So What’s The Deal On The Funny Money?

Hush! Mexican money is pretty, it’s colorful, it varies in sizes, it displays national heroes, and we like it a lot

BY ALEJANDRA BORBOLLA

Seems to us like Mexicans get overly persnickety about peso bills that are even a tad bit goofed up. What’s the deal with that? I mean, Gringos can pass off a hundred dollar bill that’s been totally torn through as long as it’s been attended to by a good Scotch tape job. Here, a peso note with a tiny little tear is not wanted anywhere. Is there a good reason for this?

Well, there is a reason, not saying it’s a good one. But here’s the rundown:

Broken: When bills are broken and taped back together, they’re good, as long as all the parts are still attached. The tape must be clear, no duct tape or brown tape, or whatever other kind. The parts of the bill have to be from the same bill, if the bill is the same value but the parts are from different bills, it’s a goner. No frankenstein bills allowed.

Written on: Bills with drawings, writing, or stamps on them are good, except when the drawing or message is either political, religious or commercial. So you can write your phone number on a bill, but no god loves you messages. These homilies devalue the bill.

Stained: Yes, bills with ink stains do keep their value. Blood, however, Continued on page 6

Who’s That Bagging Your Stuff At WallMart?

Read this, and you’ll let loose with more of your change

BY CATHY WATKINS

One would never imagine, but there are many interesting and skilled people who sack your groceries at Walmart. People with education and that had careers before this one. Here are just two personal stories.

Isabel Negrete, a remarkable woman, is one person who sacks your groceries. She’s 75 years old, and Cabo has been her home for 26 of those years. After graduating from high school, she went to the U.S. to attend the Incarnate Word College in San Antonio, Texas where she earned a degree in business administration. While on a visit back home to Mexico City, she met her future husband who was in the entertainment business. Working with Sid Bernstein, they were the first to bring big name bands to the capital city in the late sixties. Eric Gordon and the
I was accused of being a racist for using what in the letter writer's opinion is a politically incorrect word to describe people from the nation of China. Apparently Chinamen isn’t OK. The letter writer is obviously a caring person who genuinely has empathy for Chinamen and had the gumption to take a stand and write a letter. I admire that.

But I’ll have to tell you, I’m pretty done with political correctness because I don’t like what that does to a person. It paralyzes spontaneity, discourse, and most importantly, sincerity.

The politically correct person must be wishy-washy, usually not sincere even with themselves, and they become phony, shallow people who sometimes must deny their own convictions.

You never know where you stand with people like this. You can’t be sure if they even like you or value your friendship because of their need to fake their beliefs. As a politically incorrect person myself, my friends always know where they stand with me, and that’s usually a comfort. Truth is badly underrated by the politically correct set but I believe truth is a good thing.

I’m not going to get into the nitty gritty of when it’s correct to tell a social lie to avoid hurting feelings, although there is certainly a place for that. That place is for everyone to figure out where their comfort level is.

This Chinaman thing I got called out on is not even the worst of the demands of the politically correct set. They often like to hurl the word racist around, as that word brings more clout into their opinion.

Precious readers, may I point out that there are only four races in the world, which means not everyone can be “protected” under the guise of being a different race? If I, or anyone, make a joke about, say, oh let’s just pick someone at random, let’s see……hmmm…. why don’t we use as a for instance a Mexican?

Say I, or someone with an equally fine tuned sense of humor make a joke or utter a complaint about a Mexican. Suddenly I’m called a racist. How is that even possible, when Mexicans are the same race as Americans? In fact, strictly speaking, Mexicans are Americans. So how can I be a racist?

Most anthropologists recognize three basic races of homo sapien, (that’s pretty much all of us who don’t have fur, feathers, or scales). Those race classifications are Caucasian, Mongoloid or Asian, Negroid and Australoid. This race classification was created by Carleton S. Coon in 1962. I Googled it. I don’t see Mexican in there. I’m no anthropologist, but I’m thinking they are Cau- casian, since they aren’t Mongoloid, Mongolian/Asian, or, what? From Australia? I didn’t even know they were a race until now.

But if someone wants to discredit anyone for nearly anything, they like to create another race out of nowhere so they can say that person crossed the race line. (Yes, there seems to be a race line.)

We often hear someone is a racist if they so much as complain about the waiter being slow. “Quit complaining, don’t be racist”. Please, I don’t think it’s fair or accurate to call that person a racist if we’re talking about someone of our own race. But the race word plays well with the politically correct crowd and so it’s used. And used again and again, until I wonder why it has any effect at all.

Am I a racist because I think it’s a hoot to call Chinese people Chinamen? Well, they are a different race than I am, and so I appear to have crossed that race line; a case could be made for being a racist.

But I’m not calling them Chinamen to put down their race, I’m saying it because I think it’s a hoot. I should get a pass on being a racist because of my pure motives, I think. But I will cop to possessing an inappropriate sense of humor, and I will even cop to being politically incorrect. Just not a racist, don’t hurl that one at me. You’re wearing it out and it doesn’t fit.
Could be hope for us. The expansion of Uber, the phone based ride-hailing service, is spreading in Mexico, but so is strong opposition from traditional taxi drivers who see a threat to their livelihoods. This week, Uber added six cities here in Mexico — Aguascalientes, Cuernavaca, Hermosillo, Mérida, Mexicali and San Luis Potosí — to its portfolio, bringing the total to 14 lucky cities who don’t have to deal with the traditional Mexican taxi cartel. It seems like our taxistas here in Cabo are so militant and scamming so much money off us that we will never win freedom from them, but the private ride hailing service has cracked other tough markets.

Oaxaca, in the southern part of the country, doesn’t even have Uber on their horizon but that hasn’t deterred the local taxi drivers’ union from testing the introduction of the service, which may or may not be planned for this summer. They’re getting an early start on their hizzy fit. Planned modifications to the city’s transport law, possibly could pave the way for Uber. The state government denied that such modifications are even being discussed, and after he invited the company to pow wow with him, by issuing an invitation on his Twitter account. “We aren’t opposed to new options for the users of public transport, but all should be done in a regulated manner,” tweeted Meseguer.

In Guadalajara, capital of Jalisco, a taxi driver protest injured one police officer and 47 people were arrested. Over 2,000 taxi drivers gathered in downtown Guadalajara. Some taxi companies have registered drops in demand of 60%, said one company representative, and “we can’t survive.” He warned that protests could continue if their demands aren’t met. Meanwhile, Taxistas protesting Uber in Mexico City are burning cars in protest. Presumably not their own.

There is a ride hailing service here in Cabo, but it’s so under cover that it doesn’t use a traditional app. You have to know the phone number. No, we’re not going to give you the phone number, the taxi drivers would start a riot in the streets and the service would be done with.

The Chinamen are coming! Aeromexico is launching a direct flight to Shanghai from right here in San Jose, although the flight originates in Mexico City. It’s a 16 hour and 15 minute ordeals, but you’ll be cruising in their new Boeing 787 Dreamliner. The first scheduled flight was last Monday and was one of the biggest planes to ever fly into our airport. This could be the start of a big Asian invasion, if only you would all stop calling them Chinamen. They are our guests, and they spend their...
Que Pasa in Cabo?

BY DAVID FLORES

Gulf of California becomes National security issue. Mexico’s national commission of protected natural areas (Conanp) director Alejandro del Mazo wants to classify our Gulf of California, also called Sea of Cortes, as a fully protected natural zone, “not only for the protection of nature, but also as an important component of national security.”

The change will help preserve marine vaquita, a species of porpoise endemic to the northern part of the Gulf of California which is listed as critically endangered.

There goes the neighborhood. According to local consular agent Militza Perez, there are approximately 20,000 Canucks living in Cabo either part or full time. They are the second largest foreign population, as Americans, according to their consul general in Tijuana, represent a total of 30,000 residents down here. You will notice both figures are rounded up/down to the nearest 10,000, a good indication that they actually have no idea how many of you are here.

Popular watering hole shut down. Officials from Profepa, Mexico’s environmental watchdog, shut down the popular Tabasco’s restaurant/bar on Medano beach, just south of the Cascadas timeshare resort, on charges that it does not have approved environmental impact studies for its tiny little building. That is, if you can call a bunch of wood planks and a thatched roof a building. Actually, the restaurant did have a permit for a 65 square meter building, but the thing kind of grew in the night, like so many businesses around here. Tabasco’s restaurant/bar on Medano beach, just south of the Cascadas timeshare resort, on charges that it does not have approved environmental impact studies for its tiny little building. That is, if you can call a bunch of wood planks and a thatched roof a building. Actually, the restaurant did have a permit for a 65 square meter building, but the thing kind of grew in the night, like so many businesses around here.

Here Comes The Light. Again. Maybe. Could be. This time it’s for sure, for sure claims Emilio Costich, director of the Los Cabos Public Works agency. The 874/2000 light poles between Cabo and San Jose have been promised for the end of every month since last fall. Each public relations release that comes out of city hall bounces back and forth on the number of light poles there are, and we don’t know anyone who hasn’t lost track trying to count them on the 22 mile stretch.

The problem is Baja Signs is in charge of the install and they keep making overly optimistic predictions of the big Turn On. So far, only about 30 percent of the lights have twinkled on and many of those have twinkled off again. Looks like when Baja Signs is good and ready, they will flip the switch and there will be light. The problem is, by the time they’ve worked their way from end to end it appears that...
Dance Contest!
Are you going to miss this again this year?

BY MIKE RAFONE

For the dance lovers among us, this is a big damn deal. Originally known as Cabo’s Best Dance Crew, the event’s name changed to place dancers from La Paz. Now it’s Baja’s Best Dance Crew, and still a dance competition which challenges school kids, college kids and private dance crews to battle it out on the stage to win the title of Best Dance Crew for 2016. The atmosphere is loose, so take your banners, your signs, your clackers and prepare to shout out loud for your team of dancers.

The competition will take place on the outside stage at the stupid looking cultural center in downtown Cabo. Inside, it’s really pretty slick, with the main theater seating 1200. It’s all happening on the 22nd of March at 6:30pm. There will be an expected crowd of 1,200 people, so hang get your ticket.

Baja’s Best Dance Crew was started in 2010 by Erika Partida and Mariana Martinez, two dance lovers that owned a dance studio in San Jose. In 2011 Suzanne Bundey (a professional dancer originally from England) joined the partnership to help bring people from Cabo San Lucas and help the growing success of the competition.

Now in its 7th year, the competition is one of the biggest events held in the Pabellon theater. Since the beginning the competition has had the loyal support of Ultra-

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<th>Full Price in USD</th>
<th>SkyMed Price in USD</th>
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Dear Editor,

The recent article on the state's tourism project has sparked much debate. While some are excited about the potential growth and job creation, others are concerned about the misuse of tax dollars. The state government has allocated a significant amount of money for this project, but the returns on this investment remain uncertain.

The investors, who are primarily local businesses, are losing confidence in the project. A recent survey conducted by the state's tourism department revealed that only 25% of respondents were positive about the project's prospects. This is despite the promises made by the state's top officials.

