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Guatemala's
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August 2011
Year 20, No. 6

FREE



- ◆ Fotokids 20th Anniversary
- ◆ Gallon Jug Rainforest
- ◆ Interview: Walter Fischer



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*Fotokids member
in training*

by Nancy McGirr
www.fotokids.org



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From the Editor

If a picture is worth 1,000 words, the Fotokids NGO could fill a library with its successes. Celebrating its 20th anniversary this month, Fotokids was founded in 1991 by photojournalist Nancy McGirr with the aim of using photography to break the cycle of poverty for the children of the Guatemala City dump.

From six students using three cheap plastic cameras, Fotokids has since given new perspectives and hope to hundreds of young people.

In this month's cover story, Anna-Claire Bevan details Fotokids' origins, challenges and successes, and we have numerous photos by the Fotokids students throughout the magazine. Congratulations, Nancy!

From Lake Atitlán, Dwight Wayne Coop chronicles a fish tale gone awry. The story dates back to 1958 when big-mouth bass were introduced to the lake and details the ensuing ecological breakdown.

For amazing nature photos, check out conservationist Thor Janson's account of his trip deep into the Gallon Jug Rainforest of Belize, where he encountered an array of wildlife.

On a lighter note, we learn how two businessmen in La Antigua plotted to capture a most-wanted fugitive to reel in a million-dollar bounty. The scheme was a bust; U.S. authorities finally arrested the suspect in June.

We also have stories about the Santiaguito lava dome of the Western Highlands and INGUAT's plan to increase Guatemala tourism, as well as two book alerts and a comprehensive list of cultural activities and special events in DateBook. Enjoy!

—Matt Bokor

REVUE

Guatemala's English-language Magazine

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The Heart of the Mayan World

*A candid chat with
INGUAT's Walter Fischer*

Imagine a place with volcanoes and mountains, jungles and deserts, white sands and black beaches ... but while you and I have already discovered the beauty of Guatemala, the majority of the world remains oblivious.

INGUAT, the country's tourism board, has embarked on a 10-year campaign to increase tourism in the country at both a national and international level.

"Guatemala has a lot of unique products on offer like its *selva* (jungle) and Mayan archaeology," says Walter Fischer, senior advisor at INGUAT. "It's cultural tourism that doesn't exist anywhere else in the world, and we want to put it at everyone's fingertips."

The organization's latest strategy promotes Guatemala as *El Corazón del Mundo Maya* (The Heart of the Mayan World) and, coupled with increased advertising of the nation's attractions, aims to help the country achieve its potential in the travel industry by 2020.



"Guatemala ... has cultural tourism that doesn't exist anywhere else in the world, and we want to put it at everyone's fingertips."

—Walter Fischer, INGUAT

"Costa Rica has 25% of what Guatemala has," says Fischer. However, since it has promoted itself better, Costa Rica remains a more obvious holiday destination for vacationing foreigners.

INGUAT's emphasis is on increasing tourism but with customer satisfaction over customer sales—so that visitors leave planning their return trip. It also wants to capitalize on upcoming events to draw in tourists, such as the year of the Mayan Prophecy in 2012.

This year has already seen an increase in tourism compared with last year and it's hoped the numbers will keep rising. Promotional television advertisements for Guatemala have started appearing in various nations around the world as well as on popular channels like CNN and National Geographic.

In addition to pushing the country in places far afield like Germany, ...cont. page 34

No es solo un destino en Guatemala,
es la oportunidad de viajar en el tiempo

AVIANCATACA

Fotografía cortesía del Instituto Guatemalteco de Turismo — INGUAT

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Flores - Guatemala	8:05	9:10	Diario
Guatemala - Flores	18:20	19:30	Diario
Flores - Guatemala	19:55	21:00	Diario

Fotokids Anniversary



Twenty years of tackling poverty through photography

Surrounded by 40 acres of toxic garbage, in the middle of Central America's largest and most dangerous landfill, isn't exactly where most people gain inspiration. However, for ex-Reuters photojournalist Nancy McGirr, the smell of burning plastic, combined with the sight of cardboard houses and gardens of sewage, is where Fotokids first began.

Originally called "Out of the Dump," this unique project was founded in 1991 with the aim of using photography to break the cycle of poverty, and this month the NGO celebrates its 20th anniversary.

"I first went to the dump to photograph a story for an Australian magazine," says McGirr. "There were 3,500 people living, working and scavenging for food—and 1,500 of them were kids who followed me wanting to see through my camera lens. The thought occurred to me: If they had the camera, what would they see through that lens?"

Armed with three cheap, plastic cameras the first group of six students aged 5-12 began their enrollment process: taking

photos of everything and censoring nothing. The students, who all lived in Guatemala City's sprawling garbage dump, took pictures of whatever fell before their lens: drugs, violence, death.

McGirr soon realized their photographs could be used as a teaching tool to show them they didn't have to be part of a gang to be in a group, and that cameras are a more effective weapon against poverty than guns.

By taking snapshots of their everyday lives, children from some of the poorest neighborhoods in the city began to express themselves. Children who, at the age of 7 had been exposed to more pain and suffering than anyone should witness in a lifetime, could start to dream.

A DUMP WITH TRAVEL BENEFITS

"I originally thought the project would last six months to a year, but it just took off," recalls McGirr. "We started in July and by September had already appeared in *The Washington Post*."

A couple of months later, Konika Japan sent supplies and asked them ...cont. page 60



Photo by Daniel González

Fotokids staff are all graduates of the program who feel compelled to give others the opportunities they have had.



6-year-old Marta captures images during Holy Week



Alicia at home by Marta López



My Mom by Gladiz Jiménez



Santiago kids examine their cameras

The Gallon Jug Rainforest

After an expedition to the Sierra Madre of Chiapas, I was returning to Guatemala recently only to be greeted at the border by a glitch in the system and a real-life Catch-22. A new regulation says foreign-plated vehicles have to stay out of Guatemala for 90 days while the driver is welcome to return.

So, having some time on my hands, I wondered where I might go to do some wildlife photography. Like a lightning bolt the answer flashed into my mind: the Gallon Jug Rainforest in northern Belize. It's one of my favorite places and I had not gone there for several years.

A few days later, I found myself sprucing up my jungle bungalow at the escarpment camp, perched high above a vast sea of green. The forest preserves of Belize, along with the Mayan Biosphere in Guatemala and the adjacent biospheres in Mexico,

comprise the largest block of rainforest north of the Amazon Basin.

Here in the Mayan Rainforest you still can see such keystone wildlife as the harpy eagle, herds of ornery, white-lipped peccary and large cats. In fact, Gallon Jug has the highest density of jaguar anywhere on Earth, which says a lot.

This huge private forest reserve exists due to the visionary efforts of Belizean entrepreneur and conservationist Sir Barry Bowen, who was best known as the owner of the

Belikin Beer Co. (Sir Barry died tragically when his plane crashed in 2010.)

Years ago Sir Barry encouraged me to document the wildlife of Gallon Jug, and I have continued to do so since the early 1980s with the idea of eventually producing a book on the area. Every time I go out for a walk in this rainforest I find new and fascinating things to photograph.



The ornate hawk-eagle's name refers to the large, ornate crest that adorns its head.



"For the next 10 days I spent many hours a day at the site and at the end of the effort I felt that I had finally achieved my purpose: a fitting portrait of the ornate hawk-eagle, the most beautiful eagle on Earth."

HELLO KITTY

The heat was on and the temperature was 96 degrees in the shade where I was relaxing until the afternoon breeze off the Caribbean would bring some relief. April and May are the hot months in this part of the world. Then in June the rains come and temperatures become more moderate. Unlike North America, July and August are considerably cooler here. About 4 p.m. I felt like going out for walk along the road through the jungle. The hot, dry weather makes the entire forest quiet. We are all simply enduring the heat and praying for rain. Some creatures were active, though, and soon I was stalking a mating flock of violaceous trogons, which were leading me deeper and deeper into the wilderness.

I was getting some superb shots for my upcoming book on quetzals and trogons of the world. Suddenly, I checked my watch and noticed that time had flown and if I were to make it back to camp before dark I would have made tracks. The idea of spending the night wandering around a forest full of large predators was not my idea of fun. An hour later, as I approached the escarpment, I saw something strange on the road ahead—two creatures, but I could not make out what they were. Jaguarundi, perhaps? They were sleek, cat-like animals, but I didn't recognize them.

I had my "heavy artillery" with me and snapped a quick shot and zoomed in. Lions! I was thrilled and on edge because I knew that these big cats had seen me before I ever

Residents of the Gallon Jug Rainforest photos by Thor Janson



Swallow-tailed kite rides the thermals



Who brought the nectar? Butterfly mixer.



