture southeast of town on the right side of the Campat road, 300 meters from where it branches off from the cemetery road. The entrance to this cave is streaked with a red liquid, which leaches out of the rock and which the K'ekchis say is blood. They say that this cave was another site of human and


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animal sacrifice, and that groans and cries can be heard here at night. The candles that burn before the crucifix in this cave indicate that it is still a place of propitiation.

The incidence of apparitions in Chamelco has radically decreased since the introduction of electricity and street lighting in the late 1940s. Ghost tales are preserved now mostly as the stories which Chamelco fathers and grandfathers use to entertain and frighten the next generation of Chamelqueños. 

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Good Izotes cont. from page 96

very deep and tenacious roots, the better to keep your neighbor from moving the property line. They also survive droughts and most other weather-related assaults, succumbing only to root rot and, even then, only when the ground is saturated a long way down. Few insects bother it. And, like another similar plant, the aloe vera, or maguey, it provides points that can serve as needles, and juice that can be brewed into *pulque* beer.

It is only when things get too urbanized that izotes are replaced by cinderblock corners or something else that you cannot walk through. With high density, neighbors in these parts resort to impassable boundaries,

even in suburbs. Having in 2004 gone on to acquire a deed on property that I actually use—a residential lot in Panajachel and its environs—I learned that I would have to do the same, because, as the wife said, “we don’t necessarily want to know the neighbors.” And so we do not. What was the first improvement made on the property? A bigger wall along its perimeter. I am sad to report that my sons sleep only inches away, quite literally, from some boys their own ages whose bed is on the other side of a wall that forms the south end of our house and the north end of theirs. We do not even know their names. If their mom wanted to borrow a pound of sugar from the wife, she would have to look for her in the street, and that assumes they would even recognize each other. Maybe they would not. Of course, I would be recognized, if unnamable, as *el Señor Gringo quien vive a la par de nosotros*.

I suppose then, that every boundary between houses expresses a culturally normed tradeoff between sociality and privacy. After many years in Central America, I have gotten too accustomed to the local choice of favoring privacy in the extreme, such that when I visit the old country, I now marvel at the lowness of picket or wood rail fences, in a country where people are tall enough to simply step over them. And, if you spend much time in rural Central America, something tells you that the corner of a suburban property in the U.S. needs its izote.

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But there is more at work here than the need for privacy; ownership is also being established, because, too often, a mere piece of paper is not trusted. So it is that I have been to many residences that are well walled, but little else. The most extreme case involved a family of 11, spread over three generations, who had a wall that would have intimidated Joshua but, inside, they slept under lean-tos and cooked over a campfire. So it is that house's foundation is its wall, and not the hole filled with a firmament of masonry. Well, at least Yogi Bear would not be breaking in.

Part of the imperative to establish ownership is, no doubt, tied to the closeness of *campesinos* to the land, in a region where they have often been reduced to landlessness. In the wave of popular revolutions that in the 1940s swept the iron triangle of Guatemala, El Salvador and Honduras, reforms to protect the landless, and even give them fallow territory, were enacted. Much was rescinded following counter revolutions, and then, in our day, revived. Increasingly, these countries are becoming societies of law, such that invisible fences now connect the izote plants where landowners lack the funds to erect a fence.

Now... if the plants could just get tall enough to bloom and provide me with all the izote flowers I could eat. 🌿



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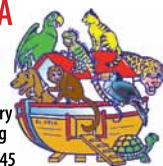
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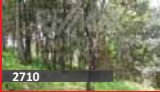
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For more information on pet adoptions, giving donations, pet fostering or sponsoring, please visit:

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Question: I have been hearing that raisins can be toxic to pets. Is that true?

Yes, uncooked grapes, raisins and currants are more toxic than the cooked form and can cause acute kidney failure. While not all cats and dogs are sensitive to these fruits, it is impossible to tell beforehand just how they might react. If a small dog or cat eats just a small number of grapes or raisins, this is considered an emergency.

Within a few hours of ingestion, vomiting is generally the first warning sign. Within one to four days your pet may experience increased urination, increased thirst, lethargy and a reduced appetite. The prognosis is excellent if treatment is started before the vomiting begins. Once kidney failure has started, it is much more difficult to reverse the kidney damage.

Treatment involves inducing vomiting, immediately followed by the administration of activated charcoal to decontaminate (absorb and remove toxins). This is followed up by administering anti-vomiting medication and aggressive intravenous fluid to protect the kidneys. Frequent monitoring of kidney laboratory values and in-hospital care are also recommended.



Zoo Slumber Party cont. from page 98

which includes a novel treatment of a perennial zoo problem. Families witness a tear-jerker drama in which visitors feed junk food to a zoo critter which, as a consequence, dies.

“Grad night” comes on the final Friday. The families drop off their children, aged six to 12, with their tents and sleeping bags, and entrust them to the Guzmán’s volunteer guides.

“But there’s always at least one overprotective parent,” Guzmán laments, “who has to be walked off the grounds.”

Such anxiety is unfounded. The children, especially those of the repeat crowd, are too excited to worry. They are surrounded by their coursemates of four weeks, and the idea of staying up all night, and having full run of the zoo’s four hectares, is irresistible. There is plenty to do even at night: observing the nocturnal animals by the light of red lanterns, roasting marshmallows, listening to storytellers, and romping in the playground which includes a red swing set that is reputedly haunted. The newest attraction is the psittacid aviary with whimsical scarlet macaws and the like. Opportunities for mischief also abound.


“The young ones stay up as late as they can,” Guzmán says, “while most of the adults turn in at a normal hour. But the kids steal their caps as they sleep, or lace their shoes together, causing havoc when they awaken. These, and other pranks besides.” While this is not encouraged, it is tolerated—to a degree.