The project's supporters argue that it will generate jobs and economic growth, but their predictions are based on optimistic assumptions. The state's financial situation is also a concern. The state is currently facing a budget deficit, which may impact the project's ability to secure necessary funding.

In conclusion, while the tourism project is undoubtedly a valuable asset for the state, the risks associated with it must be carefully considered. The state government must ensure that the project's investment aligns with the state's financial goals and the needs of its residents.

Sincerely,

[Your Name]
**Book Report**


Buzzards can be beautiful. Do you ever consider how grateful we humans should be, to the bird who cleans the world? This enlightening tale, (the first fable in the book), along with other chapters in this small book tell stories that give answers to many weighty questions. Also, read “Advice from a Jackass”, “How the Serpent was Born”, and “Who cuts the Trees Cuts his own Life” for more ancient insights on the relationship between man and nature. These fables give us nature’s wisdom, and are similar to universal legends and wisdom from Native Americans and other indigenous peoples around the world. Most of these fables are related by animals, who impart wisdom through their stories.

The first fable is a great beginning, so it is the one I will describe. It takes place at the time of the great flood, when the whole world was destroyed by torrents of water; all except for one house on a hill that remained untouched and housed all the species of animals. When the waters receded, a trumpet bird (Ho chök) was sent out to scout, but the waters were still high, and the trumpet bird returned to the house. Usmiq, the buzzard was sent out next.

He was very hungry, and he found dead and rotting animals everywhere, which he hungrily devoured. When the buzzard finally had a full tummy and returned to the house on the hill, stuck to high heave, and the other animals would not let him enter. As a punishment for his gluttony, he was condemned, from that time on, to eat only dead animals, and by doing so, to clean the world by going out daily to dispose of the stinky rotting dead animals. So, from that time on, the buzzard has been called ‘the Bird Who Cleans the World’; as he soars through the skies, and searches, carrying off all things that might contaminate the earth. He flies and circles, looking for rotten things to eat. It is a great fable!

In another chapter, “Sometimes Right is Repaid with Wrong”, we learn about rabbit, who kept borrowing money and belongings until he owed half the world, and of course he never repaid or returned anything. The solution here was original, if not exactly ethical. “The Lazy man” fable, is longer (5 pages), with a satisfying ending, and the chapter, “the Buzzard and the Dove” contains many bits of folk wisdom, including; “love has no boundaries,” “...looking at the courage of a person, instead of looking at the dress”, and that “...necessity sometimes wears a dog’s face.” (whatever that means)

The ancient Mayan culture, so important in the history of Mexico, was complex, sophisticated, and beautiful. The Mayans have been called the ‘father of Mexico’ by historians, and in these short fables, handed down by parents and storytellers through many centuries, we find...
Hey! Those Cruise Ships Are Ours!

Pardon us. We like our cruise shippers and get a little jealous when they go to other ports

By Skip Dover

There have been a few setbacks for the $230 million cruise ship terminal in Rocky Point. That’s the poor man’s Cabo San Lucas on the Sea of Cortez up by the U.S. border. The first cruise ship is expected to arrive “soon.” Whether that’s a Mexican soon or real soon was not divulged. The problems include strikes, issues with faulty construction materials, and political and environmental problems, and oh yes, a bad engineering report that swore that the rock under the construction would hold the structure. Well, maybe they just mailed in the report, figuring that if a place was called Rocky Point, it was suitably rocky. It wasn’t, so gigantic concrete blocks had to be pushed into the sea for anchors. Some tourist businessmen here tried to put a cruise dock in front of the Hacienda in downtown Cabo, but the three Parr brothers who at that time owned the old Hacienda hotel knew they were going to sell it so they started a campaign against the proposed facility. They felt it would block their guests’ view and devalue their property so they drummed up a phoney ecological reason.

Holland America’s new 7 day cruise ship route starting from the new port facility in Rocky Point, not to build it. The Parrs even started a corporation with an ecological name and theme. However, they paid the people they hired right out of the Hacienda corporation, so it was pretty easy to trace the money back. Nevertheless it worked, as well meaning ecologists broke the so called experts the Parrs hired, and they raised such a fuss, the push for the cruise ship pier was abandoned. So to this day we only have little tenders going back. Nevertheless it worked, as well meaning ecologists broke the so called experts the Parrs hired, and they raised such a fuss, the push for the cruise ship pier was abandoned. So to this day we only have little tenders going to haul our cruise ships into town, leaving many of our possible visitors onboard the mother ship. Rocky Point has always been the beach for people from Phoenix, Tucson and Yuma as it’s just 60 miles from the Arizona border.

Cruise ship customers are expected to come from those markets along with California residents, for whom a new coastal highway has cut the distance by nearly 100 miles. An airport finished eight years ago is also expected to bring the cruise ship people to this new departure point. This new home port will include a half mile long jetty, a terminal building, and a pedestrian walkway. Locals have been told to expect an additional $12 million a month to be spent there, all due to this new facility.

Holland America is excited, declaring Rocky Point to be their new favorite jumping off point to their new seven day cruises on the Sea of Cortez. (See map for their route). Stops would include Guaymas, Loreto, La Paz and Topolobampo. Well, not exactly glamour pusses like Cabo and Puerto Vallarta, but nice. And warm. And these cruise passengers don’t have to spend a full day getting from Los Angeles to their first Mexican warm weather stop.

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March 12 The Baja Boogie Band starring David Raitt and Pat Barclay starting at 7pm. Outstanding performance by this group several years in a row. Local prices for rooms, almost sold out.

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May 13 Sand Castle Competition, great family funday, gifts for kids and prizes for winners.

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Animals, The Doors, and Chuck Berry were a few of the big names she worked with.

After a divorce, Isabel took her two boys to San Antonio to raise them. Later in life, returning to Mexico, she came to Cabo. She is happy to be here at Walmart and is grateful to the corporation for the opportunity to work because she can’t find employment. There is a lot of age discrimination in Mexico, it is illegal but nobody fights it. That prejudice kicks in at about 40. Mexicans

know that if they haven’t found a permanent spot by then, they are in trouble and face a grim old age.

On a good day she makes around $20, which is often spent right there on groceries. Isabel is struggling to survive and would like to remind customers to please tip. As a customer passed by, she said Bonjour and started to talk to him in French.

Another interesting person sacking your groceries is Maria Elena who is full of energy and has a friendly smile. She says she is working here because she is too old at 75 to get any other job. She was born in Mexico City, got married, had five children, and worked there holding primarily managerial positions. She has managed five pharmacies and was a supervisor for a money exchange office. Sadly, her husband passed away, and she couldn’t get over it. Her doctor told her she needed a change and should get a change of scenery. Leave. So she came to Cabo. Alone. She works because she doesn’t like to stay at home and because she needs the money.

Only two groups of people are given the opportunity to sack groceries at Walmart. Teenagers from the ages of 14 to 16 are continued on page 1

CONTINUED ON PAGE 17

Isabel Negrete is your 75 year old bagger at WallMart, working at one of the few jobs available to seniors.
Gulf Gas Stations Pop Up In Mexico

money, and we welcome them.

Thomson airlines recently began flying people direct from the UK to Puerto Vallarta. That’s OK, PV can have the Europeans, we’ll take the Chinenes.

Mexican insurance. Everyone who works and pays taxes gets access to the Mexican national health insurance program for themselves and their families. Last year this system, called IMSS, spent about $1000 U.S. per beneficiary. In comparison, workers at Pemex paid top peso for their health plan and they don’t like it. The state owned company paid about $2300 U.S. for each beneficiary and the employees want to abandon that ship and go with IMSS.

Speaking of Pemex, Pemex announced it has set up lines of credit with Mexico’s development banks to improve their liquidity and start paying back some of these billions of dollars they owe suppliers, as the firm seeks to repair finances hit by a dive in crude oil prices.

Pemex has deferred payments to dozens of suppliers and contractors since last year, racking up some $8.2 billion in debt. Their new loan to cover this, floated from three development banks, total $836 million. So, are we supposed to quit our whining about high prices at the pump? Aint gonna happen. We’re not going to abandon our love for Pemex.

Sea Creature Washes Up. A 12 foot long sea creature that washed up on an Acapulco beach following a storm out to sea, has experts baffled. It looks like a rock in pictures, but it’s soft and mushy and definitely at one time not long ago was alive. While beach goers prod it with feet and sticks, marine biologists were on their way for their own investigation.

Remember Gulf gas stations? The big orange disc for a logo? Maybe you’re not old enough. The company will open its first four gas stations in Mexico in June and July and aims to operate at least 100 by the end of the year. In the next three years it hopes to reach 2,000. Gulf has a target of 25 percent of the national market, which currently comprises more than 10,000 gas stations across Mexico, so get used to seeing orange instead of green.

Mexican gas stations must sell fuel at a fixed price, and Gulf will be subject to the same system. However, Mexican officials have said that in the future the prices will vary at the pump according to market forces.

In other news, private businesses will be able to import gasoline and diesel beginning two weeks from now instead of in 2017 as initially planned. Gulf’s headquarters are in Framingham, Massachusetts.

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Ceviche is a seafood dish popular in the coastal regions of the Americas, especially Central and South America. The dish is typically made from fresh raw fish marinated in citrus juices, such as lemon or lime, and spiced with other ingredients that I will gift to you further in this article. Be patient, a virtue in a good cook of Mexican food.

The origin of ceviche is disputed, but possible origin sites for the dish include the western coast of central South America, or in Central America.

The invention of the dish is also attributed to other coastal societies, such as the Polynesian islands of the south Pacific. The Spanish, who brought from Europe citrus fruits such as lime, could have also originated the dish with roots in Moorish cuisine. However, the most likely origin lies in the area of present-day Mexico and Peru and that's what I choose to believe. Probably Mexico, probably not Peru.

Ceviche is nowadays a popular international dish prepared in a variety of ways throughout the Americas, reaching the United States in the 1980s. Distinctly unique styles are also found in coastal Mexico, El Salvador, Guatemala, Peru, Panama and the Caribbean and several other nations.

The origin of the name of the dish is also disputed. One hypothesis suggests the common Spanish word for the dish, ceviche has its origin in the Latin word cibus, which translates to English as “food for men and animals.” Another hypothesis, supported by the Royal Spanish Academy (the official institution responsible for regulating the Spanish language.), is the name might derive from the Spanish-Arabic word “assukkabag”, which is a word that will send my dirty minded Gringa boss into hysterical laughter, but is a legitimate word that comes from the Arabic word “sakba” meaning: meat cooked in vinegar. Further hypotheses base the origin of the term on “escabeche”, Spanish for pickle.

Bottom line, most historians agree ceviche originated during colonial times.

Ceviche is marinated in a citrus-based mixture, with lemons and limes being the most commonly used. In addition to adding flavor, the citric acid causes the proteins in the seafood to become denatured, (destroy the characteristic properties by heat, acidity, or other effects that disrupt its molecular structure), appearing to be cooked.