Slaty-tailed trogon at rest



The rare pootoo bird uses "tree branch camouflage"



A crocodile scouts the river surface



Incredible coloring of the wild turkey

saw them, and they were not moving off the road. Normally, if I see a jaguar or a mountain lion in the forest, it's only for a brief moment because they are usually very shy and upon seeing a human will retreat into the dense bush. But these lions were bold. They did not move. And over the next few minutes I slowly crept up on them. They were watching my every move but did not run away, which worried me somewhat. Closer and closer I got to them. They were lounging on the road, occasionally getting up and scrutinizing me, but they seemed to be bold and fearless.

The sun would soon be setting, and I did not want to become these lions' plaything after dark. Not knowing what else to do, I started walking toward them and talking to them. "Nice kitties," I said loudly—yes, nice kitties. Finally, when ...continued page 86



Here kitty: two mountain lions lounging on the path



Swooping ornate hawk-eagle



A curious, and extremely cute, baby howler monkey



DATEBOOK

AUGUST GUIDE TO CULTURE AND UPCOMING EVENTS COMPILED BY MERCEDES MEJICANOS

2 Tues., 5:30pm — TALK: *Niños de Guatemala* works to build a better future for Guatemalan children. Donation Q25. Rainbow Café (tel: 7832-1919), 7a av. sur #8, **La Antigua**.

4 Thurs., 7pm through Sat., 13 — ART: Inauguration of *40 Años*, an exposition by Guatemalan artists, part of Galería El Tunel's 40th anniversary celebration. Galería El Tunel (tel: 2367-3284), Plaza Obelisco, 16 calle 1-01, z. 10, **Guatemala City**. ▼



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

4 Thurs., 6pm through Sept. 30 — PHOTOGRAPHY: *20 Years Capturing Dreams* by the Fotokids NGO. ArteCentro Graciela Andrade de Paiz, 9a calle 8-54, z. 1, **Guatemala City**. See cover and article on page 16. ▼



5 Fri., 5pm — (Spanish) CONVERSATORIO: *Rafael Landívar, vida y obra*. Convento de La Concepción, Actual Museo de la Semana Santa, 4a calle oriente #45-A, **La Antigua**.

6 Sat., 9am-1pm — MUSIC: Third annual *Music Festival CasaSito*, featuring young artists from rural areas of Guatemala. Free. Cooperación Española (tel: 7932-3838), 6a av. norte between 3a & 4a calle poniente, **La Antigua**.

7Sun., 9am — GASTRONOMIC FESTIVAL: *Festival Gastronómico con Identidad*. Garden of Casa No'j, 7a calle 12-12, z. 1, **Quetzaltenango**.

8Mon., 5:30pm — ART: Works by students from Centro Educativo Toscana. Cocktail. Free. Museo Ixchel (tel: 2361-8088), 6a calle final, z. 10, Centro Cultural UFM, **Guatemala City**.

9Tues., 5:30pm — TALK: *Asociación Nuestros Ahijados* works to improve the health, nutrition and living conditions of Guatemala's poor. Donation Q25. Rainbow Café (tel: 7832-1919), 7a av. sur #8, **La Antigua**.

10Wed., 7:30pm, through Sept. 4 — ART: Inauguration of *Escenarios y Contrastes*, paintings by Lauro Salas. Cocktail. A La Mesa Restaurante & Galería de Arte (tel: 2269-4094), 5a av. 15-52, z. 10, **Guatemala City**. ▼



11Thurs., 6:30pm — PHOTOGRAPHY: *Aguas, Ríos y Pueblos*. Galería Rafael Mora, Casa No'j, 7a calle 12-12, z. 1, **Quetzaltenango**.

12Fri., 8pm — BENEFIT CONCERT: The band La Raíz performs in a fundraiser for Niños de Guatemala. Donation Q35 goes to construction of a new school in San Lorenzo El Cubo. Bar El Chamán, 7a av. norte #2, **La Antigua**.



12Fri., 7pm — PHOTO EXHIBITION: Annual exposition of the best photos by members of the Club Fotográfico de Antigua. Free. Casa del Turista (tel: 7832-3782), 2a calle oriente #12, **La Antigua**. ▲

12Fri., 9am-5pm — ART: Exposition by artists participating in the contest Arturo Martínez. Galería Rafael Mora, Casa No'j, 7a calle 12-12, z. 1, **Quetzaltenango**.

13Sat., 1pm — BENEFIT DANCE: The Niños de San Antonio Aguas Calientes dance and play the marimba, flutes and bombas. Donations benefit educational pursuits. Free. La Peña de Sol Latino (tel: 7882-4468), 5a calle poniente #15-C, **La Antigua**.

15Mon. — GUATEMALA CITY HOLIDAY: Celebration honoring Virgen de La Asunción, patron saint of Guatemala City. Visit cultura.muniguatate.com for more information. **Guatemala City**.

15Mon., 5pm — (Spanish) CONFERENCIA: *Objetivos y la Inspiración de la Educación Jesuítica*, expositor Padre Rolando Alvarado, S.J., Rector de la Universidad Rafael Landívar. Cooperación Española, 6a av. norte entre 3a y 4a calle poniente, **La Antigua**.

16 **Tues., 5:30** — TALK: *Life in Guatemala: Brief History and Current Conditions* by Sue Patterson, former U.S. Consul General in Guatemala and founder of WINGS. Donation Q25. Rainbow Café (tel: 7832-1919), 7a av. sur #8, **La Antigua**.

17 **Wed., 7pm, through Sept. 3** — ART: Inauguration of *Interior Colectivo*, paintings and sculptures by Valenz. Galería El Tunel (tel: 2367-3284), Plaza Obelisco, 16 calle 1-01, z. 10, **Guatemala City**. ▼



18 **Thurs., 2:30pm** — TABLE GAMES: *Tarde de Juegos de Mesa en el Museo Ixchel*. Q100. Contact Denni Marsh (tel: 2478-1649). Museo Ixchel (tel: 2361-8088), 6a calle final, z. 10, Centro Cultural UFM, **Guatemala City**.

19 **Fri., 9am** — (Spanish) FORO: *Rafael Landívar y su Influencia en los Escritores Guatemaltecos*, expositor Adolfo Méndez Vides. Sede URL, Pasaje Rubio #1, Carretera a San Bartolomé Becerra, **La Antigua**.

19 **Fri., 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. Entrada libre. Vivero y Café de La Escalonia (7832-7074), 5a av. sur final #36-C, **La Antigua**.

20 **Sat., 6pm-10pm** — EVENT: *Wine and hors d'oeuvres* (catering by Porta Hotel Antigua) to benefit the Riecken Community Libraries, sponsored by the American Society of Guatemala and the British Commonwealth Association. Admission Q250. For additional info., contact Greg Norton (tel: 5326-3849) or Romeo Rodriguez (tel: 4007-2815). Convento de Capuchinas, 2a av. norte, 2a calle oriente, corner, **La Antigua**.

23 **Tues., 5:30pm** — TALK: *The KIDS Restaurant*, a unique program in which kids go to the market and prepare and serve a meal with profits saved for the future. Donation Q25. Rainbow Café (tel: 7832-1919), 7a av. sur #8, **La Antigua**.



Club Fotográfico de Antigua Photo Exhibit: **12 Fri., 7pm**

Civilization is a movement and not a condition, a voyage and not a harbor. —Arnold J. Toynbee

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tel: 7832-2925 5a av. sur #19, La Antigua

Mondays — New Orleans blues with Nelson Lunding.

Wednesdays — (Lunch) Live classical music. (Evenings) Classic jazz trio.

Thursdays — Buena Vista de Corazón, Cuban Jazz by Ignacio.

Fridays — Latin trio.

Saturdays — Julio & César, guitar duo.

Sundays — (Brunch) Live classical music.
Nightly cover: Q35

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tel: 7882-4468 5a calle poniente #15-C, La Antigua

Mondays — 7-10pm: The magic guitar of Carlos Trujillo, Latin jazz/salsa, with Bill on congas. Free.

Tuesdays — 7-10pm: Ramiro plays trova cubana, with Bill on congas. Free.

Wednesdays thru Sundays — 7-10pm: Sol Latino plays Andean music (pan flutes). Free. ▼



Sundays — 12:30-3pm: Ramiro plays trova cubana, with Bill on congas. Free.

Gaia Restaurante

tel: 7832-3670 Calle del Arco #35-A, La Antigua

Thursdays — 7pm: Live music.

Fridays and Saturdays — Belly dancing.

If your bar or restaurant has live music on a regular schedule, send info to: publicidad@revuemag.com

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 — 7:30pm: Gustavo plays Latino classics, western tunes with some harmonica.

Wednesdays — 7:30pm: *Open Mike Night*: come along and show your skills. Free drink for anyone who performs.

Thursdays — 7:30pm: Kenny and Friends, some of Antigua's best-loved local musicians will amaze you with some great music.

Fridays — 7:30pm: Segio, a talented local plays a great mix of music including lots of reggae.

Saturdays — 7:30pm: A variety of bands.

Sundays — 7:30pm: Kenny and Friends, some of Antigua's best-loved local musicians will amaze you with some great music.



