

# Paradise Post

News From Ojochal, Costa Rica  
and Beyond

---

APRIL 2008



*Does Pam catch a sail-fish? Find out on Page 8*

## Inside this issue

|                        |   |
|------------------------|---|
| Updates from the Osa   | 1 |
| Restaurant Review      | 2 |
| Pejibaye               | 2 |
| Road Improvements      | 3 |
| Telecom in Costa Rica  | 3 |
| Green Leaf Arts        | 4 |
| Costa Ballena Beaches  | 4 |
| Isla del Coco          | 5 |
| Lost Treasure of Lima  | 5 |
| Hammerhead Sharks      | 6 |
| New Neighbors          | 7 |
| Tour Pictures          | 8 |
| News from Pacific Lots | 9 |
| Letter from the Mayor  | 9 |
| Thank You Note         | 9 |

## Updates from the Osa

There have been several changes in our area in the past three months. We've seen the addition of another grocery store in Uvita along with the opening of two bank branches (Banco National and Banco de Costa Rica). The Hospital de Osa has recently opened along the Costanera and seems to have increased their ambulance fleet. We anxiously saw one racing toward Ojochal last week only to find out they were heading to Joel Yoder's roadside baked goods stand.

The delightful Shelagh Duncan and her husband Bruce have opened their shop, Royal Palm Interiors, at the entrance to Ojochal. The plaza is also home to Maryanne's successful clothing boutique, "Samoa", Dr. Ellen's chiropractic office and Rhonda's holistic healthcare business. We've heard she gives excellent massages. Also, an extensive furniture store has opened up in Uvita with a wide assortment of outdoor and indoor furniture as well as a selection of mattresses. A new coffee shop has opened next to Crocodive, Cafesito. We haven't checked it out yet but the story on the street is that they make their own delicious breads and are closed on Sunday and Monday.

The recent news about Costa Rica includes: the Latin Business Chronicle of March 2008 reported that the Latin Security Index has identified Costa Rica as the safest country in Latin America followed closely by Chile and Uruguay. The Latin Security Index measures the danger level in Latin America based on homicide rates as well as other factors affecting corporate security and the safety of foreign business executives. The ratings are based on official numbers from public security secretariats, local politics,

governments, NGO's and institutes of crime investigations.

Also, according to La Nacion, Costa Rica's Public debt has had a spectacular reduction over the last 5 years, from 60% of the GDP to 43% in 2007. The lower debt arises from a combination of factors, including production growth, lower interest rates, and restricted government spending. The impact of the lower public debt has resulted in lower interest rates on loans for housing, as well as increasing the government's ability to invest more on roads, schools, and hospitals. The image of a healthier economy continues to attract foreign investment.

The Costa Rica Confidence Index -0.0 to 3.0 range- for the government has increased from 2.36 in August 2007 to 2.55 in March 2008, the highest point since January 2003. The index is the average of a general evaluation of the government regarding whether or not it discriminates among sectors, is efficient in public spending, its officials are honest, and it is able to solve the problems of the nation.

*Kristina Welburn*

Kristina@PacificLots.com



Traffic Jam in Costa Rica



If you're looking for a menu with lots of options then Talapias el Pavon is not for you. If fresh and tasty tilapia makes your mouth water you won't be disappointed. Just a few miles south of Ojochal, watch for the sign along the highway on your left just before a bridge. Take the left and follow the road as it traverses the river and head inland toward the mountains. You'll find the restaurant on your right about 4 miles up the road

Owned and operated by the Moro Vargus family for the past 5

years, Tilapias el Pavon is a popular spot for locals and visitors. Considering its virtually hidden location it's quite a testament to its appeal and to our coconut telegraph.

Your visit starts with the charming Manuel asking if you would prefer that his nephew catch your dinner or if you'd like to fish for it yourself; in which case he'll hand you a rod and send you on down to the tilapia ponds. On our visits we chose the lazy way and sat in the shade sipping our cervezas while awaiting our catch.