Traditional style ceviche was marinated for about three hours. Modern style ceviche, popularized in the 1970s, usually has a very short marinating period. With the appropriate fish, it can marinate in the time it takes to mix the ingredients, serve, and carry the ceviche to the table.

There are several variations of this dish, like Mexican ceviche, Peruvian ceviche, Ecuadorian ceviche, made of shrimp, lemon and tomato sauce, and ceviche from Costa Rica. Most Latin American countries have given ceviche its own touch of individuality by adding their own particular garnishes.

In Mexico and Central America, it is served in cocktail cups with tortillas, or as a tortilla topping and taco filling. Shrimp, octopus, squid, tuna and mackerel

**Continued on page 19**
end, the end where they started is already non operational.

Just a suggestion: Set these up like modern day Christmas lights, where if one light goes off, it doesn't crash the entire string of lights. Duh. And bill us for 874 lights, not 2,000.

Autism conferences announced. Red Autism, the local charity that devotes its efforts to helping people with autism or autistic next of kin, will hold a series of conferences on Saturday, April 2 at the Cultural House in San Jose, from 9:00 am to 2:00 pm.

The theme is, “Getting to know the autistic disorder spectrum: a different and peculiar development, which includes sub-themes such as: the autistic disorder spectrum and its implications, neuropsychology of autism, evaluation and diagnose process, therapeutic approach, educational and social environment and me and my family.

And in celebration of the World Autism Awareness Day, which falls on Saturday April 2, the Red Autism organization will hold a beach meeting at El Tule, halfway between Cabo and San Jose from 8:00 to 10:00 am. More than 1,000 people are expected to attend. For information, contact Maria Moreno 624-120-6328, email info@redautismo.org or look up www.redautismo.org

Las Vegas expanding to Cabo. FamousVegas night club owner Victor Drai will soon open a Drai's night club and beach club here in Cabo San Lucas. Also, Darin Feinstein, owner of Red Mercury Entertainment who also owns The Viper Room in Los Angeles once owned by Johnny Depp, is opening a Viper Room in Cabo. Where? Where? That's not been disclosed at this time. But you sorta heard it here first.

Bathrooms! Santa Maria beach, one of our most pristine, located at Km. 12 on the four lane outside of Cabo, now has decent parking, bathrooms, showers, palapas and security, all thanks to the Vista Serena tourist development that was built near there. Santa Maria is one of our favorite beaches, ideal for snorkeling but had no shade at all. Vista Serena ponied up because this was part of their developers fees.

Tennis tourney does Cabo.

This August the ATP 250 tournament will take place in Cabo. ATP stands for Asociación de Tenistas Profesionales, or professional tennis players association.

The tourney will have a total financial commitment of nearly $800,000. The new hard court tournament will take place from August 8 to August 14, which will surely give at least the less hearty players heat stroke. Did anybody even think of that?

Tournament director Jose Fernandez is expecting to use the new courts at the new Solaz resort, which is currently under construction on the four lane between Cabo and San Jose. The resort's complex will seat 3,500 people at its stadium, he said, and we believe him. Well, we have to believe him, because Solaz has a continued on page 19
Cerritos, Pescadero & Todos Santos: A good way to spend a day

For those ready to escape the non-stop excitement of Cabo, consider a more relaxing pace, less than an hour’s drive north of downtown Cabo San Lucas. You’ll find an artist’s colony, an authentic Mexican town, laid back residential areas, and the best swimming and surfing beach on the south Pacific side of the peninsula.

Todos Santos offers a charming, authentic environment, with the traditional central plaza, dozens of art galleries, and small hotels. Some of the streets are torn up right now for utility upgrades, but the jewelry stores, galleries, cafes and restaurants are all still open and inviting. Visit the Hotel California (no connection to the Eagles song, despite their best efforts to promote that with T-shirts), browse shops full of handcrafted treasures, and enjoy some great Mexican cooking.

What you won’t find are buildings taller than three floors, chain stores, or fast food joints.

Speaking of food, Todos Santos has a full range of temptations. Try Alma & Manny’s or the Todos Santos Inn for breakfast, Rob Marin or Hotel Casa Tota for lunch; Los Adobes, or the Santa Fe for dinner. South of town, near the Pemex, is Dana’s Diner, which has 13 TVs and 13 channel feeds for sports. The gourmet French restaurant Chez Laura is a bit difficult to find, but wow, it is amazing. You step off a dusty dirt road into another world. For fabulous chilli relleños try Miguel’s across from the Pemex. Next to the Pemex is the very sophisticated La Casita.

Want off beat? Go to the mask restaurant called Faces of Mexico. Tucked on a side road in Todos Santos, the proprietor provides an enthusiastic tour of authentic masks from the various eras of Mexican history.

The cultural museum on Juarez Ave. also has interesting historic displays. Todos Santos is home to the annual musical festival every January, an artist’s open studio tour in February, and the ever-popular GastroVino in April.

Many visitors extend their Cabo vacation and get to know the real Mexico by staying a few days in either Todos Santos or the nearby beach areas. Cerritos Beach is part of El Pescadero, but where the town of Pescadero is old Mexico, Cerritos has that vibrant beach vibe. Cerritos and its neighboring beach, San Pedrito, are both world-class surf spots. There are a couple of ways to get to the beach, either the old dirt road at km 65, or the new dirt road at km 67. Either way, it’s a bump, but what the hell, you’re in a rental car.

Cerritos is perfect for swimming and enjoying the sand and sun for a day, or a week. Take a surfing lesson or rent a boogie board. Kick back with your favorite refreshment and watch the surfers. There’s a beach club there with tables and beach umbrellas out on the sand, so you don’t even have to pack a lunch if you don’t want to.

El Pescadero is a small town on the way to Todos Santos. It has a rich history of agriculture, ranching and fishing. The lush poblano chili fields are everywhere, as well as strawberry, tomato and basil fields. The town is between the ocean to the west and the Sierra Laguna mountain range to the east. A modern four-lane highway runs right through it connecting Cabo San Lucas to Todos Santos, the Pemex, and La Paz. Stop at one of the many taco stands along the highway, or buy veggies or fruit along the road. In the afternoon when the fishermen come in with the day’s catch you can buy fresh fish off the boat at Punta Lobos. For a small propina (tip) they’ll filet it for you, too.

Turn off the dirt road just before the Pemex in Pescadero, left toward the ocean, to discover Hilaria’ena, a huge vegetable garden with an open-air restaurant smack in the middle of it. They serve fresh organics from the garden, and a nice selection of wines. Stop by the little bakery on the road in and buy a pan dulce, a Mexican version of a doughnut. Duck into some of the little local shops, but be aware, there is no English spoken here.

Off the main street in Pescadero is a tiny backyard restaurant called La Pasidita that has, I kid you not, the best burgers anywhere else in Baja. For a truly unique experience book a room at the Arriba de la Roca, (which means “top of the rock”) a high-end boutique hotel that specializes in personalized service and is perched on top of a cliff. For adults only (it’s on a cliff, after all). You’ll experience 360 degree views not matched anywhere else in Baja.

Visitors interested in hiking, horseback riding, surfing, charter fishing on a traditional panga, a Mexican fishing boat, adventure tours, or just experiencing Mexican village life, should head to Pescadero. Cerritos and Todos Santos. They are less than an hour’s drive north along the Pacific.

Enjoy the warmth and feeling of old Baja with great food and service. Only 30 minutes north of Cabo, at Km. 65 on the highway to Todos Santos. Great surf point & safe swimming for the entire family.

- Live Sports on Giant TVs
- Surf Lessons
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- WiFi

Best Beach Club!

Enjoy the warmth and feeling of old Baja with great food and service. Only 30 minutes north of Cabo, at Km. 65 on the highway to Todos Santos. Great surf point & safe swimming for the entire family.

Live Music Sat. & Sun. with John Cash (Sat) and Jazz with Doline Jones & Diego Ramirez (Sun) from 2:00pm
Ph. 624-129-6315 or 612-130-3358
info@cerritoslodge.com Map at www.cerritoslodge.com

La Pasidita is a locals place, though, and is only open after 6 p.m. Maybe 7 pm, sometimes a little later.

For a truly unique experience book a room at the Arriba de la Roca, (which means “top of the rock”) a high-end boutique hotel that specializes in personalized service and is perched on top of a cliff. For adults only (it’s on a cliff, after all). You’ll experience 360 degree views not matched anywhere else in Baja.
DANCE CONTEST...
continued from page 5

announce that both of these companies will be sponsoring the event this year, so the lucky winners will be welcomed on board to watch the new dance shows while touring the harbor and the arch at sunset.

The event is free to enter, so there is no reason not to go along and support the local dancers of Baja. You may be surprised at the talent of these future stars. Teams such as Green Apple (Bradley Miranda) and Monsters Dance (Giovan Palacios) who have been competing since their early teens, are now in their early 20s and many have dreams of studying dance in the States and dancing professionally in a world outside of Cabo San Lucas.

So go see for yourselves 6.30pm 22nd of March at the Pabellon Outside Theater. For more information contact suzanne.suzibarkinmad@gmail.com, 6241229397.

Last year’s dance contest participants all went out on their costumes to perform solo or different styles or share the singing talent, with no place to perform in Cabo, Cabo’s Top Talent was born.

Last year some of the participants included Fabian’s dancing dogs, a pop choral group, Hawaiian dance groups, acrobats, singers and more. This year, who knows what talent will be discovered?

This is a free event, with suggested donation of 50 pesos to go directly to Casa Hogar to help the children’s orphanage. Doors will open at 5pm on the 25th of March. For more information contact Suzanne on suzibarkinmad@gmail.com or 6241229397.

What’s the big deal about Fred Astaire?
Ginger did everything he did, but in high heels and backwards.

The Q is now by the sea, bringing luxury oceanfront living above and beyond.

We invite you to play, grow, indulge and design your ultimate Los Cabos experience within the Private Side of Cabo, Querencia.
How Are We Doing On Solar Energy?

Like, we’re not going to be running out of sun shine any time soon

BY JAMES BELL

Our state has earned high praise as the first region in Latin America to install large, publicly and privately funded solar facilities. México and Latin America have seen what many analysts describe as a boom in photovoltaic (PV) solar plant installations and it all started right here in Baja California Sur.

Santa Rosalía 1, México’s first publicly funded solar field, went into operation in 2012. This 1 MW (megawatt) plant contains over 4,000 solar panels and was inaugurated by former President Felipe Calderon.

In April, 2012, Mr. Calderon passed the General Law on Climate Change, which calls for a 30% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by 2020.

Two years later, our capital city of La Paz became the home of the first large, 30 MW, utility-scale solar plant in México. Called Aura Solar 1, it sprawls over 250 acres, and cost roughly 100 million dollars. It’s owned by Aura Solar, a Mexican company. It was partly financed by the World Bank and through loans from the International Community Foundation out of San Diego and Financiera Nacional.

This one was inaugurated by current President Enrique Peña Nieto in March, 2014 and held the distinction as the largest PV solar facility in Latin America until it was outshone by a 100 MW solar field that came online just two months later in Chile. Although one of Aura Solar 1’s 20 transformers was destroyed in a fire caused by a short circuit a month after the plant began operations, and in spite of damage suffered by Hurricane Odile in 2014, the solar facility is still going strong. It provides clean energy to more than 160,000 residents.