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tel: 7832-1033 4a calle oriente #10 (2nd level), La Antigua

Fridays, Saturdays, Sundays — 8pm:
Live music, featuring a variety of artists.

Las Palmas

tel: 7832-9734 6a av. norte #14, La Antigua

Wednesdays — 8pm:
Bossa, soft rock and blues.

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Music



Ocelot

tel: 5658-9028 4a avenida norte #3, La Antigua

Thursdays — 7-9pm: Mike Mcarthy plays some mean blues.

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Fridays — 7-9pm: Ron Fortin, saxophone; 9:30-11:30pm: Nelson Lunding, New Orleans piano.

Saturdays — 7-9pm: Malcolm Oakley sings and plays guitar.

9:30pm: Mercedes, guitar blues/rock/folk.



Pub Quiz hosted by Brendan Byrne; **Sundays** at 6:30pm

Fridas

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El Cadejo Tapas Bar

tel: 2337-4365 5a av. 16-49, z.10, Guatemala City

Thursdays — 7pm: Acoustic jam, Luke from England

6th, Sat. — 8pm: La Chapina Blues Band

13th, Sat. — 8pm:

Ensamble Rock

20th, Sat. — 8pm:

One Way

27th, Sat. — 8pm: Black Box (free)



Circus Bar

tel: 7762-2056 Avenida de los Árboles, Panajachel

Mondays — 7pm: Chris Jarnach, classic music, jazz and rock.

8pm: Marco Solo and friends, Pana's Carlos Santana. Rock, blues and jazz.

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Tuesdays — 7pm: Chris Jarnach, classic music, jazz and rock.

8pm: Rockiris, alternative rock.

9pm: Latin ensemble.

Wednesdays — 7pm: Chris Jarnach, classic music, jazz and rock.

8pm: Latin ensemble.

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Thursdays — 7pm: Chris Jarnach, classic music, jazz and rock.

8pm: Latin ensemble.

9pm: Norte, contemporary trova.

Fridays — 7pm: Flamenco by Marco El Messina.

8pm: Latin ensemble.

9pm: Trova del Lago.

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Sundays — Latin ensemble.

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www.trovajazz.com



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tel: 2331-1114 Av. Reforma 13-89, z.10, Guatemala City

Wednesdays — 8:30pm: Victor Arriaza on piano; Alejandro Alvarez on bass; and Julio García on drums.



25 Thurs. — CELEBRATION: Different cultural and religious activities honoring San Luis IX Rey de Francia. Salcajá, *Quetzaltenango*.

28 Sun., 11am — MUSIC: *Ensamble Antigua*, concert with Nadir Aslam, violin; Diana Ramirez, soprano; Carolina Palomo, harpsichord. Donation: 1 person Q100 / 2 for Q150. Tickets on sale at Mico Toys (4a calle oriente, across from Restaurante Doña Luisa). Info: ArteAntigua Producciones (tel: 5297-5481). Centro de Convenciones Hotel Casa Santo Domingo, *La Antigua*. ▼



30 Tues., 5:30pm — TALK/DANCE: *Mayan dances* by indigenous children from Nuevo Amanecer, K'a k'a'Saqarin-Nuevo Amanecer or New Dawn, a charity dedicated to helping more than 30 indigenous children in San Andrés Itzapa. Donation Q25. Rainbow Café (tel: 7832-1919), 7a av. sur #8, *La Antigua*.

BIRD WATCHING: Come and see over 200 egrets return to their home tree for the night. 5:15, SHARP! The birds are never late! La Peña de Sol Latino Restaurante, 5a calle pon. #15-C, *La Antigua*.

The life of every man is a diary in which he means to write one story, and writes another.
—James Matthew Barrie

Please submit your DATEBOOK entry for the SEPT., 2011 edition of the REVUE by Wednesday, August 10

Throughout the Month

ART: *Travesía Singular*, an exhibit of over 50 new works by Guatemalan artist Doniel Espinoza. La Antigua Galería de Arte (tel: 7832-2124), 4a calle oriente #15, *La Antigua*. ▼



ART: *Heliconia*, by Marie-Noëlle Fontan. Through botany and plants the artist harmonizes material, color and form. Mesón Panza Verde (tel: 7832-2925), 5a av. sur #19, *La Antigua*. ▼



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"El secreto" by William Kalwicz Jr.



ART, through Fri., 5th — EMBROIDERY: Fundación G&T Continental presents *Belleza y Colorido Guatemalteco*, by Academia de Bordado Arte en Lana de Sandra Mencarelli de Paredes and students. Vestíbulo Banco G&T Continental, 6a av. 9-08, z. 9, **Guatemala City**. ▼



ART, through Sun., 28th — VISUAL ARTS: *Otros Páramos* by Paloma Navares (Spain), showing different worlds of women through video, photography, installations, small objects and collages. Co-operación Española (tel: 7932-3838), 6a av. norte, **La Antigua**. ▼



Throughout the Month

ART, through Thurs., 11th — *Muerte y Vida cotidiana de los Antiguos Mayas en Naachtún*. Galería de Arte Alianza Francesa, 5a calle 10-55, z. 13, Finca La Aurora, **Guatemala City**.

Saturdays, 8pm — MUSIC: Classic rock played by some of the best bands in Guatemala, live rock music from the 70s, 80s and 90s. **6th** — La Chapina Blues Band; **13th** — Ensamble Rock; **20th** — One Way; **27th** — Black Box. El Cadejo Tapas Bar (tel: 2337-4365), 5a av. 16-49, z. 10, **Guatemala City**. ▼



SEMINARS: (English) The Wish Granter is in town! New Zealand motivational speaker & Author JOY! is offering seminars on *Living more Joyfully in Three Minutes or Less*; *Clear Stress in Less Time Than it Takes to Find the Valium*; *Face Reading*; *Getting Well, Staying Well*; *Vanquishing Fear*; *Eliminating Worry*; *Communicating with Your Guides & Angels*; *Protecting Yourself from Negativity*; *Twisting Time*; *Creative Problem Solving*; and *Reprogramming Your Brain*. For more info., contact Joy, 4407-1221 or experiencejoyhere@gmail.com for details. Rainbow Café (tel: 7832-1919), 7a av. sur #8, **La Antigua**.



Tuesdays, 6pm — (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**.

Wednesdays, 8pm — MUSIC: Entrevoz, acoustic band; Ladies Night 5-10pm. El Cadejo Tapas Bar (tel: 2337-4365), 5a av. 16-49, z. 10, **Guatemala City**. ▼



Wednesdays & Thursdays, 8pm — (Spanish) TEATRO: *El Estrago*, comedia fina. Q50 estudiantes/Q60 otros. Solo Teatro, Avenida Las Américas 7-20, z. 13, Centro Comercial Real America, **Guatemala City**. ▼



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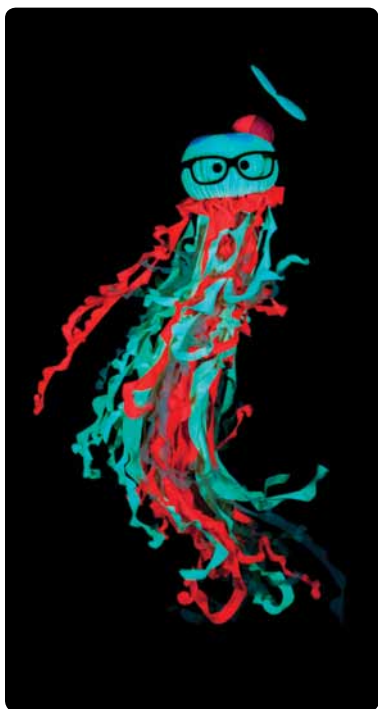
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Sundays, 7, 14, 21 & 28, 11am & 4pm — (Spanish) **THEATER FOR KIDS:** *ImaginaMar*, the new musical adventure for the whole family written by John Tartaglia, chronicles the underwater adventures of three fish friends who discover a treasure map. The Spanish version is produced by Fundación Paiz and presented as part of the XI Festival Internacional de Cultura Paiz. For more information visit www.fundación-paiz.org.gty Tickets Q60 at todoticket.com or at the door. Museo de Los Niños (tel: 2464-4545 ext. 4552), 5a calle 10-0, z. 13, **Guatemala City**.



PLAN AHEAD

Sept. 3 Sat., 12-4:30pm — **LABOR DAY PICNIC:** Good food and drinks. Donation Q50, free parking. Presented by Democrats Abroad. Contact John Chudy, mayadems@yahoo.com or tel: 7832-4581. Casa Convento Concepción, Calle Concepción #1, **La Antigua**.

PHOTO CONTEST Photographers of all levels are invited to submit their work (color or B&W) with the theme *Fiestas Patronales de Guatemala* (Municipal Fairs of Guatemala). The best 12 photos will appear in Museo Ixchel's 2013 calendar. Deadline Oct. 3, 2011. For more information visit Museo Ixchel Galerías on Facebook. Museo Ixchel (tel: 2361-8081), 6a calle final, z. 10, Centro Cultural UFM, **Guatemala City**.