“We’re used to it, and we keep an eye out for excesses. We know when to nip it.” But otherwise, the travesuras have become a traditional element in the fun, with most of the “victims” keeping a sense of humor.

By dawn, almost everyone is sleeping in. No one, however, is drying out. “Alcohol is absolutely verboten,” Guzmán insists. The kids, she adds, do not want to leave when their families come for them around 8 or 9.

The “campers” belong to a fraternity administered by none other than Carlos Guzmán, now 21. From early adolescence, he has presided over Amigos de Minerva Zoo, which is open to kids as young as five. Almost all participants are metropolitan quetzaltecos, since few families from elsewhere can bring their children to a four-week day camp. Nevertheless, out-of-towners lacking the course experience may attend if accompanied by course laureates.

Guzmán recalls how, last year, Verónica Rossotto told her, “Thanks, Lucy, for making my kids so happy!”

“I, too, felt happy,” Guzmán said, “to see the parents gushing with gratitude. The activities are healthful and educational, and there were no TVs, videogames, or internet terminals in sight. You can’t beat that!” 

***For more information on
this event, call 7763-5657.***

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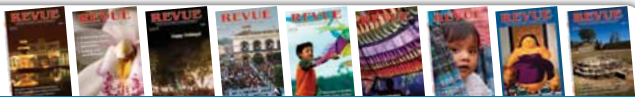
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*If you only do what you
know you can do—
you never do very much.
—Tom Krause*

*The penalty for success is
to be bored by the people
who used to snub you.
—Nancy Astor*

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ANTIGUA

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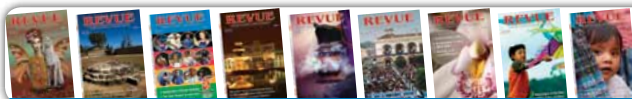
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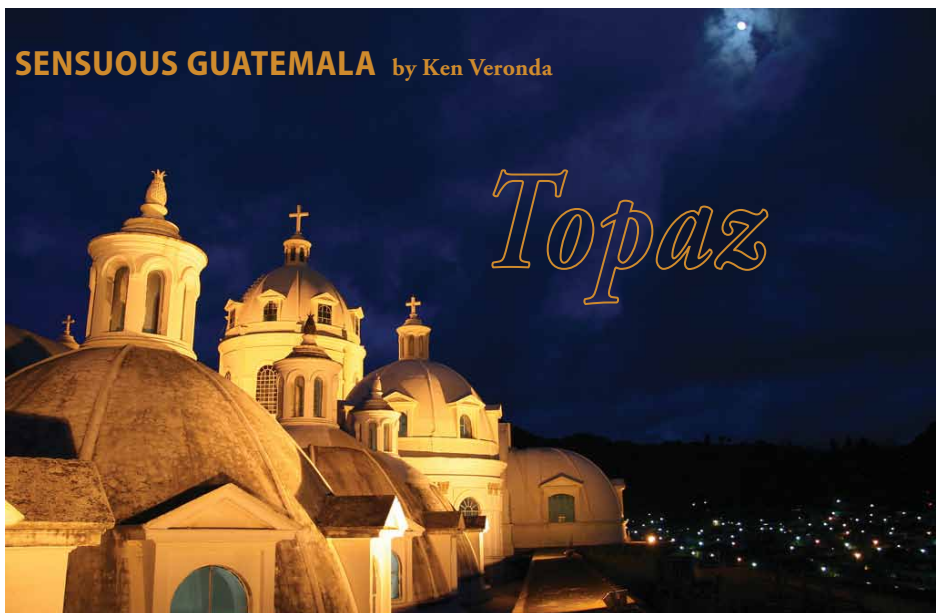
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Police: 120 Fire: 122 and 123
Policia de Turismo (Antigua)
7832-4131
La Antigua Bomberos
Voluntarios: 7832-0234
Guatemala City
Tourist Assistance
dial 1500 (24-hour)



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Topaz



Cupulas of the Cathedral, Quetzaltenango Harry Díaz www.flickr.com/harrydiaz

Topaz as a jewelry gem is not to be found in Central America, but Guatemala mines some amber stones in rich creamy topaz shades that are just as enticing as the petrified tree sap from the Baltic. And Guatemala has its own precious topaz: the twin brown beans inside each coffee cherry that roast and toast into the best cup of coffee in the world.

We have lots more topaz in places other than coffee *fincas* at harvest time, however.


Fields of wheat on the hills of Alaska—not the 49th state, but the highest point on the Central American Highway between Quetzaltenango and Guatemala City—bow to the breezes in rippling shades of topaz.

Treetops in the Almolonga Valley yield hard macadamia nuts that can be cracked open and roasted into luscious delights. Closer to the soil, pods of peanuts are topaz

treasures ready for picking.

Crystals of copal—*pom* to the Maya—are topaz-toned lumps of resins from the pines, dried and burned to make the pungent, cleansing incense of ceremonies and processions. The same golden-brown topaz shade shows up often above the altars of village churches, glass or stone adornments decorating the frames of paintings of the saints, or studding a cross or crucifix.

In October and November, the season of All Saints brings out more fields of topaz, as marigolds and mums are gathered to decorate graves in all cemeteries. This is the best time in Guatemala to photograph or paint with topaz, when families pick the orange-brown blossoms for the Day of the Dead in celebrating the ancestors.

Topaz time is all year in Guatemala, but the special time is now, yours to enjoy these months as the holidays approach. 

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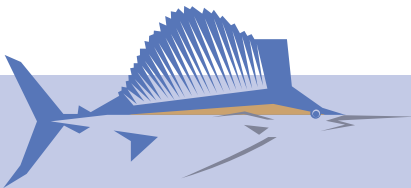


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