There is more good news to report as well. A second, 25 MW, solar plant in La Paz, this one owned by Grupotec, is also under construction and will be built with an 11 MW battery storage system. The Santa Rosalía 1 solar field will continued on page 24
3 Amigos Back In The Saddle

Last year’s meeting of the leaders of Canada, Mexico, and the United States was called off, but this year it’s back on.

Last year President Pena Nieto was pissed about Canada not letting Mexicans in without a visa, and Canada was pissed about the United States not letting the Canucks run their oil pipeline through the U.S.

This year Canada can’t even sell enough oil to push through a pipeline if they had one, and the new Canadian prime minister has softened Canada’s stand on Mexicans needing visas.

So now the meeting between the three leaders, often called the three amigos, is on again, and will be held in Canada in June.

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2 Blocks from Costco in Plaza Juan Diego, Loc. 4

Legend of Bank of Mexico, the Law Reform, rotate is 45 degrees and it says 20 pesos and below the transparent part of the bird. There is supposed to be a 20 peso coin, but don’t take it, they’re too rare. Remember, precious foreign reader, you are always the one at the shitty end of the money stick. We’re trying to wise you up, but we are aware it’s an uphill battle.

50 peso bill:
Redish pink, plastic, the front has a painting of José María Morelos y Pavón, Mexican insurgent who struggled in the second phase of the Independence, there is also the banner of Morelos and a transparent butterfly. In the back is the aqueduct of Morelia located in the state of Michoacán, the symbol of the Bank of Mexico and the prehispanic symbol of Michoacán (That means: “The ones of the Earth of the fish”) Under the butterfly there is a small fragment from “Sentimientos de la Nación” a Mexican political text considered as one of the most important, but it must be seen under a magnifier.

100 pesos bill:
Yellow, paper, bearing Nezahualcóyotl, an aztec emperor who fought Cortez and died for his efforts, and on the back there is Tenochtitlán, capital of the Mexico Empire, where Neza died. This character was an architect and a poet, the tiny words are one of his poems.

200 peso bill:
Green, paper, with Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz on the front, a Spanish nun, who dressed as a young boy so she could go to school and learn how to read and write. She then became one of the most well known Mexican writers. On the back, the Panoayan hacienda, where she lived and in the background the volcanoes Popocatépetl and Iztaccihuatl. The tiny words are also one of her texts, a very good one where she says that men blame everything on women pretty much. Could explain her wasting away in a convent.

500 peso bill:
Reddish brown, with Diego Rivera on the front and Frida Kahlo on the back. We all know who these two were and their sick love for each other.

1000 peso bill:
The one no one will probably take, so make sure you don’t

continued on page 6
According to these teachings, secret signs (read and interpreted by Mayan people), by animals or natural elements have powerful meanings. I found this book of fables to be a window to the past, and also ancient wisdom, still timely in today’s Mexican culture. After the author’s preface and introduction, you will find 19 short, and easily read stories. Each fable contains a colored illustration, and there is a page at the end of the book which explains all of those illustrations. The fables are nature-based; an ancient culture’s answers to universal questions through story telling. The stories concentrate on many of the “why?” questions we still ask today.

You can find The Bird who Cleans the World and other Ma-
Ask a Mexican

This Week’s Question is: Have you noticed the American spring breakers party their asses off when they’re here? What do you think about their behavior?

1. Alicia de la Torre, 38, housewife.

Yes, I think they go insane because they are kids in college with enough money (from their parents) to travel to a place where no one sees what they do, besides their friends and they are probably in the same mindset. I understand they need to blow off some steam, but here they do things that most people would consider vulgar. Of course, Mexicans encourage them, specially men encourage women because they know a local girl wouldn’t do the sort of thing the pendejadas, (blonde American woman), do. I think it’s okay to party, they are young, but they should do it in moderation. It makes me happy to see them have fun but it’s not fun to deal with them. When I was young, I had a vacation period which coincided with the sort of thing the pendejadas, I know a local girl wouldn’t do and behaved like that too, dancing and having a blast, but the guys couldn’t keep up with our drinking and the girls... Well, they just got so drunk they couldn’t get back to their hotel. We had to take them to their hotel and some guys thought we were going to abuse them, so we got into a fight, which was not even close to our goal, to be honest, they were ridiculous and we didn’t really enjoy that.

2. Josue Bernal, 42 store owner.

Tourist kids are not that bad, they are good for business, but with partying hard come really hard consequences, like puking their brains out after shots, ending up in fights and stuff like that. It sure is fun to see them have fun but it’s not fun to deal with them. When I was young, I had a vacation period which coincided with that would scare tourism off but there’s been many kids who have been murdered for some grams of coke.


I do know, there was even a show about the girls going wild. I think it’s shameful. I bet that if their parents saw them doing what they do here they would cancel all their cards and take them to a church and stick them there for years. The guys are handsome and the girls are pretty, but nowadays it’s all sex, drugs and alcohol. And they come here to blow off some steam, but here they do things that most people would consider vulgar. Of course, Mexicans encourage them, specially men encourage women because they find it easy, cheap and no one tells them anything! I have two kids and they sure will never party like that, not until I die. I don’t care if they turn 50, I will take them to their hotel and some guys thought we were doing something that was evil to get them to do something we never did and have some stranger lick alcohol off your privates. What if they have diseases? If they go home and find out there will be a forever mark with their mistake? Let alone the accidents that happen. No one talks about them and their parents) to travel to a place with enough money (from a couple of weeks of our time, and it doesn’t really overlap the whole two weeks, I understand different universities give different time of vacation. Cabo is one place, but there’s also Cancun, Vallarta, and even more in South America.

4. Leonardo Diaz, 29, service provider.

I think it’s a certain type of kids who do the crazy partying. White trash I think it’s called, the ones who go absolutely crazy and do really awful things. But not all of them are the same, just as us Mexicans are not all the same, some of them come to enjoy their time off and follow their principles. Even those who don’t, we are not ones to judge. If I don’t like seeing crazy springbreakers I avoid the places I know they will be at, that simple. It’s only a couple of weeks of our time, and it doesn’t really overlap the whole two weeks, I understand different universities give different time of vacation. Cabo is one place, but there’s also Cancun, Vallarta, and even more in South America.

5. Sandra Núñez, 32, accountant.

Springbreakers are crazy, yes, but to be honest I wish I had the guts and money to do something similar. If I could have, I probably would have partied as much and behaved like that too, dancing carelessly with my friends. But us Mexicans have a different view of things, we are “stuck up” and we always will be, from only thing I wouldn’t do is drugs.

6. Agustin Ruiz, 22, student.

I can’t say I disagree with them partying. I’m a college kid, and I party hard too. Except, I don’t go as crazy as they do, I’m always scared someone I know will see what I’ve done, on Facebook or whatever, there’s so many platforms these days. I also think the girls have lost respect for themselves, they come here and they dance like they were prostitutes... I don’t think that’s attractive. Well, they are attractive and provocative, but just for one thing, if you know what I mean. Also, they get really rude when they’re drunk!! It’s amazing how alcohol can literally change your whole personality.
are popular bases for Mexican ceviche. And you can mix them all together, creating ceviche mixto.

The marinade ingredients include salt, lime, onion, chile, avocado and coriander or cilantro. Tomatoes are often added to the preparation. According to the book *Mexico One Plate At A Time*, even though the dish has been a part of traditional Mexican coastal cuisine for centuries, ceviche is not a dish native to Mexico. Humph. If that’s true, still, Mexican ceviche has developed its own distinct styles that make it unique from any other, usually lesser, variations. In El Salvador the ceviche tradition is very strong. One of the most exotic ceviche recipes is “Ceviche de Concha Negra”, known in Mexico as Pata de Mula, or “The Black Clam.” It is dark, nearly black, with a distinct look and flavor. It is prepared with lime juice, onion, yerba buena (the Spanish name for a number of aromatic plants, most of which belong to the mint family. Yerba Buena translates as “good herb”), salt, pepper, tomato, Worcestershire sauce, and sometimes picante sauce (any kind of hot sauce or any kind of hot pepper) as desired.

**Ingredients**

- 1 pound bay scallops
- 8 limes, juiced
- 2 tomatoes, diced
- 5 green onions, minced
- 2 stalks celery, sliced
- 1/2 green bell pepper, minced
- 1/2 cup chopped fresh parsley
- freshly ground black pepper
- 1 1/2 tablespoons olive oil
- 1/8 cup chopped fresh cilantro

**Directions**

Rinse scallops and place in a medium sized bowl. Pour lime juice over the scallops. The scallops should be completely immersed in the lime juice. Chill the lime juice and scallops all day or overnight until scallops are opaque (That means you cannot see through them).

Empty 1/2 of the lime juice from the bowl. Add tomatoes, green onions, celery, green bell pepper, parsley, black pepper, olive oil, and cilantro to the scallop mixture. Stir gently. Serve this dish in fancy glasses with a slice of lime hanging over the rim to pretty it all up.
THE NEW STANDARD IN EXTRAORDINARY LIVING

As an architectural sculpture that pays tribute to contemporary art from Mexico, The Residences at Solaz, a Luxury Collection Resort, Los Cabos, are designed to immerse the celebrated few in the true essence that is Los Cabos, and become part of the resort that defines the destination. The lifestyle and services you experience during travel does not end when you return home.

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Bilingual Doesn’t Mean Bicultural
There are more differences between us than language

BY ROSAURA BARAHONA

Some years ago, my husband and I were travelling by train in Europe and barely caught the one that was taking us to Paris, so we had to walk through several cars to get to our seats. The first four were full of people from Germany, Holland, England and France and there were some persons talking in soft voices, reading, eating a snack or sleeping. The passengers in those cars didn’t even look at us.

The fifth car was a noisy one and soon we would learn that the rest of them were the same. I know this sounds like a cliché, but it is not. A large Italian family was travelling in that car and as soon as they saw us, they said hello and someone started to share what they were eating and drinking.

Later, some Spaniards and three Argentinians joined the group and soon we were all discussing hotels, restaurants and places to visit or not to visit. We are still in contact with some of them, although we have not seen but three of them since then.

The trains in Mexico haven’t changed since Porfirio Díaz (at the beginning of the 20th century), although politicians talk about creating a very necessary new train system for the whole country. But years ago, many of us travelled by Mexican trains and the experience was very similar to that in Italy.

Mexicans would usually start our trip without knowing anyone in our car, but in a couple of hours everybody was talking to everybody as if we were old friends. You didn’t really become friends with them, but you had a good time while going from one place to another. Something like that can happen to you anywhere and you’ll have to realize two things: in Mexico staring is not necessarily considered bad manners; Mexicans usually stare a lot more than people from Anglo Saxon or European countries. They will also ask you personal questions not to pry, but to show interest in you.

We Mexicans tend to smile and laugh a lot. Our culture is noisier than others and this sometimes bothers people from other countries. The problem is that we think that if we are happy, everybody will be happy too, which is not necessarily true.