They offer either fried fillets of fish or they will also fry the entire fish (for the less squeamish). The tilapia dish includes white rice with small bits of red pepper, boiled yucca, crisp and salty fried plantains and a side salad with chopped tomatoes reminiscent of those from our summer garden in New England. Tilapias el Pavon serves wine and beer along with sodas and juices. They are typically open for lunch as well

as dinner and close on Fridays during the green season. The meal is very filling and costs about \$6.

They do on occasion serve chicken as an option. We did not have a chance to try it since it was not available on either of our visits but I trust it would be delicious as well.

Across the street is Cascadas el Pavon that is a popular swimming spot at the base of a waterfall. After lunch you're welcome to park in their lot and walk down.



## Pejibaye

By Tricia Stapleton

Pejibaye, a relative of the coconut, is one of Costa Rica's most unusual treats. Pejibayes, also known as peach palms because of the way they grow in clusters on palm trees, are like miniature coconuts. The part that you eat would correspond to the fibrous husk, while the hard pejibaye seed, when cracked open, reveals a thin layer of bitter white meat around a hollow core. The bright orange or red pejibayes are delicious boiled in salted water, then peeled, halved and pitted and eaten alone, with mayonnaise or any other favorite dipping sauce. You'll see them sold in markets here in the south pacific zone usually starting in April. Their flavor is difficult to describe. They are not sweet, but more a combination of chestnut and pumpkin with a thick, fibrous texture. You can buy a racimo (bunch) of raw pejibayes and boil them up for parties, or you can buy them in markets fresh from the boiling water to eat as you please.

This useful palm is apparently indigenous to Amazonian areas of Colombia, Ecuador, Peru and Brazil, but

it has been cultivated and distributed by Indians from ancient times and is so commonly naturalized that its natural boundaries are obscure. It is not as common anywhere else in Central America as Costa Rica, though it is fairly abundant in Nicaragua, Honduras and Guatemala, and has long been grown in commercial plots in Panama to furnish fruits for local markets.

Undamaged, raw fruits kept in good condition in a dry atmosphere with good air circulation store well. Roughly handled and bruised fruits ferment in only 3 to 4 days. The cooked fruits, as commonly marketed, can be held for 5 or 6 days. In refrigerated storage at 35.6° to 41° F (2°-5° C), uncooked fruits can be kept for 6 weeks with a minimum of dehydration or spoilage.



Sopa de Pejibaye Recipe (Palm Fruit Soup)

10-12 pejibayes  
3 cups chicken stock  
1 Tablespoon vegetable oil  
3 cups milk  
1 onion chopped  
3 cloves garlic chopped or pressed  
1 red, yellow or green sweet pepper.  
salt and fresh ground black pepper to taste

Wash and boil the pejibayes until soft (about 45 minutes). Remove from the water, and when cool enough to handle, peel and core them. Puree the pejibayes with the chicken stock.

Sauté the onion, garlic, and pepper in the oil until the onions are clear, then combine all the ingredients in a stock pot and simmer for another 5-10 minutes.

Coming soon to Uvita – Starting May 10 a new feria/market will be taking place every Saturday at Rincon de Uvita the new soccer/sports complex in central Uvita. With a great mix of local farmers, artisans and lively entertainment this will be a great place to connect with the community every Saturday from 6 -1.

## Paving from Quepos to Dominical to Start Soon

Conavi, the National Council of Roads in Costa Rica, has reported that the paving contracts are completed and paving of the stretch between Quepos and Dominical is expected to begin in September, 2008. Pedro Castro, deputy minister of Public Works, says the contracts call for an asphalt layer of 10 centimeters thick (3.9 inches). The new stretch will be four lanes in some areas and two lanes in others, allowing passing zones at various places along the way. Each lane will be 3.65 meters wide (12 feet) and each side of the road will have a 5 foot shoulder as well.

This is the final section of the Costanera Sur to be completed, a 222 kilometer project connecting Barranca, Puntarenas and Palmar Norte, Osa. Two companies have been working for the past 18 months widening the road, laying the gravel road bed and constructing sewers, drains, bridges and culverts. These same two firms were tasked with widening, grading and straightening the road as well as

rerouting the highway around the towns of Quepos, Hatillo and Matapalo. They have also been busy constructing seven new bridges along the route, replacing the old single lane bridges in Paquita, Parrita, Hatillo, Matapalo, Tres Rios, Sevegre and Portalon. We are happy to say nearly all of these bridges are nearing completion.