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—Richard Rodgers and Oscar Hammerstein II

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from nor where it leads to. —Pablo Picasso



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Absurdity, n.: A statement or belief manifestly inconsistent with one's own opinion.
 —Ambrose Bierce

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Walter Fischer cont. from page 20

Spain and the UK, INGUAT is also canvassing at a more local level and encouraging neighbors to visit.


Central America has Guatemala at its fingertips; residents of these countries don't require a visa to visit and many unique destinations are just a bus ride away.

With the recent increase in air travel across the region, INGUAT hopes tourists will be persuaded to extend their vacation and visit a chain of popular attractions throughout the area.

"Rather than someone coming just to visit Mexico, why not go from Palenque to Tikal, on to Antigua and fly back?" asks Fischer.

Internal tourism is also very important to INGUAT. *Viaja a Guatemala sin salir de Guatemala* (Travel to Guatemala without leaving Guatemala) is a new project that encourages residents to go beyond the tourist hot spots of Antigua and Panajachel and visit lesser-known archaeological towns around the country like Uaxactún.

While Fischer admits the level of in-country violence is a challenge to the country's tourism industry, he insists the international perception of Guatemala remains its biggest barrier to development.

"There's a lot of negative publicity about Guatemala," he says. "But there's also a lot of positive things to say about the country, which rarely gets mentioned." 





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Now imagine a stove that burns so efficiently that the time and effort previously allotted to collecting wood is greatly reduced. Ponder a gas cook stove, which operates not off wood but rather off food waste and animal manure, or how electricity can be generated using the flow of a nearby stream.

These practical and affordable alternatives, such as efficient wood stoves, biodigestors and micro-hydroelectric systems, are what we are developing at Alterna by creating social ventures. Located in Quetzaltenango (Xela), our office and shop are staffed with the brains and brawn of an interdisciplinary group of professionals from across the globe. Although Alterna is a recently established organization, its core members have been working with appropriate technologies and social business development in Guatemala for more than five years.

Alterna harnesses local social entrepreneurship* in order to build economically sustainable ventures with the ability to serve those who lack basic services. We aim to de-




José and José cooking with biogas (JAMES WINFIELD)

velop products that are accessible to families who earn a limited annual income and can greatly benefit from savings in time and money, while ensuring minimal impact on the environment.

As our various ventures grow into maturity they will gradually be transferred into the hands of local entrepreneurs, rooting them within the Guatemalan economy. Developing profitable social businesses both fortifies the local economy as well as guarantees accountability for the products installed, ensuring long-term technical support for end users.

We invite those looking to bring positive social and environmental change in Guatemala to get involved with Alterna. To learn more about our ground-breaking enterprises, visit our website www.alterna-la.org, call +(502) 7765-4225 or email info@alterna-la.org. Or just stop by: 6a calle 1-37 zona 1 in Xela.

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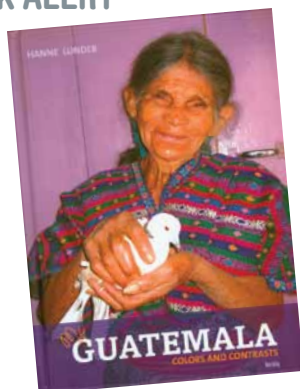
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BOOK ALERT



My Guatemala Colors and Contrasts

Author/photographer: Hanne Linder
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Hanne Lunder, ceramicist and author, is one of the initiators of the Cultural Bridge Guatemala-Norway; she's also been a guest professor at ENAP, the Art Academy in Guatemala City. Her ceramic work is exhibited in more than 20 galleries in Norway; in Central America she is represented by La Antigua Galería de Arte.

She lives in Norway with her husband and their two children. Readers can contact her at www.hanne-lunder.com 

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—Ted Ray



Portrait by Holly; Fotokids (SEE STORY ON PAGE 14)



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With fees ranging from Q35 for a one-day pass to Q245 for a monthly membership, there's a plan for everyone. If you won't be in La Antigua Guatemala long but want to get in a few workouts during your stay, the gym also offers 8-, 12- or 15-visit plans. Gym membership includes group classes as well as getting advice from a trainer during your workouts. If you'd like to hire a trainer for a personalized one-on-one session, there is an additional fee.

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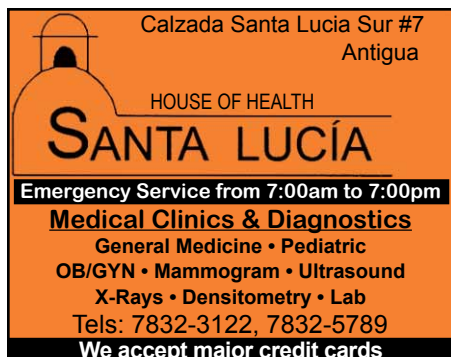


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Panosteitis is an inflammation on the surface of the long bones. This is also termed "long bone" or "growing pains." This may occur in more than one bone at a time and may cause lameness in one bone or leg and then another. It is self-limiting but may recur until rapid growth is over. The pain may be relieved with several types of medication.

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Eternity's a terrible thought. I mean, where's it all going to end? —Tom Stoppard

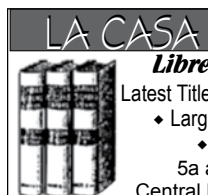
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It is a curious situation that the sea, from which life first arose, should now be threatened by the activities of one form of that life.

—Rachel Carson

I am much better employed from every point of view, when I live solely for my own satisfaction, than when I begin to worry about the world. The world frightens me, and a frightened man is no good for anything.

—George Gissing



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—Jimmy Piersal, on how to diaper a baby

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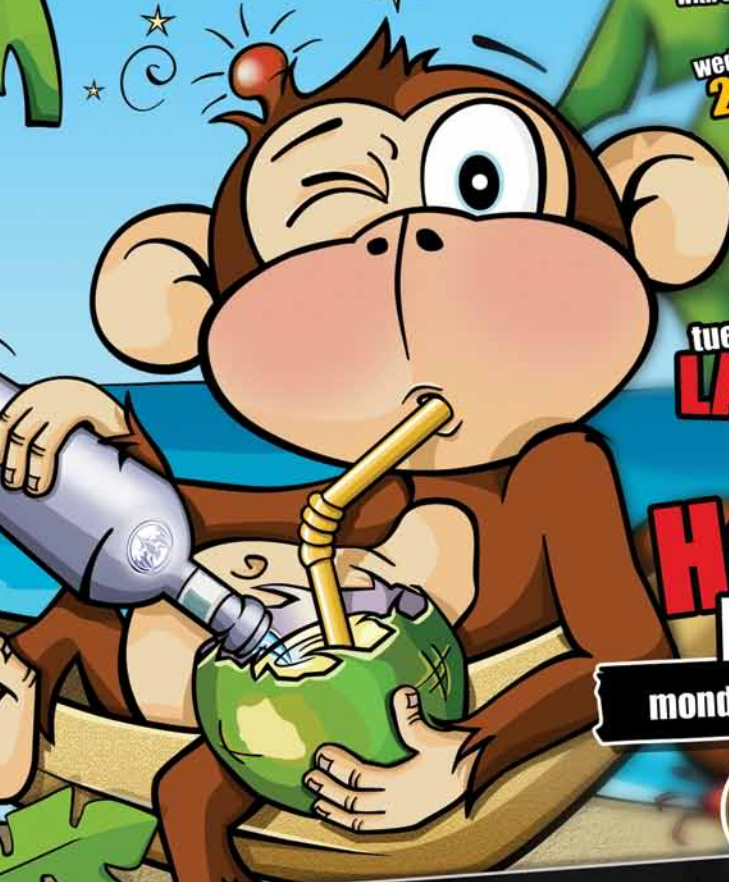
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ASK ELIZABETH

by Elizabeth Bell
AUTHOR/HISTORIAN

Why does La Antigua Guatemala now have more aldeas?

Most cities in Guatemala were founded in the 1540s as part of the Spanish territorial “order.” Today municipalities are divided into various categories of smaller urban areas: aldeas, caseríos, barrios, colonias and lotificaciones.

While aldea may be translated as a village, aldeas are not necessarily occupied by Mayas, as La Antigua Guatemala, in fact, has no Maya inhabitants. Antigua has barrios that date back to colonial times, and aldeas and caseríos emerged organically throughout the 20th century.

Antigua had 14 aldeas (and a number of caseríos) prior to April 9, 2010, when the City Council approved a number of new aldeas: Agua Colorada, Bueva Vista, Guardianía el Hato, San Gaspar Vivar, El Hato, Pueblo Nuevo, Vuelta Grande, San Pedro el

Panorama, Santa Isabel, San Lázaro and El Guayabal. With 23 aldeas today, each one has an auxiliary mayor who works with the mayor of Antigua. Now we have to figure out when their fiestas are celebrated!