When you go to a fast food restaurant or cafeteria in the USA or in other countries where they have similar facilities, you will see small tables and chairs fixed to the floor. Very often you can see two or three persons eating by themselves, each one in his/her own table. They never look at each other, much less talk among themselves.

When you go into a Mexican restaurant you will never see fixed tables or chairs. Our tables are always ready to be reorganized because families are always ready to be reorganized because families

CONTINUED ON PAGE 27
Fish Report

BY GARY GRAHAM

Good luck, Gary Graham, gary@garygraham.com

Cabo San Lucas

The billfish “catching” remains challenging for the Cabo San Lucas anglers as water temperatures fluctuate on both sides of the peninsula, especially on the Pacific side. An impressive list of other species lurking inshore included trigger fish, groupers, sierra, pompano, ladyfish and roosterfish, mainly over on the Pacific side.

March is typically the windy month of the year. Sea Conditions: Two-day port closure due to windy conditions. The water temps on the Pacific side are falling. Finger Bank to Cristobal is 69 to 72. Just inside the Jaime Bank and up to the Gorda Banks, stretching from the shoreline to about 10 to 11 miles off, all at 72 to 73. Gorda Banks to Los Frailes at 74. San Jose

Ocean conditions are a bit more stirred up with areas of greener cooling currents; water temperatures varied from 71 degrees on the Pacific side to 76 degrees in the direction of the Sea of Cortez. Schools of baitfish continue to be found off of San Jose — more sardinas than anything else, but also some mackerel. This is the same area where there has been good action for striped marlin up to 140 pounds, mainly drift fishing baits down deep. Not wide open action, though most charter fleets, the more productive action had opportunities at marlin. Live caballito were available inside the marina on a limited basis.

For the La Playita panga fleets, the more productive action was coming off the bottom structure; high spots from Red Hill/Palmilla, north to San Luis Bank, produced a mix of species, while drift fishing with various baits

Why do they call it an asteroid when it’s outside the hemisphere, but call it a hemorrhoid when it’s in your butt?

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For the La Playita panga fleets, the more productive action was coming off the bottom structure; high spots from Red Hill/Palmilla, north to San Luis Bank, produced a mix of species, while drift fishing with various baits

though these fish were hanging around the San Luis Bank and a few fish were landed, ranging up to 70 pounds, striking on strips of squid — early in the day seemed to be the best chance at enticing a strike; though sporadic, there was also the ever-present problem of sea lions waiting for their chances at stealing hooked fish.

Along the shoreline, anglers have encountered increased numbers of sierra, striking on lures and strip baits. Some smaller-sized roosterfish rounded out the inshore activity. The coming weeks should see improvement closer to shore, though this season the lack of the sardina has made things more unpredictable.

Fish Killers of the Week

WOW! Winter weather — even typing the words seems weird. However, port closing for two days due to 30 knot wind and rain ... OMG, the sky is falling! It must be El Niño is finally here, rain . . . OMG, the sky is falling! Two days due to 30 knot wind and rain . . . OMG, the sky is falling! It must be El Niño is finally here, rain . . . OMG, the sky is falling!

East Cape

Fishing has been pretty slow. However, experience tells us that it can turn around in the howling scream of a reel. Conditions are excellent, with flat seas, mild days and water temps still in the mid-70s. The bait boat has been providing good green mackerel and caballito. We expect it to go off any day!

Anglers who targeted billfish were seeing both sails and stripers, but could not get many of them interested. Fish would appear among the lures and then quickly lose interest. Frustrating. Yes, fish are around, but don’t seem hungry. Others who decided to work inshore and along the bottom were rewarded with roosters in the 20- to 30-pound range, as well as jacks.

Pargo, triggerfish and other species are around, but this is a sunup sierra — more sardinas than anything else, but also some mackerel. This is the same area where there has been good action for striped marlin up to 140 pounds, mainly drift fishing baits down deep. Not wide open action, though most charter fleets, the more productive action had opportunities at marlin. Live caballito were available inside the marina on a limited basis.

For the La Playita panga fleets, the more productive action was coming off the bottom structure; high spots from Red Hill/Palmilla, north to San Luis Bank, produced a mix of species, while drift fishing with various baits

though these fish were hanging around the San Luis Bank and a few fish were landed, ranging up to 70 pounds, striking on strips of squid — early in the day seemed to be the best chance at enticing a strike; though sporadic, there was also the ever-present problem of sea lions waiting for their chances at stealing hooked fish.

Along the shoreline, anglers have encountered increased numbers of sierra, striking on lures and strip baits. Some smaller-sized roosterfish rounded out the inshore activity. The coming weeks should see improvement closer to shore, though this season the lack of the sardina has made things more unpredictable.

Fish Killers of the Week

WOW! Winter weather — even typing the words seems weird. However, port closing for two days due to 30 knot wind and rain ... OMG, the sky is falling! It must be El Niño is finally here, rain . . . OMG, the sky is falling! Two days due to 30 knot wind and rain . . . OMG, the sky is falling! It must be El Niño is finally here, rain . . . OMG, the sky is falling!

East Cape

Fishing has been pretty slow. However, experience tells us that it can turn around in the howling scream of a reel. Conditions are excellent, with flat seas, mild days and water temps still in the mid-70s. The bait boat has been providing good green mackerel and caballito. We expect it to go off any day!

Anglers who targeted billfish were seeing both sails and stripers, but could not get many of them interested. Fish would appear among the lures and then quickly lose interest. Frustrating. Yes, fish are around, but don’t seem hungry. Others who decided to work inshore and along the bottom were rewarded with roosters in the 20- to 30-pound range, as well as jacks.

Pargo, triggerfish and other species are around, but this is a sunup sierra — more sardinas than anything else, but also some mackerel. This is the same area where there has been good action for striped marlin up to 140 pounds, mainly drift fishing baits down deep. Not wide open action, though most charter fleets, the more productive action had opportunities at marlin. Live caballito were available inside the marina on a limited basis.

For the La Playita panga fleets, the more productive action was coming off the bottom structure; high spots from Red Hill/Palmilla, north to San Luis Bank, produced a mix of species, while drift fishing with various baits

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Dear Gringo Gazette:
Get A Clue!

Editor,
Why do you do this to us? You tell us Aguas! Aguas! means look out! Look out! in your article about the La Paz triathlon, but then you say you don’t know why or where that expression originated. You’re a newspaper, and it’s your job to find out why. Don’t leave us hanging, I think you owe it to us to explain.

Jim Kane
Detroit, MI

Oh gosh, now we’re taking assignments from the peanut gallery in Detroit. You can’t even run your city and now you’re telling us how to run a newspaper? All right, we got off our ass and looked it up for you, and here it is.

In colonial times the sewer system was not common in all households, so most people would get rid of their used water by throwing it from their balcony onto the street. This water was pretty unpleasant, as it was used to wash dishes, clothes and other objects, such as those used for physiological needs if you catch our drift.

The polite thing to do was before giving the old heave ho, the person heaving and hoing shouted water! to alert passers by to quickly deploy their umbrella or quickly run out onto the street into traffic.

Over time, this expression was popularized to prevent almost any situation. Now, are you satisfied?

Editor,
I am not sure who wrote (about the Chinamen arriving here) but it is pretty offensive and would not be appreciated by your new tourists here in the Baja. Offensive and insulting. Who are you referring to that (you) call them “chinamen”. When was the last time you heard this term used? If it was meant to be humorous - it was not clever so therefore it failed badly. Can you imagine writing about the Arabs or Israelis or Japanese in the same derogatory way?

You then express...that you would prefer the British instead of the Chinese? The whole thing has a tone of racism that I hope was not intended. I wonder if there needs to be an apology or a retraction.

Yours sincerely
Beverley Kort
Zacatitos

Dear Ms. Kort,
Thank you for a nicely written letter, and taking the time to write it. I do appreciate it. I take responsibility for writing the piece that offended you. I was sort of trying to be funny, not entirely. I did know of course, that it would offend some people.

Actually, we do write about the Arabs and Japanese in an offensive way, and of course we do get some angry reaction. Israelis, no, because they are perceived to be the underdog and even I know where I dare not go. (Most of the time).

But for each letter such as yours, we pick up dozens more fans who are really tired of political correctness. That is my campaign: Political correctness.
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HOW ARE WE DOING ON...
continued from page 15
also be expanded in the future and will provide an additional 9 MW’s of clean energy. Santa Rosalia is also the home of the only geothermal power plant in the state, which contributes 10 megawatts of renewable energy to the region.

“La Paz to become the first 100% solar powered city in Latin America.” Announced the general director of CFE, (The federal electric utility), Enrique Ochoa. “With La Paz’s two solar energy plants, 100% of the energy needs of La Paz’s 250,000 residents will be met.” This positive news has caught the attention of many industry leaders around the world, and several articles have been written about La Paz going solar, with typical headings announc-

BELGIUM FRENCH FRIES, a Big Cabo Favorite

Have you tried the fries at Fritz Belgium Fries? The buzz around town is that they are delicious, they are awesome! Fritz is seeing several return and word of mouth customers as good news travels quickly, especially in a community like Los Cabos.

Fritz Belgian Fries are prepared with fresh cut potatoes and deep fried in zero trans-fat oil within a six-stage process making them simply wonderful: Golden crunchy on the outside and soft & chewy on the inside.

Fries are served with a choice from ten dipping sauces which include Bacon Garlic, Lemon Parmesan and Chipotle Spicy Hot to name a few. And of course, you will find ketchup and vinegar if you prefer the more traditional dip.

Stop by to try them sometime, they are located at the corner/entrance of Giggling Marlin, downtown Cabo San Lucas and are open 7 days a week. You will be delighted you did stop by, as their slogan goes “Try our Fries, You’re Gonna Love Them!”

P.S. They also serve a Pizza Burrito with 3 types of meat and cheese, absolutely yummy!

Continued from page 15

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Continued on page 43
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Injuries

November 5th, 2012

In Mexico: 52 638-102-3284

PHOTOGRAPHY

612-137-5767 or 612-149-1832

 Kitty’s: At Club Med

Sailboat

1154-3264

SO WHAT’S THE DEAL ON... continued from page 16

take it or if you do, get rid of it fast or break it into smaller
bills. Blueish purple, paper, with Don Miguel Hidalgo y Costilla
on the front, he was a Mexican Catholic priest and leader of
the Mexican War of Independence. There’s an overview of the city of
Guaymas the back. Now, we leave you, the frequent holder of the shitty end
of the money stick with this piece of news:

If the money you’re holding is determined by the Banco de México’s (Mexico’s treasury
department), to be counterfeit you’re screwed. It’s like musical cards and the last one standing
loses. They will take it from you and give you nothing in return.

QUE PASA IN CABO?... continued from page 19

the hotel, not Ms. Witherspoon), next fall with a 40 years old theme. For more information look
up: www.hotelloobuenavista.com

Fishing vessel abandoned.