A new Municipal Code was approved on May 13, 2010, by the Guatemalan government, and it has specific guidelines for aldeas—alas, Antigua’s new aldeas were created before that date.

Unfortunately, this does not affect how much funding the city receives from the central government—that is based on the population of 56,000 inhabitants. (The total municipal budget last year was Q86,169,812.) Does this affect the vote for the September elections? No—although 70% of Antigua’s population lives in the “villages,” so the vote will be decided there! 🇬🇹



View of Antigua from one of its new aldeas, El Hato (GUIDO LUCCI)

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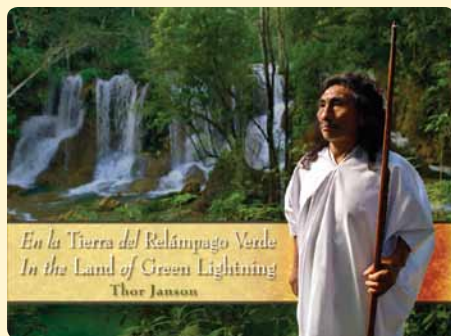
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Author/photographer: Thor Janson

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Spanish/English

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“Biologist, conservationist and photographer Thor Janson has worked in Central America for nearly thirty years. In this book he reveals his deep love and respect for the land and its inhabitants through 250 stunning color photographs accompanied by short descriptive text. An introduction by anthropologist Robert M. Carmack provides a brief history of the Maya. Together, these writings coupled with the pictures present an understanding of the ‘land of green lightning’ so complete as to make each one of us feel protective of such a precious place.” 



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to exhibit in Tokyo, they were the cover story of various magazines and even had a film crew from London come out to record two TV episodes for a children's art show.

From the initial six students who entered the after-school program, hundreds have passed through it. Each receiving a camera, food, photography classes and educational scholarships—while having their work displayed in exotic locations around the world.

From meeting the Dalai Lama, to working on the set of *Star Wars: Attack of the Clones* and exhibiting alongside Brazilian photographer Sebastian Salgado, Fotokids has created a future for many underprivileged children: a tool with which they can escape their lives of perpetual poverty, drugs and gang violence.

A CULTURE OF GIVING BACK

"I never imagined going on a plane," says Evelyn Mansilla, who started with Fotokids 18 years ago. "But at 15 I went to Spain, then to Australia and San Francisco."

Mansilla, who grew up near the dump, now works as the administrative director of the project and believes the experience changed her life. "Without it I'd never have finished school, gone to university or been able to give back to my community."

Giving back is an integral part of Fotokids' philosophy. Many of the students become the teachers and work in the school in Zone 13 or in outreach programs across the city or farther afield in Santiago Atitlán and Honduras. The staff are all Fotokids graduates who feel compelled to give others the opportunities they have had.


Often they go back to their own communities, mentoring children and showing them what can be achieved if they work hard at school and stay in the program.

CHALLENGES

"We all want to branch out and take the project to more places in the city. There are so many children of all ages here that need our help," says Mansilla. "Around 7 years old is a good time to start—that's when gangs start recruiting."

As well as dealing with the threat of gangs, one of the main challenges Fotokids faces is persuading parents to let their children stay in the program. Parents often fail to see the long-term benefits of keeping children in school beyond sixth grade and would rather they start contributing to the family income.

To tackle this problem teachers work directly with communities, going into some of the most dangerous barrios in Guatemala City and giving classes to children while building relationships with their families.

"Of course, they don't all go on to become photographers," states McGirr. "Photography just gives them an identity and a platform"—for other opportunities they would never otherwise have had. 

(MORE FOTOKIDS PHOTOS THROUGHOUT THIS ISSUE)

Entrance to Fotokids' month-long "20 Years Capturing Dreams" exhibition is free and opens at 5:30pm, Thursday, August 4 at Artecentro Graciela Andrade de Paiz (9a Calle 8-54 zone 1, Guatemala City).

More information: www.fotokids.org



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Trombetta and Billy Burns

Fugitive's arrest closes the book on frying-pan caper

U.S. authorities recently arrested one of their most-wanted fugitives in California—an alleged mobster-murderer from Boston who had been in hiding or on the run for 16 years.

For two businessmen in La Antigua Guatemala, the June 22 arrest of James “Whitey” Bulger, 81, dashed hopes of ever claiming a million-dollar reward (later upped to \$2 million) to turn in the white-haired fellow who they are sure frequented their bar 11 years ago.

“Our retirement plan just went out the window,” lamented Billy Burns.

“We should have clocked him—I’m convinced it was him. He looked too much like him,” added Jean-Louis Trombetta.

Co-owners of the Monoloco Restaurant in Antigua, Burns and Trombetta were alerted to Bulger’s potential presence in Guatemala by a newspaper article sometime in 2000.

“People allegedly saw him in the Lake Atitlán area and at Café Condesa, that’s when the tip got hot,” Trombetta recalled. “After looking at pictures where the FBI added glasses and a mustache, we realized we had a customer at Monoloco who had the same mustache and glasses. He came to have drinks in the afternoon. That’s where we saw Whitey.”

Knowing of Antigua’s appeal among other top fugitives, including a pedophile who once frequented their first internet café, the men did a risk assessment of sorts.

“We conferred whether it would be worth \$1 million to bonk someone on the head. In the risk-reward analysis, we concluded the big reward was definitely worth the risk,” Burns said.

“At the risk,” Trombetta continued, “of assaulting an older gentleman, an AARP member, worth maybe a \$500 pension check.”

...continued on following page



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Frying-pan caper from previous page

Next, Burns did his homework on the FBI website. He learned that Bulger liked to read, had an interest in history, used disguises and many aliases, had a violent temper and was thought to carry a knife at all times. “Considered armed and extremely dangerous,” according to the FBI.

Instead of calling the U.S. Embassy as the FBI posting urged, the men decided to take matters into their own hands.

In classic Wile E. Coyote style, the plan was for Burns, working as bartender, to randomly shout Bulger’s aliases while Trombetta stood by nonchalantly—armed with a potentially lethal, Teflon-coated frying pan.

“If he had the slightest reaction, I was going to whack him in the head with the frying pan,” Trombetta said.


“The choice of weapon came from the fact that a frying pan in a restaurant would be as inconspicuous as a bat at a Red Sox game, but put in the hands of a bounty hunter, it could prove a very effective weapon,” he elaborated. “The element of surprise was our only hope when dealing with a professional hit man like Whitey, so the right choice of weapon was essential.”

So Burns worked the bar, pouring drinks, making small talk with customers and occasionally shouting aliases: Thomas Baxter ... Mark Shapeton ... Jimmy Bulger ... Tom Harris ... Tom Marshall ... Ernest Beaudreau ... Harold Evers ... Whitey ...

Riveted on the suspect, Trombetta was ready to strike—but nothing happened. No reaction. Not the slightest flinch.

“We just pretended it never happened and carried on,” Burns said.

With Bulger’s arrest, Burns sighed: “We have to re-evaluate our business plan.”

“But we’ll be keeping an eye on the most-wanted list,” Trombetta said. “Antigua is such a magnet.” 

A fruit is a vegetable with looks and money. Plus, if you let fruit rot, it turns into wine, something Brussels sprouts never do. —P.J. O'Rourke

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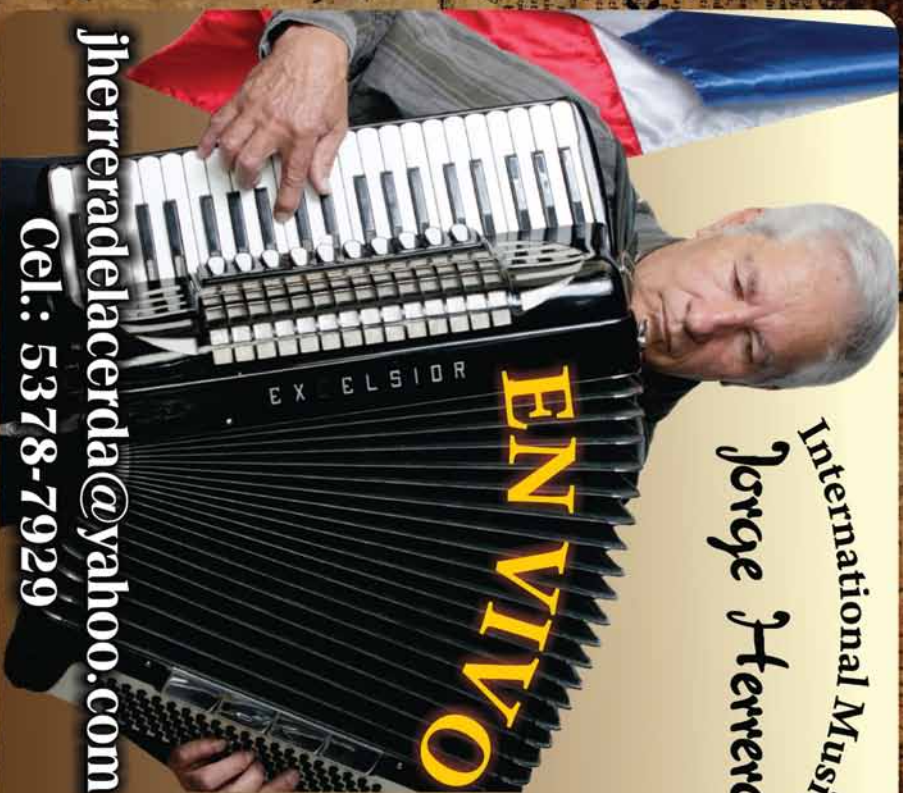
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Santiaguito consists of four domes (from left to right): El Caliente (erupts 10-20 times daily), La Mitad, El Monje, El Brujo

PHOTO: R.W. SANDERSON



SANTIAGUITO

Volcanic offshoot beckons trekkers to the Highlands

Amere infant in geologic time, the Santiaguito lava dome is a steam-spewing, smoke-belching spectacle just outside Quetzaltenango in Guatemala's Western Highlands.