The sardine fishing boat named El Cachanilla, flying an Ensenada
flag, beached at in Vizcaino bay, a

preserved natural area and

home to migrating whales and

their babies.

Although the crew was rescued unharmed, the boat re-
mains there, as a threat to the environment with its nearly
1,000 gallons of fuel still on-
board. Mexican Navy sailors and

boaty type expert people from

neighboring Guerrero Negro are

monitoring the vessel, which so

far has not leaked any fuel. As

soon as help arrives, they will tow
the boat away and prevent a fuel
discharge in such a delicate area.

Far be it from us to tell any-

one how to do their job, but if

those federal officers would just
go get a beer somewhere and

stop watching the distressed

boat, we have no doubt the

neighbors would descend on

the problem witherry cans and

suck all the fuel out in about

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Drawing SS And Working Here?

Good luck with that

BY ORLANDO GOTAY

Today I am going to write about a subject, unfortunately as complex as my main discipline, which is tax law: U.S. Social Security benefits.

Social Security rules are quite complex by themselves, in the “regular” cases, and become even more so when the international “abroad” component is added.

I want to focus on those who are residing in Mexico drawing Social Security retirement benefits, not those on disability or receiving survivor benefits.

You may know there is a full retirement age at which Social Security retirement benefits are added.

You may know there is a full retirement age but a worker can choose to retire early at 62. This discussion is aimed chiefly at those early retirees.

The foreign work test: The SSA will withhold benefits for each month a beneficiary younger than full retirement age works more than 45 hours outside the United States in employment or self-employment that is not subject to U.S. Social Security taxes. It does not matter how much you earned or how many hours you worked each day.

A person is considered to be working any day he or she:
- Works as an employee or self-employed person;
  • Has an agreement to work even if the person does not actually work because of sickness, vacation, etc.; or
  • Is the owner or part owner of a trade or business, even if the person does not actually work in the trade or business, or the person does not make any income from it.

Ouch—That’s pretty severe. This means that if you are self-employed, you will meet those 45 hours pretty early in the month (the 6th day), losing the corresponding benefit payment.

From time to time, the SSA sends out a questionnaire to determine continued eligibility for benefits. You can’t dodge this questionnaire, because if you do not fill it out and send it in, your payments will stop. The questionnaire is not exactly user friendly, and if you need to report work, you may need to attach parts of your income tax returns. But that is what is needed to ensure you get the allowable benefits. The questionnaire must be signed under affirmation of truth, so think twice about consequences of straying far from the truth.

If you (or your employer) paid U.S. income taxes and Social Security taxes on your work, you do not need to worry about the foreign work test and you will not be subject to reductions on account of it. Also, the foreign work test does not apply once you reach full retirement age.

But don’t forget that all early retirees (no matter where they live) are subject to the annual income test in which retirement benefits are reduced (and paid later) if wage income exceeds certain amounts.

Plan early, plan ahead, and enjoy Mexico!

Orlando Goytay is a California licensed tax attorney (with a Master of Laws in Taxation) admitted to practice before the IRS, the U.S. Tax Court and other taxing agencies. His love of things Mexican has led him to devote part of his practice to the tax matters of U.S. expats in Mexico. He can be reached at tax@orlandogoytay.com.

BILINGUAL DOESN’T MEAN...

continued from page 21

...tend to be large and we all want to sit together.

When we go into a taquería or cafeteria and we see someone sitting by him/her self we usually say hello and, often, we will say something else not necessarily to start a conversation, but just to let the other person know that we saw him/her.

But let’s not fool ourselves, here we are not talking about tables and chairs, we are talking about life concepts.

Fast food restaurants are related to a culture that eats to live: food is already prepared, the menu is limited and you can order your food without going into the restaurant. You pay before receiving your food. Salt, pepper, sugar, catchup or mustard come in individual packages and customers throw their own disposable plates, cups and napkins in a large garbage can.

In Mexico we live to eat. We enjoy Mexico!
Every Monday, 8.30 am Pickleball in San Jose. Contact rondumbartton@gmail.com

Every Tuesday at 8 a.m. Rotary Club at the Sheraton Hacienda del Mar resort. In the Chapel. RSVP: 172-0009 y 172-0010

Every Wednesday: 7:30 to 8:30 pm. Bike ride in San Jose. Free. If you bring your own bike, or rent from Sportia bike store. Form up at Plaza del Pescador in San Jose, across from the Royal Solaris hotel at 7:15 pm. (624) 130-7159. info@yoreciclo.org.mx

First Thursday. Yo Reciclo sets up tents to receive clear glass bottles, metal, plastics (except Styrofoam), thick cardboard, computer equipment (except monitors), small home appliances (except TV’s of all kinds), cellphones and accessories, edible vegetable oil, ink cartridges and accessories, edible TV’s of all kinds), cellphones and accessories, edible vegetable oil, ink cartridges and accessories, edible

Every Thursday from 6pm to 9pm. Art Walk. Historic downtown, San Jose. Visit galleries, many serve wine, they close down the street.

Every other Thursday. You guess which one. Los Cabos Tomatoes, ladies social group. All women who aspire to be a tomato are welcome. loscabostomatones@gmail.com

Every Friday Palmilla Farmers Market Every Friday 9 am to 1 pm in the parking lot of the Palmilla strip center

Every Friday Todos Santos Farmers Market. Music and fun stuff. James Black, merlo4u@earthlink.net, www.facebook.com/Todos-Santos-Farmers-Market-937899742952014/?ref=hl, (612) 134-8728, Todos Santos. It moves around, so check where it is this week.

Every Friday night from 5:00 - 9:00 pm at the Amelia Wilkes Plaza in downtown Cabo. The Artisan Market. Nothing made in China here.

Every Friday 11:00 a.m. Al-Anon Family Group. Next to Calvary Chapel Corner of Degollado and Margarita Maza de Juarez in San Jose. Info. Cell 624-165-3333

Every Saturday. 9:30 am to 11:30 am. Children’s library open. Story tellers at 10:30 and 12:30. Looking for gently used books.

Every Saturday. 9:00 am to 2:00 pm. At the Cultural House in San Jose. “Getting to know the autistic disorder spectrum: a different and peculiar development.”

April 2, Saturday. World Autism Awareness Day. 8:00 to 10:00 am. El Tule beach. Red Autismo will hold a beach meeting at El Tule, halfway between Cabo and San Jose. Maria Moreno 624-120-6328, email info@redautismo.org or look up www.redautismo.org

April 3, Sunday. The Los Cabos Humane Society presents the 11th annual Paws ‘n Claws Open Golf Tournament and Dinner at Palmilla followed by dinner at Don Sanchez Restaurant in San Jose. Tickets: Margarita Partridge 624-129-7399 or email: tropimargarita@prodigy.net.mx info contact Linda Aven: 173-6349 www.loscaboshumanesociety.com

March 17-20. San Jose annual fiestas. Some of the streets in the historic downtown of San Jose will be closed to vehicle traffic. Great opportunity to exercise and mingle with local families. Each week a different activity, like spinning, aerobics, zumba lessons, clubcactusbike@gmail.com

April 2, Saturday. World Tuna Shoot Out fishing tournament. At Palmas de Cortez resort, Los Barriles, East Cape. Approximately $35,000 prize based on 100 teams. Raffle prizes of tackle, lures and return trips to Van Wormer Resorts. $500 entry fee. Information: www.eastcapeshootout.com

March 21th, 2016


To get your event listed here, email the details to david@gringogazette.com. There is no charge.
The Exchange Rate
A Special Consideration for Sellers

BY CAROL BILLUPS

One of the things we think about when placing a property on the market is what the seller is going to end up putting in their pockets when the deal is concluded. This is not my favorite part of my job because quite often I’m the first person to tell them they are going to owe a ton in capital gains tax. But, it’s necessary and better than having a nasty surprise at the closing table.

In reality there are at least four factors that could cause a big capital gains tax bill:

1. The seller actually did make a ton of bucks, in which case I really don’t want to hear any griping,
2. The registered price they bought it for, or what was spent to build it, is lower than reality (there are a number of possible reasons, only one of which involves dirty tricks),
3. The sale involves a corporation or business, and
4. The peso has shifted versus the dollar significantly since they bought.

It’s that last one that we tend to forget about; especially here in Cabo where we deal in dollars so often in our daily lives. Our real estate community speaks dollars almost 100%. Our prices are quoted in dollars, we negotiate prices in dollars, and we write contracts in dollars. Every piece of paper the buyer and seller see reference the price in dollars. Yet the truth is the actual transaction occurs in pesos.

On the day of the closing the Notario Publico will make the conversion from dollars to pesos and that is the amount that is registered as the sale price. Which is fine… as long as the peso is stable.

This morning I was working on the paperwork for a property we’re going to put up for sale. One of the reasons we ask for the trust is to check the values and make a rough (very) calculation of what their net proceeds will be in event of the sale. Taking the date of the trust, and the value recorded in pesos I can go onto the SAT website (SAT is the Mexican equivalent of the IRS) and consult their tables to see what the official exchange rate was on that day. The exercise caused me to draft the following email which I think is a good enough explanation to warrant blogging it.

“My major concern right now is capital gains tax. I’ve just taken a spin through the documents pertaining to the house. One of the big problems I see here is out of our control… the exchange rate. We know that this is probably going to take a while to sell the house, average time on market right now is over one year, and we don’t know what the exchange rate will be in the future. But, if we were to sell today we have an artificial gain in addition to the real gain. The day your purchase was recorded the exchange rate was 9.71 according to the tax agency. Today’s is about 17.5. Since the sale is registered in pesos, and the gain in pesos is what is taxed, you can see that it’s going to have a big impact. Looking at a hypothetical $100 house, if you paid 100 US in 2001 and sold for 100 US today you would think there is no gain and therefore no tax due. But to the tax agency it would look as if you bought for 100 and sold for 175. The tax on that ‘gain’ would be $75. So there is a built in artificial gain of about 40 percent just on the exchange rate. If the rate is higher on the day we sell the effect will be greater, if we inch back down close to 10/1 it will go away.”

Sellers need to be aware of this phenomenon and take it into consideration. There are several legal strategies to reduce the amount of capital gains tax due to some other capital gains tax law.
The Mexican Peso and Your Real Estate Purchase

BY CHERYL T. MILLER

Since June 2014, the Mexican peso has suffered a whopping 40% decrease in value against the American Dollar. Compare the peso at 12.84 : 1 in June 2014, to a sad average last month (February 2016) of 18 : 1. At one point in February, the pesos hit an all time low of 19.13 : 1. Some experts think by June 2016, the pesos will be at 20,1, while others think the worst is over and the peso will slowly increase in value. Who is right? We will have to wait and see.

But Mexico is not alone. In fact, most of the world’s economies have suffered against the dollar, including Russia who suffered 120% less buying power in the same period, Brazil at 81%, Canada at 40%, the Euro and all of its nations at 27%, Iran at 22%, South Korea 20%, the British Pound at 19%, India at 15% and China at 10% less buying power as of January 2016. Another disaster was in Argentina who had a 22% change as of December 2015, and then overnight lost an additional 74% of its buying power against the dollar. A true economic disaster.

The reality is that most of the world’s economies have suffered some loss in buying power against the US Dollar. Why? Well one reason seems to be based in oil related commodities and the plummeting price of a barrel of oil. As of January 14, 2016 prices of crude fell from $100 a barrel in late 2013 to $30 a barrel. Some experts, as of the end of 2015, believed the price of oil will rise again to $50/barrel by mid-2016 and slow down the downward trend of the world’s economies, but that is yet to be seen. In fact, once a downward trend is sustained for a period of time with all of the resulting responses, such as inflating prices, it is very difficult to reverse. A discussion on “oil based economies” is worthy of additional and thorough re-consideration, for obvious reasons, as shown in the above statistics, it is not for this article. However, it is cited as one of the reasons for a plummeting peso scenario.

Mexico, for the first time in decades, now has higher fuel prices at their nationalized gas stations than the United States. Despite a slight adjustment downward in recent months, spurred on by the Mexican Government’s recent bolstering of the pesos by selling off some of their dollar reserves, gas prices still remain high compared to the United States. However, for Mexico, a major producer of oil with a relatively low national debt, the practice of propping up the pesos must be limited, as Mexicans US dollar reserves are also limited. In billion is in reality, a drop in the bucket. And and cannot continue indeﬁnitely as Mexicans US dollar reserves are limited. Gas prices affect every other...
The Advantages of Building Your Home in Baja Sur

If you already fell in love with Baja California Sur but have not decided on the property that best fits your lifestyle, have you considered building to your needs? The keen advantage of building is that you get exactly what you want in every aspect.

Here are the top 5 reasons to build your Baja dream home:

1. No cookie-cutter: You can go as minimalistic or as innovative as you wish.
2. Cost efficient: You will definitely be in the know and will ultimately better control the qualities and choice of the building materials.
3. One Step ahead: Should you choose to rent/sell your property once it is completed, a financial model can be worked out with all the different scenarios and what the return on your investment will look like.
4. That NEW Smell! A new house comes with warranties as well as the utmost satisfaction of having everything brand new.
5. Proximity: And since Baja California Sur is located within a few hours flight from the United States, Canada and mainland Mexico, you can visit the progress as often as you like while using the perfect excuse to spend a couple of days by the beach!

The process is simple: you start by choosing the location and narrow it down to the community that best accommodates your lifestyle. Several communities, such as Pedregal in Cabo San Lucas and La Paz, Las Lomas Residencial in La Ribera, Puerto Los Cabos in San Jose and many more throughout Baja, have guidelines and regulations to protect and to encourage outstanding building to your needs? TheArchitect and Builder, here are the top three things to consider:

Reputation & Esthetics. We advise you to take the time to visit the properties that most appeal to you and talk to their architects to see what their designing approach is and what their advice and proposal are. Remember, a good architect will listen to your needs and specifications but will make recommendations based on their experience, the terrain you are about to build on and other relevant factors.

Budgeting & time frame. It is important that you set a budget and a timeframe to work with, always allowing a 20% more in case of incidentals.

Legal advisory. A legal document will protect you and the architect and will avoid any misunderstandings in the future.

Your favorite real estate advisor in Baja California Sur can help select the best lot for your project: oceanfront, ocean view, within a private community, off the grid... and when it comes to building, as real estate professional, I'd like to present you Riveras Building by MCA – an award winning design services company offering precise cost estimation and project management for new construction or remodeling ventures in Baja California Sur. Riveras Building prides in offering plenty of market knowledge and as their client, you will receive excellent communication and follow up, so you only have to worry about when the house warming party of your new home will be!

For more information about building in Baja, construction regulations and architect recommendations, send us an email to felix@riverasbuilding.com and allow us show you why we are the local experts when it comes to real estate.

THE EXCHANGE RATE...

continued from page 29

factors, unfortunately there's no cure I know for this effect.

Carol Billups is Broker/Owner of Cabo Realty Pros. She has enjoyed working with both buyers and sellers for over eleven years and still thinks hers is the best job on earth. She is also the real estate columnist for Los Cabos Magazine. You can read more of her articles on the website blog www.caborealtypros.com. You can reach her from the U.S. or Canada at 1-760-481-7694, or in Cabo at 044-624-147-7541. You can listen to our 24/7 broadcast on http://www.livocabo.net for a mix of happy music, local experts when it comes to real estate.

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March 21th, 2016

**Strong Dollar - Great Time To Build In Baja**

The Strength of the DOLLAR makes this the BEST time to Build that Dream Home in Mexico!

**BY CHERYL MILLER**

For over the years between 2003 and most of 2008, the US Dollar and the Mexican Peso enjoyed a stable exchange rate between 10.0 and 11.0 pesos per dollar. Sometime in December 2001, the exchange rate, based on several economic factors, dramatically changed with the dollar slipping to 9.0 pesos per dollar, only to rise to a record 19.13 pesos per dollar in a very short period in 2016. The exchange rate is still high compared to the dollar, around 17.5:1. This means that your dollar will currently buy approximately 35-40% more than 2014.

Although, construction starts in 2016 are now on the rise, one effect of the economic recession in the US which began to affect our market since the first quarter of 2008, the Swine Flu, and the bankruptcy of Lehman Brothers, our market has been in a downward slide. However, with many lots now being price adjusted downward, it is a homebuilder’s market NOW!

As of 2016, the new starts of condominium projects and hotels potentially marks the beginning of the close of this window, so don’t wait too long. Land prices are at an all-time low, as well.

Want to build your dream home in paradise? Now is the time!


---

**Baja Properties SHOWCASE**

We would highly recommend Gerardo Pineda at Baja Properties as your Realtor.

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**SOLD**

1) Las Flores 16, Casa Mexicana, Beautiful home 2bdm/2.5 ba. fully furnished, $247,000. N. Fong and E. Romeike / Los Cabos Agent.

2) Commercial lot 15-2695 sold $283,520 USD. 40 meters highway frontage. D. Robles/USD M. Gutierrez and C. Miller /Baja Realty and Investment

3) Lot 2150 Los Cerritos, 2000 m2 4th row lot with great views. MLS 15/1463, $66,000 USD M. Geisler Anderson /Dream Homes of Cabo and M. Olachea Pedrin / ODR Real

4) Club Campestre, lot 59 La Cañadas MLS 14-812. $110,000, M. Geisler Anderson /Dream Home in Cabo

5) Puerto Los Cabos, lot 109 La Noria MLS 15-1321. $70,000, M. Geisler Anderson /Dream Home in Cabo

6) Los Barriles, lot 110 La Noria. MLS 15-1320. $50,000, M. Geisler Anderson /Dream Home in Cabo

7) Dale and Betty’s Place – 2 bedroom, 2.5 bathroom unfurnished house in Cabo Bello. MLS # 15-2378 $185,000 USD. M. Nicol /Cabos4Sale

8) Cabo Bello Lot 2208m2 – $400,000 USD. 15-2322 M. Nicol /Cabos4Sale

9) Ventana de Cabo Phase 3B Condo #224, 2 bdrm, 2 ba. condo sold for $219,000. MLS #15-2143 $ 750,000USD 2 BD 2 BA

10) Villa Rosa 106, Palmilla Foreclosure Property. MLS 15-2204, 3bdm/2.5 ba, outdoor entertaining area overlooking the pool, backyard for pets, fully furnished. Price $450,000 USD. Nick Fong ph. 624 157-3170


12) Walmart-MLS# 15-228, 3bdrm /2.5 ba, Land’s end views and rooftop access. Price $1,599,000 USD. Nick Fong ph. 624 157-3170
Buying Real Estate
In Mexico

BY LINDA JONES NEIL

Mexico is a wonderful and very beautiful country. If you enjoy your visit you may begin to think about acquiring a bit of our paradise. We have mountains, lakes, rivers, forests, deserts and seashore in Mexico. We also have history, ancient cultures, handcrafts, folklore and many other wonderful things to share.

Buying property in ANY country can be stressful. A property purchase in Mexico can be just as safe and secure as in the U.S. or Canada... IF it is done correctly!

Here are some guidelines for success in a real estate acquisition in Mexico:

1. Be sure the agent you select to represent you is a member of AMPI, the Mexican National Real Estate Association. Ask for references, check them out. Be satisfied the person representing you is experienced in Mexican transactions.

2. Insist that the person representing you, represent ONLY you, the buyer, and not also the seller unless you understand, agree to and sign an agency disclosure agreement.

3. Consider only the purchase of PRIVATE property. Ejidal property is often offered at a far lower price but it cannot legally be sold or promised to be sold until it becomes private property.

4. Be certain that you and your agent are dealing ONLY with the owner of record or his or her legitimate power of attorney. Insist upon receiving a copy of the seller’s deed as a condition of your offer. If you and/or your agent don’t understand Spanish, get it translated.

5. Avoid costly and time consuming litigation, insist upon including a binding arbitration clause in your contracts with the seller and other parties involved.

6. Get a title investigation and buy title insurance for the full amount of your purchase price. While the initial search may seem expensive for some areas, the title policy transfers risk to the insurance company, and minimizes yours as the buyer.

7. Think carefully about how you acquire title in order to avoid or minimize probate and transfer costs in the future.

8. Closing costs may run from 13% to 20% of the cost of a $50,000. dll. property! The multimillion dollar property will be about 3.5% of purchase price. Certain costs are fixed regardless of value. Be sure to budget for closing costs and get a full estimate in writing from the company supervising your transfer.

9. The major portion of your payment for the property should be withheld or held in escrow until the deed has been signed by the seller and, if applicable, the bank trustee (if a fideicomiso).

10. INSIST upon receiving a registered title document for your property. If the seller is financing the property, sign a document protecting his interests in the event of your default. Be SURE you know the amount which is declared in your deed and understand the tax implications of same.

11. Use an experienced neutral third party to supervise the transfer of title to you.

LINDA JONES NEIL is the founder of The Settlement Company®, which specializes in real estate transfers and escrows, as CONTINUED ON PAGE 37
Do’s And Don’ts Of Remodels

By Wendy Knapp, Broker

With the advent of the New Year, it is a great time to bring in the new and get rid of the old... especially clutter, that is the least expensive way to remodel! Perhaps a coat of fresh paint, liven up some tired looking linens or just add a few colorful pillows.

Costs versus value should always enable a remodel project for the homeowner to recoup 100% of their initial investments. Kitchen and bathroom remodels have always been a long safe way to improve the functionality and value of a home, but not every project is a guaranteed winner. Make sure that your changes don’t inadvertently make the rest of the home stick out like a sore thumb rather than improving the space.

Here’s a few guideline tips:

**Do consider the way your remodel will affect the rest of the home.** Keep the architectural integrity in mind.

**Do NOT overlook the importance of using a seasoned designer or architect, they will know the tricks to maximize achieving the goal.**

**DO look beyond the surface details, keep in mind functionality along with beauty.**

**DO NOT design just for today, but look to the future, keep styles and materials that will last the test of time.**

**DO work with what you have, it is not always necessary for complete demolition and renovation. Only invest in major changes that are not working or are unsafe. Upgrades may do the trick.**

**DO NOT over-improve the space.** You may not be able to recoup your investment from over-excessive improvements and you may “over build” for the neighborhood.