Rising more than 8,000 feet above sea level, Santiaguito (Little St. James) is one of the world's most active lava-dome complexes, consisting of several jagged peaks that have been forming in the aftermath of the catastrophic eruption of adjacent Volcán Santa María over a century ago.

Santa María, a 12,375-foot, roughly 30,000-year-old volcano, had been dormant

for at least 500 years, if not several thousand, before a 10-month series of earthquakes signaled impending volcanic activity. On Oct. 25, 1902, Santa María erupted with such force that its volcanic ash reached San Francisco, California, some 2,500 miles away.

The disaster killed at least 5,000 people—a widely acknowledged underestimate—and more victims perished in a malaria outbreak that followed. Santa María ranks with Novarupta (Alaska, 1912) and Mount Pinatubo (Philippines, 1991) as one of the most violent eruptions of the 20th century.

Rising since 1922 in Santa ...cont. page 84



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what is it good for? A question which would
abolish the rose and be answered triumphantly
by the cabbage. —James Russell Lowell

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Blame someone else and get on with your life.
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I suppose that I shall have to die
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Santiaguito cont. from page 74

María's aftermath, the Santiaguito moonscape consists of four domes: El Caliente, the largest and most active with frequent eruptions; La Mitad; El Monje; and El Brujo.

Today, Santa María's forested slopes provide a tranquil overlook of the noisy offspring, a popular destination for trekkers to get a close-up view of one of Guatemala's most amazing sights.

For my recent visit, Adrenalina Tours arranged for lodging at the Villa de Don Andrés, a quaint

and cozy bed and breakfast just a block from Quetzaltenango's Central Park.

Since clouds roll over the mountains by late morning, the day began with a 5 a.m. pickup for the half-hour drive to Llano del Pinal, a pueblo at the foot of Santa María. Edgar, a knowledgeable young guide from a local indigenous family, led the way in the morning fog.


Through fields of corn, potatoes, beans, onions, flowers and more, the trail rose along the base of Santa María. Occasionally, workers equipped with machetes, shovels and hoes walked or rode by on horseback to farm fields on the slopes.

Prominent on the horizon was the Siete Orejas (Seven Ears), a volcano with seven peaks that are said to resemble ears.

It took about two hours to reach the mirador, at an altitude of about 1,300 feet, providing breathtaking views of the Santiaguito siblings in a rocky, gray cluster, only a half mile away.

For more adventurous travelers, a two-day, overnight trek leads to a much higher outlook on Santa María, actually looking down at El Caliente, which erupts 10-20 times daily in addition to emitting constant towers of steam.

Though scenic, the destination is rated dangerous by volcanologists because of its high possibility of life-threatening eruptions—and with good reason. Violent eruptions in the 1980s and '90s created dense mudflows in rivers below that leveled the nearby village of El Palamar and killed hundreds of residents.

Even so, adventure-seeking travelers from around the world are drawn to the site to marvel in its power and splendor. 

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Gallon Jug Rainforest cont. from page 21

I was about 50 yards from them, they got up and quickly disappeared into the green mystery. Back at camp I helped myself to an ice-cold Belikin beer and, as the adrenaline rush subsided, marveled at what had just happened as I watched the red orb of the sun melt into the forest.

The Most Beautiful Eagle on Earth


A few days later I was walking down a remote track north of the escarpment and noticed something funny-looking atop a giant mahogany. Could it be? There was a dense mass of dead branches at least 10 feet wide up near the tree's crown. I started getting excited because the Mayan Rainforest is home to the harpy eagle *Harpia harpyja*, the world's largest raptor and one of the rarest, and the idea of discovering a harpy nest is truly the Holy Grail for a wildlife photographer.

I had been studying the nest for a few minutes when suddenly and silently a huge cocoa-colored, winged entity came gliding in to alight at the edge of the structure. Not a harpy but an ornate hawk-eagle—definitely not a disappointment!

What the ornate lacks in size—and it is by no means small, its wing span must be nearly as wide as the nest—it makes up for in sheer elegance and in the beauty of its markings. Known to scientists as *Spizaetus ornatus*, its name refers to the large, ornate crest that adorns its head. This was an unexpected bonanza, and during the next hours I remained glued to the great mahogany as both male and female eagles came and went. I could not see into the nest but judging

from occasional high-pitched squawks emanating from it, I felt certain chicks were inside. This meant that the birds would quite probably remain there for some time.

In the afternoon I returned with my heavy artillery and a portable blind and settled in for a long campaign to get a good image of the birds in flight. It was easy to get good shots while the eagles were perched, but only in flight do you really see the creature's magnificence.

Of course, filming them in flight was not at all easy. Patience was essential. For the next 10 days I spent many hours a day at the site and at the end of the effort I felt that I had finally achieved my purpose: a fitting portrait of the most beautiful eagle on Earth, which hopefully may inspire others to explore, appreciate and protect “El Mundo Magico,” the magic world of the wilderness. 

Author's note: The best way to experience the Gallon Jug Rainforest is by booking a stay at the award-winning Chan Chich Lodge, built on the plaza of an ancient Mayan city. Chan Chich is your gateway to some of the best birding and wildlife viewing anywhere in the Mayan Rainforest.



Autographed books by author, photographer, and conservationist Thor Janson are available for sale at 6a calle poniente #2, La Antigua

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The hardest thing to learn in life is
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 —David Russell

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Rainbow over San Salvador, viewed from Boqueron (LENA JOHANNESSEN)



Karla S. is among the many anglers who frequent the Panajachel piers for bass.

(PHOTO: BRENNAN HARMUTH)

Bad-Ass Bass Rain from the Sky

53 years ago, an airplane wrought sudden, significant alterations in Lake Atitlán's food chain

Flying fish inhabit oceans, not lakes. Well, except for one sunny day in 1958. If you were looking at Lake Atitlán then, you would have seen big fish on the fly.

They arrived in tubs welded into what was, judging from eyewitness accounts, a Sikorsky seaplane, which early airlines used to scout routes for the budding commercial aviation industry. The fishy missiles rained down as the pilot swooped close to the surface.

The plane bore the insignia of Pan American World Airways. Pan Am had made common cause with Panajachel's nascent hotel association to boost tourism to Atitlán by making it into a sportfishing destination. This would be done by literally dropping black bass into the lake.

Unfortunately, the fish already living there, who surely would have objected to this idea, were never consulted. And the phrase "environmental impact study" was not yet in anyone's lexicon.

This bass in question, *Micropterus salmoides*, is the state fish of Alabama and Florida. It is a thrilling quarry for sport fishers, but a ferocious killer—even of its own species.

"These fish," says American John Riddle, a longtime Panajachel resident, "will try to gobble members of their own kind who've had the misfortune of being hooked." Being a largemouth species, the bass do not hesitate to attack prey as large as themselves. They can ingest anything up to a third of their size, which includes even ...continued page 92



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—Carlos Castaneda, Tales of Power

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baby alligators. The male does have one virtue: He guards and fans the eggs while the female plays doxy with several nest-hugging males.

The indigenous species in the lake quickly became scarce following the bass paratrooping. Ironically, the bass introduction made Atitlán a poorer source of food fish—rather than a richer one—by stunting its biodiversity. For millennia Maya fishermen had captured local fish in nets lowered from *cayuco* boats; now they had to retool. The bulk of their take declined, and so did the variety.

“I was a boy when they dropped the fish,” says Guatemalan Charlie Vickers. “I watched it from the lakeshore. I’d never seen anything like it, nor do I expect to, ever again.” Vickers himself grew up to become a hotelier, as proprietor of what is today Panajachel’s Jardín del Lago.