**DO make sure you can afford the project, skimping on materials or design may leave you dissatisfied and may lead to a negative result.**

**By Wendy Knapp, Broker of Rionda & Knapp, (624) 118-1395, wendy@rionda-knapp.com

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$2,900,000 Gaviota 2 4,342.41 sqft 4 bedrooms MLS # 15-2582

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**The Mexican Peso... continued from page 30**

and bars, if you have not already: Some merchants in the resort areas, are pricing in dollars because of the DAILY change in the exchange rate. Why? Here in the Baja, in particular, almost everything you buy, eat, drink is imported to the peninsula from the mainland or a foreign country, as well as for the ease of tourists.

**Now what about Real Estate?**

After the worldwide economic crisis at the end of 2007, prices took some time to adjust after the “bubble burst”. But here in Los Cabos, since that fateful time, the overall average downward adjustment in real estate prices was between 35 to 60% of 2007 prices, depending on the type of property and market level. There are exceptions, both lower and higher, but overall, prices did adjust drastically, as they did in many parts of the United States during that period. Prices seem to be fairly stable now and we can report that 2016 seems to becoming a record sales year.

Here in resort areas in Mexico, real estate prices in the MLS are quoted in dollars for the benefit of foreign buyers. So, it is unlikely to see further adjustments stemming downward due to the peso devaluation. But, be advised that all real estate transactions are registered in pesos at the official exchange rate of

**CONTINUED ON PAGE 37**
when you resell, you will have an automatic cushion against Capital Gains, if the pesos stabilizes lower than the present amount.

For a seller though the situation is in reverse. If you bought 100K USD at 12.84:1 or a registered value of $1,284,000 pesos, and sell now for the same USD amount, your sale is registered at $1,800,000 pesos or a “paper gain” of $516,000 pesos, which is subject to the capital tax. See Carol Billups article on this subject in this same issue.

For a buyer as well, you must understand that the Mexican buyers are now in a holding pattern. (Never underestimate your property's appeal to the national buyer. Los Cabos has local buyers and buyers from all parts of Mexico, and the world.) Since most prices are quoted in dollars, that price represents to the Mexican National an increase in price of 40% plus the cost at the bank to buy dollars. In addition, the cost to register and to pay the 2% acquisition tax which goes up according to the price converted to the official peso rate of the day. Since Canada has had a pretty similar devaluation of their

Agent Profile

**Kim Anthes**

Kim was born and raised in Ontario, Canada and began her real estate career 15 years ago, giving her the experience & skills to be a strong negotiator in the purchase or sale of your home. Kim has always had the desire to live in a warm climate. Wanting to make a lifestyle change, Kim explored different options in the sunny south and decided to make Cabo her new home.

It didn't take long for her to discover why this warm and welcoming community was such a popular vacation and 2nd property destination. Kim has successfully completed the Canadian Staging Professional (CSP) and Resort and Second Property Specialist (RSPS) designations. She uses innovative, current technologies to help you in your home search and to market your property. Kim's success stems from her work ethic, integrity and attention to detail. Whether you’re looking for a place to retire, or a place to live a few months of the year, Kim can help find that perfect fit. Contact Kim through email at kimberly@century21baja.com,
March 23, Wednesday. 7:00 pm. Urban dance at Main Plaza. As part of Todos Santos Art Festival. Spanish and help in English. Free.

March 30, Wednesday. 8:00 pm. Thursday. Local talent singers. Spanish and some help in English. As part of Todos Santos Art Festival. Free.

San Pedro Beach. Between El Pescadero and Todos Santos. 1 hour driving from La Paz or Los Cabos.

March 24 to 28. From Thursday to Monday. Apparitions Festival 2016. A 24-hour electronic music festival. Drop in anytime. A mind-blowing 4 day experience of non-stop electronic music in a stunning natural location, guaranteed to blow out your ear drums. The festival tickets are $200 USD!! Well, that’s for the 4 days, includes parking, camping area, showers, drinking water, yoga lessons and workshops. Food and drinks for sale inside festival grounds. Napoleón Domínguez, napo@apparitionsfestival.com, www.apparitionsfestival.com.

Todos Santos Main Plaza

Todos Santos Main Plaza. March 8. Tuesday. 9:00 pm. Urban dance at Main Plaza. As part of Todos Santos Art Festival. Spanish and help in English. Free.

March 10. Thursday. 8:00 pm. Thursday. Local talent singers. Spanish and some help in English. As part of Todos Santos Art Festival. Free.

San Pedro Beach. Between El Pescadero and Todos Santos. 1 hour driving from La Paz or Los Cabos.

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end of Cerralvo on Rapalas. Fish ran up to about 25 pounds. A few smaller amberjack were also taken and one fish estimated at close to 80 pounds was picked up and lost at gaff. Supposedly, the northern end of Cerralvo is holding some really big amberjack according to the commercial guys.

Inshore, yup, inshore there are still wahoo up to about 40 pounds that are again falling to the dark Rapalas/ Yo-zuri-type lures. Gotta’ be honest... there’s a real lack of live or dead bait right now. Hope that changes. But we’re able to scrape up some sardina and some mackerel here and there or use frozen stuff.

Smaller lures and cut bait are working on cabrilla and sierra and some big pargo up to about 20 pounds are in the spawn mode in the usual rocky areas, but especially off Punta Perrico and Los Pilis near the east side of the island.

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Tracy Ehrenberg www.piscesfishing.com
Larry Edwards www.cortezcharters.com
San Jose del Cabo
Gordo Bank Pangas www.gordobanks.com

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR...
continued from page 23

and how it is out of control.
You may be interested in my next column we’re publishing, as it addresses the issue of racism, and how it is perceived in regards to the relationship between Mexicans and Americans/Canadians. I think you may like it and feel maybe a little better about the attitude of the GG, I hope so. I would be interested in your comments on it.

Again, thank you for writing, Kindly,
Carrie Duncan
Publisher, Gringo Gazette

Editor,
We have been spending more and more time in the Baja over the past 10 years and have enjoyed the many improvements that have been made.

However, one thing that has grown steadily worse is the traffic in San Jose. It has become increasingly dangerous to cross the street due to several factors - the general speed of vehicles and the failure by most drivers to observe pedestrians’ rights at crossings and driveways. Frequently, parked vehicles block the crossings and, even worse, too often drivers actually pass other vehicles that have slowed or stopped to allow pedestrians to cross at crosswalks.

This is really dangerous, particularly for tourists who expect drivers to observe crosswalk rules.

Before a visitor gets seriously injured or worse, the local police should enforce speed controls and crossing violations. As well, city council should consider lowering the speed limits in the hotel zones, clearly indicating these limits with signs and road markings, inserting topes and more raised crosswalks like the ones near the Mega on the Paseo and the Cabo Azul on Hotel Row.

Visitors are the basis of the Baja economy and their safety should be of more concern to the authorities and to all drivers in the hotel area.

Michael Egan
Via email
International Women’s Day
Los Cabos did their part in the big party

BY CATHY WATKINS
International Women’s Day, originally called International Working Women’s Day, is celebrat-
ed on March 8 every year. On this day, women all around the world celebrate being a woman and they honor women. It’s a time to reflect on the advances women have made and to continue to demand change for a better future. Several events took place right here in Los Cabos to celebrate this day.

Despite the strong winds on March 8, a group of determined women gathered on El Tule beach from 8:00 to 10:00 a.m. to celebrate their special day. Sinergia Consulting sponsored the event titled “Ser Mujer (Being a Woman) Transforming Ourselves and Our Planet”. The internet radio station www.RadioDifferente.com transmitted the event live for those who didn’t get up early and make the trek to Tule Beach on the corridor.

Adali Parks lead the group consisting of about 50 English and Spanish speakers. The women formed a circle of sisterhood in order to introduce themselves using three adjectives before sharing their reasons for being there. Some were there to meet others and celebrate friendships. All said they were there to offer support and strength to each other. Many work professionally with women and believe it is important for women to work together for change. It was stressed that women need to help each other hand in hand. Lupita Carbajal, a clinical psychologist, from Emovere Psychological Clinic was a guest speaker.

Elsewhere, women were recognized and celebrated at City Hall in San Jose, and there were activities there to empower women. Mayor Arturo De la Rosa stated that women are involved in his government in occupying important positions and making important decisions to better Los Cabos, although he did not offer details of this. He finished saying that forming opportunities for women and men to be equal is a long process and it begins with a personal consciousness.

In Cabo San Lucas, the Institute for Women’s branch of the government organized a conference at the downtown cultural center. The regular Sunday morning bicycle event organized a special women’s race starting at Plaza Bonita. There were 108 women participating in three areas: 9K, 5K and walking. Winners received a rose and a medal.

The celebrations ended on March 13 at the San Jose City Hall with a pedestrian race for the Rights of Women along with yoga, personal defense, and Zumba.

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play a significant role in improving air quality around La Paz, they will still have to co-exist with environmentally unfriendly fossil fuel plants that produce over 250 MW’s of dirty energy, which is more than four times the amount of energy that will be produced by the combined solar plants.

Ah, but the federal government says it has a solution—albeit a costly solution. A national infrastructure plan has been approved which will bring natural gas to Baja California Sur, and in 2015, CFE announced a call for bids to transport the gas, (piped undersea or by ship), to the Baja peninsula. In the meantime, two new, supposedly efficient electric plants will be built in 2016 and in 2018 north of La Paz. These new plants as well as the older generating plants will probably be retrofitted in the future to use natural gas, which would improve air quality considerably. The combined costs, however, of these enormous transport projects (tentatively scheduled to go into operation by December, 2018) and the new generating plants may exceed one billion dollars.

So it is likely—or at least possible—that within a few years or so both the new and old electric plants, powered by natural gas, will no longer produce the occasional brown haze to which La Paz residents have grown accustomed. Although natural gas is considered a potent greenhouse gas and produces carbon emissions, it is regarded as a cleaner and less toxic fuel source and its cost is lower than conventional fuels.

Our current governor, Carlos Mendoza, while serving as a senator in 2014, introduced a bill that passed in the Senate that would address air quality problems in La Paz and the harmful use of contaminating fuels used in the state’s generating plants. In the same year, México finally enacted major energy reforms, which created sweeping and historic changes in its energy policy and have opened up the electricity sector to private investors. According to President Peña Nieto, these reforms will lead, “to more energy generation, cleaner energy, and above all, cheaper energy to help make México a more competitive country”.

By working together, Southern Baja residents and others could create even greater opportunities for sustainable energy projects, including wind power. Having said that, how many solar fields or wind turbines would a billion dollars buy? Perhaps one day we could even dismantle our conventional electric plants altogether. And given that some of the highest solar radiation rates in the world occur on the Baja peninsula, abundant, pure, and safe solar energy may be the brightest option in any long-term plan.

Feedback or kind comments to: lbellapaz@gmail.com.
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