In the lakes and rivers of the southeastern U.S., the bass’ numbers are checked by herons, bitterns, eagles and alligators; kingfishers prey on the young. But in Lake Atitlán, *Micropterus* became the apex predator when, previously, no single organism held this distinction. When the native fish declined, the bully bass prowled the muddy bottoms and chomped every freshwater crab and snail large enough to trouble with. The crabs survived, but large individuals are rare near the shore, having retreated to depths to which the bass do not descend. The other hunted survivors include bluegill, crappie and a type of tilapia. Another threat to Atitlán’s ecology is the presence of introduced carp.

Some organisms, peculiar to the lake, may have met extinction before biologists had an opportunity to catalog them. The bass’ most resplendent casualty was the

great grebe, a large bird which, like the bass, eats crabs. As the crabs waned, so did the grebe; the last was seen in 1982. The Atitlán subspecies was the only population outside of South America.

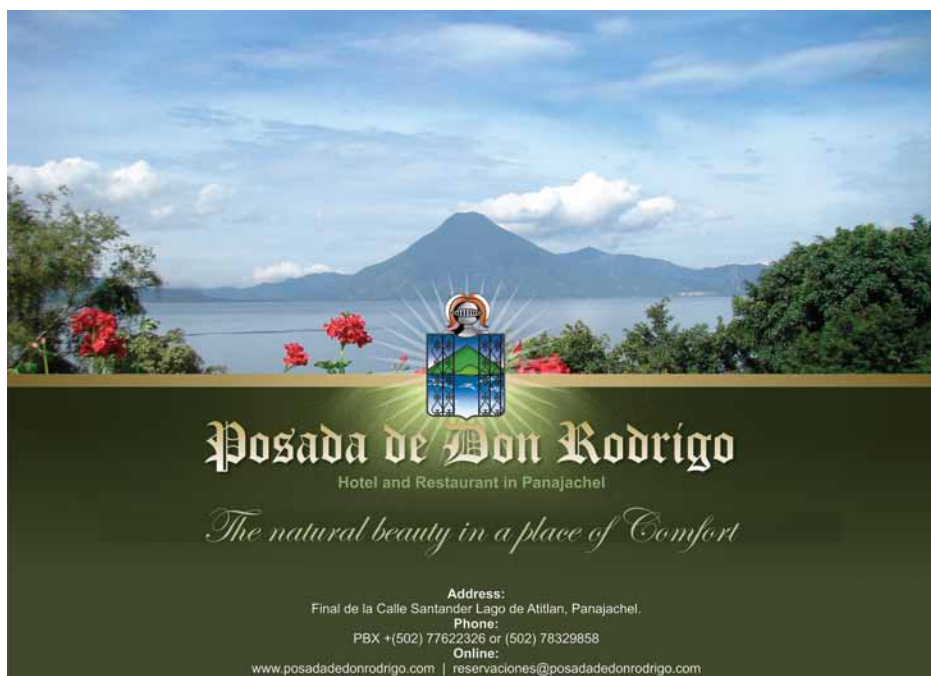
In 2004, Riddle and others chartered a club to make the hunters into the hunted. This was the year the Atitlán Bass Club held its first tournament, an annual event suspended in 2009 due to the cyanobacterial bloom, which has no direct relation to the bass introduction decades earlier.

Over this period, attitudes about sport fishing in Atitlán have so changed that even the Bass Club is conservation-oriented. Most bass caught during the tournament are thrown back after being weighed, measured and photographed. Trophies have been awarded to anglers who released their catch to hunt and be hooked another day.

“But this is optional,” says Allen Stern, another North American living in the basin. “Bass caught during the tournament can be keepers.”

The Bass Club today belongs to an alliance of organizations dedicated to preserving the health of the lake, not only for fish and fauna generally, but for anglers, too—both sport and subsistence fishermen.

The earlier alliance—of the hotels and Pan Am—is today a bizarre footnote in Guatemalan history, a “fishy” scheme that might have inspired an episode of *The Simpsons* set in Central America. The hotel industry developed apace without Atitlán acquiring the enviable reputation as a fishing Mecca. And 33 years after the bass seeding, Pan Am, the “world’s most experienced airline,” went belly-up in 1991. Myriad competitors were by then overwhelming Pan Am with their own Guatemalan routes, and mention of Atitlán sport fishing had disappeared from the company’s brochures.



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Yet the legacy of the bass invasion remains in force. Decades of ecological adjustments have brought the lake's dislocated food web into a new equilibrium, and fighting fish may be had with surprising ease. Even the piers at Panajachel are frequented by anglers equipped with as little as a line and a single lure. These are twirled overhead like a sling, then cast, then reeled in—with-out a reel.

"You really don't need a pole," claims North American expatriate Frank Hoyas, who casts on weekends from the stern of a moored commuter ferry. "Better if you do, naturally. But either way, on a good day you'll collect a stringer of fish."

Pan Am, like the great grebe whose fate it sealed, is gone. But sportfishing in Atitlán is cleared for takeoff. 📍



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The external deserts in the world are growing, because the internal deserts have become so vast. Therefore the Earth's treasures no longer serve to build God's garden for all to live in, but they have been made to serve the powers of exploitation and destruction. —Pope Benedict XVI (Homily at inauguration as Pope, April 24, 2005)

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There's a difference between a philosophy
 and a bumper sticker. —Charles M. Schulz


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If you want to make an apple pie from scratch,
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—Carl Sagan

You can't have everything. Where would
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Sacred turtles in Mayan art and iconography



A new FLAAR Report* now lists all of the animals that were sacred or otherwise considered as special by the Classic Maya. There are animals that are related to the sky (constellations, stars, planets), the forests and those that are associated with rivers, lakes, swamps and the oceans. These waters are conflated by the cosmology of the Preclassic and Classic Maya into the underwaterworld.


On the surface of this underwaterworld you get the major interaction of exotic creatures. Crocodiles, fish, sharks, turtles—both sea turtles and freshwater turtles—are often depicted.

It has long been recognized that turtle carapaces were used as musical instruments. These instruments are pictured in murals and on pottery vases, especially in the Late Classic period (AD 600-800).

The turtle carapace scene shows a youthful deity figure splitting out of a sea shell on a plate. This resurrection from a giant turtle carapace is one of the truly important moments in Mayan cosmology.

The carapaces of turtles are often de-

picted in Mayan art as one of the housings of God N (also called Pauhtun). Normally God N is in a conch shell or snail shell, but sometimes he can be in a turtle carapace.

Turtles are found in the various Mayan codices and in the murals of Bonampak. Any good book on Mayan archaeoastronomy will discuss the turtles (and peccary) in the murals and codices. Turtles are decoration for a typical Puuc structure at Uxmal in the Yucatán. Turtle symbolism is deeply embedded in Classic Maya beliefs. 

Dr. Nicholas M. Hellmuth is director of FLAAR Reports (Foundation for Latin American Anthropological Research). To view the list of sacred animals visit www.maya-archaeology.org or contact Dr. Hellmuth at frontdesk@flaar.org

** See the complete list of sacred animals at www.maya-archaeology.org*

Turtles that you can find in the rivers, lakes and mangrove swamps of Guatemala, southern Mexico or Belize include: Central American river turtle *tortuga blanca*, *Dermatemys mawii*; Furrowed wood turtle, *rhinodemmys areolata*; Mexican snapping turtle, *Chelydra serpentina*; Narrow-bridged musk turtle, *Claudius angustatus*; Northern (Mexican) giant musk turtle, *Staurotypus triporcatus*, three parallel ridges along back; Red-eared terrapin, Mesoamerican slider, *jicotea*, *Trachemys scripta*; Scorpion mud turtle, *Kinosternon scorpioides*; Tabasco mud turtle, *Kinosternon acutum*; White-lipped mud turtle, *Kinosternon leucostomum*; Creaser's mud turtle, *Kinosternon creaseri*; Yucatan box turtle, *Terrapene carolina*.

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Men weary as much of not doing the things they want to do as of doing the things they do not want to do. —Eric Hoffer

Every time you don't follow your inner guidance, you feel a loss of energy, loss of power, a sense of spiritual deadness. —Shakti Gawain

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Long before I knew Arthur Kennedy, who passed last month at 87, I benefited from his legacy. So have you, if you are among the millions who have traveled Guatemala's stretch of the Pan American Highway. He was in charge of much of the construction of what remains the country's principal artery, and its first graded one.

Kennedy learned civil engineering in the U.S. Army during World War II. He saw active duty by the end of the war in the Army Air Corps as a first lieutenant and aviator.

Though Idaho-born, he was related to the famous Kennedy clan, being a third cousin of John Fitzgerald Kennedy. Ironically, Art was a lifelong Republican who never met or even voted for Jack Kennedy. He did, however, meet Vice President Nixon—for whom he later voted—at a 1958



American Legion conference. His neighbors in Panajachel, where he lived since 1977, knew that he was unhappy over the abortive Bay of Pigs invasion of Cuba in 1962.

Arthur Kennedy would spend most of his life in Guatemala, which he loved as much as the United States. He arrived in 1949 as security adjutant at the American Embassy. When that assignment ended, he began working for the Glenstorm Corporation, under contract to build the highway. He and his first wife, Canadian Barbara Bickford, had four children, all born in Guatemala.

He took his second wife, Georgina, a Guatemalan, to every continent, where he oversaw the building of bridges, tunnels and highways. "Georgie" recalls his particular fondness for Africa. For decades, they operated Panajachel's Playa Linda Resort, where Kennedy, a skilled chef, designed the restaurant's menu.

Paralleling Kennedy's American Legion membership was his service as an embassy warden. By 2005 he was already, according to consul Marty Haas, "apparently senior" to every other volunteer retained by the



Kennedy meets Nixon in 1958

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U.S. State Department. After retiring from what he called “wardening” in 2010, he was honored at an embassy town hall meeting. By then he had clinched the distinction of being the longest-serving warden in the history of the U.S. warden system worldwide.

It was through wardening that my own friendship with Kennedy began in 1999. He mentored me in the practice, and gave me perspective in it. Whereas nowadays wardens depend heavily on the internet to ply their responsibilities, Kennedy relied on short-wave radio in the middle of the last century.

Arthur Kennedy was never short on opinions or hospitality. He was crusty, but kind. He was a hero to my sons, partly because of the citations on his wall, but also because he was always willing to share with them his toffees, his swimming pool, and the company of his terriers and budgerigars. 🐕

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There is a lot more juice in grapefruit than meets the eye. —author unknown

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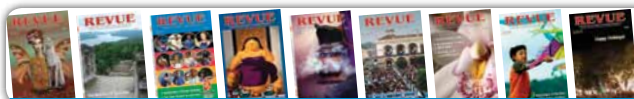
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A man can sleep around, no questions asked,
but if a woman makes nineteen or twenty
mistakes she's a tramp. —Joan Rivers

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There must be something unconscious about it.
—Louis Kronenberger

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had done yesterday, so few that we feel like
doing today. —Mignon McLaughlin



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road all the way to your door. —Irish Toast

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—Rose Kennedy



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A wedding anniversary is the celebration of love, trust, partnership, tolerance and tenacity. The order varies for any given year. —Paul Sweeney

Our marriage has always been a 50-50 proposition —with the possible exception of closet space. —Gene Perret



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"Forest and brush fires were blazing all around me during my recent expedition into the rainforest."

Green Gospel

The tradition of slash-and-burn farming cannot continue

In Mesoamerica the end of the dry season—April and May—finds millions of *campesino* farmers busy practicing their age-old method of slash-and-burn agriculture. All the refuse on the fields is put to the torch, enriching the soil with mineral ash. This traditional method of farming is sustainable as long as the human population remains small. The technique goes like this: A piece of rainforest is cut down and set ablaze. The organic material that was stored in the vegetation fertilizes the thin tropical soil. The land is farmed until the soil becomes depleted and the process is repeated.

Because the forest was big and the human population was small, the forest, in time, would regenerate. Today that is no longer the case. I have seen poor farmers arriving at remote rainforest locations equipped with nothing more than a sack of food and an ax. These are hardy, hard-working settlers simply trying to eke out a living. But unless the growing campesino populations are given a helping hand, they have little or no choice

but to continue destroying the forest. In the 21st century slash-and-burn agriculture is absolutely obsolete. Soon there will be no more forests and nowhere else to go.

APOCALYPSE NOW

Forest and brush fires were blazing all around me during my recent expedition into the rainforest of northern Belize. The mountains to the south were burning; the situation exacerbated due to the fact that the pine-bark beetle destroyed nearly all of the upper elevation forests leaving plenty of dry tinder. News flash on Radio Belize: A real-life apocalypse of fire was sweeping down on Francis Ford Coppola's Blacanaux Lodge, located 30 miles to the south in the Mayan Mountains. Tourists were being evacuated. The sky was so choked with smoke that the sun was not visible.

There is no question that all this smoke contributes greatly to global warming, and the grave danger is that this can become a self-reinforcing cycle. As things heat up and dry out there will be more forest fires, more

"I dream of a land where people cherish and protect the sublime and glorious majesty of the vast and mysterious wilderness. Where all the rivers run crystal clear and the air is pure and scented with the perfume of flowers and pine trees. Where humans once again have the time to listen to the beauty of the sounds of nature, the chirping of crickets, the cry of an eagle, the night song of the wolves. A land where its people remember the Great Spirit, and give thanks for all the wonders and bounty of the Earth." — Thor Janson



more smoke in the atmosphere and more heat. Now is the time to break this cycle. In Mesoamerica this means that we must provide alternatives for the poor farmers who are simply following the traditions of their ancestors. Traditions which made it possible for them to survive. We cannot fault people for simply trying to feed themselves.


URGENTLY NEEDED: A GREEN GOSPEL

After working as a conservationist in Mesoamerica for 30 years I have concluded that the only way to save the forests—over the long term—is by gaining the grassroots support of the people. We need to motivate people everywhere to mobilize and become actively involved in the defense of nature.

Fifty years ago there was a massive educational campaign in the U.S. to persuade the population to stop throwing garbage everywhere. "Don't be a litterbug," went the slogan. And it worked! The vast majority of people in North America DO NOT throw trash on the ground or out their car windows. This is due to education.

Some years ago I was walking along a wilderness seashore, far from any human population. The beach was strewn with garbage.

My God, I thought, it must be the same scene on so many beaches around the planet. How are we ever going to clean up this mess? Clearly we need a massive, well-funded, educational campaign in Guatemala and around the world to convince Earth's citizens that they must get involved with the defense of nature. More than half of all the temperate and tropical forests are now gone. About half of the wetlands and a third of the mangroves are gone and 75 percent of the world's fisheries are now overfished. Twenty percent of the coral reefs are gone and another 20 percent are severely threatened. Species are disappearing at a rate about a thousand times faster than normal. Persistent toxic chemicals can be found by the dozens in each and every one of us.

What will it take to convince people that we must halt further dismantling of the Earth system, the foundation upon which our civilization is built? Do we have the courage, the honesty, the foresight and the integrity to turn away from our present hell-bent destruction of the natural world and begin to learn how to live in harmony with our Mother Planet? 

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Generally the theories we believe we call facts, and the facts we disbelieve we call theories.

—Felix Cohen

An old belief is like an old shoe. We so value its comfort that we fail to notice the hole in it.

—Robert Brault



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Tourist Police (Antigua)
7832-4131
La Antigua Bomberos (Fire)
Voluntarios: 7832-0234
Guatemala City
Tourist Assistance dial 1500
(24-hour)

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The bulldozer and not the atomic bomb may turn out to be the most destructive invention of the 20th century. —Philip Shabecoff

Human beings are perhaps never more frightening than when they are convinced beyond doubt that they are right. —Laurens van der Post



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Sensuous Guatemala: RAIN by Ken Veronda



Lightning storm approaches
Antigua from the west
(GUIDO LUCCI)

INVIERNO, winter, is here. It's the rainy season, and all our senses know it, even though most days still have lots of sunshine in the Guatemalan Highlands around La Antigua Guatemala, and temperatures continue to be mild. Drizzles, showers, deluges, each day's touch of rain is different, something for all five senses.


The colors of our rain shade from light silver through pewter to steel-gray, with misty curtains shading the volcanoes some days, or hiding them completely in dark velvet drapery. Photographers love to capture the reflective puddles on the cobblestones, while painters brush in the metallic tones seen in the skies. Then the sun breaks through, and the just-washed leaves and blossoms flash rich colors.

The odor of rain can be pungent when the soil first gets wet, then fresh and clean as the showers wash away any trace of unpleasant exhaust or dust. Occasionally there's a whiff of burning wood from a fireplace, sometimes the special smell of cedar logs. Lightning displays add nitrogen to the soil and its unique ozone aroma to the nose. The scent of wet dogs or woolen clothing, the

smell of tortillas or meat sizzling on a grill, the musky damp of laundry hanging limp on the line, each adds a touch to the seasonal odor around town.

The touch of rain on the face can be as gentle as a baby's hand caressing a mother's cheek, or as bracing as a high dive into a cold pool. The taste of rain can be refreshingly clean, as every child knows from sticking out his tongue to catch a few drops.

Ah, but it's the sense of sound during rainy invierno afternoons that's so very special around the town, light rain sounding like little bells, heavier rain like marimba from the rooftop, occasional kettle-drum tympani on the clay tiles overhead while you're curled up inside by a gentle fireside with a good new book.

The rainy season can mess up traffic, bring some leaky roofs to drip into hastily placed pots, require tourists to scoot into a nearby shop until the shower eases up. But don't let our invierno spoil your day. Tune on each sense and appreciate the metallic shades, the pungent smells, the wet touch, the restoring taste, the musical sounds of the season. 

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