Travel time from Ojochal to Quepos and Manuel Antonio will be cut from nearly three hours to about an hour. The road bed is being constructed to handle heavy truck traffic in anticipation of the rerouting of north south truck traffic along the coastal route. This will alleviate much of the truck traffic in the central valley of San Jose and along the mountain route 2, Cartago to San Isidro Del General, known as the "path of death". The new road will allow heavy traffic to follow the coastal route north, south, cutting travel time and avoiding the high mountain passes found on the current route of the Pan American highway.



New bridge nearly complete in San Buenas



New bridge taking form next to old one lane bridge in Parrita

---

## Current Telecom Situation in Costa Rica

Foreigners are often surprised to learn how advanced the telecom network is in Costa Rica.

All internet traffic goes through the state owned monopoly, Instituto Costarricense de Electricidad (ICE). At this point ICE still has a monopoly on landline, cellular and most data transmission in Costa Rica but the telecom arena is due to open up to international competition when the recent ratification of CAFTA (Central American Free Trade Agreement) is put into full force.

Presently Costa Rica has one of the highest numbers of phones per capita of any country in Latin America as well as a high percentage of internet access. With the recent passing of CAFTA, ICE released millions of new cell phone and wireless internet numbers. Costa Rica recently added a new digit to all phone numbers within the country, you must now dial a 2 after the area code (506) to call a land line number and an 8 before the number for a cell phone. 011 is the country code for

Costa Rica and 001 is the country code to call the US from Costa Rica. Costa Rica has a 911 emergency network, much like the US. Costa Rica is very technically savvy, with nearly 80% of all software development companies operating in Latin America located here.

Cellular phone service through ICE runs about \$8 USD per month for unlimited in-country calling. Pay phones are widely available and with the use of a ICE phone card available throughout the country you can call the US for about 15 cents per minute. VoIP telephone services are also widely available using Skype, Vonage and other providers. Most cell service is offered on a GSM system and Costa Rica has been able to skip much of the generation of wire line services, opting to build out their cellular network instead.

Internet usage in Costa Rica was available to about 27% of the population as of August 2007 but that number is increasing very rapidly. Nearly 1.8 million users now have online access. Access is through

both landline, ADSL and cellular wireless modems. Cellular wireless services cost about \$16 USD per month. ADSL runs \$19 USD per month for speeds of 256kBs/128kBs. A variety of services are available, topping out at 4096kBs down and 768kBs up speed, at a cost of \$169 USD per month. Fiber Optic cable spans the country though it is not readily available for use yet. Point to multi point microwave is in use via the Central American Microwave system and Costa Rica has two intelsat satellites and two submarine cables. Cable Tica and Amnet offer cable internet services.

Costa Rica has 13 television stations as well as wide availability to services like Direct TV and cable TV. You can still watch your favorite stations in English in Costa Rica, with full access to channels like ESPN and the major US networks.



## Green Leaf Arts & Artesania

**G**reen Leaf Arts & Artesania has a surprising assortment of beautiful pieces in what deceptively looks to be a small shop. They offer a great selection of quality local art and indigenous crafts. The shop has been in the Ventana Plaza in Ojochal for the past 3 years and is owned by Kumari Lefebvre, originally from Montreal.

Green Leaf carries wood products made from exotic, recycled local woods of various sizes from small vases to large bowls. They also have original paintings by Costa Rican artists and intriguing hand crafted masks. They carry works by the Guamy, Malaku as well as the Boruca tribes. In addition, Green Leaf offers a variety of beautiful handmade jewelry as well as the best selection of books, CDs and maps in the area. Items from Green Leaf make great gifts as well as beautiful additions to any home décor. The next time you're in the area be sure to stop in.



---

## The Beaches of Costa Ballena



*Playa Hermosa*

**T**he beaches of Costa Ballena (Dominical to Ojochal) are some of the most beautiful in the country. It's an area where the rainforest and mountains nearly extend to the coast and sands range from chocolate brown to cinnamon beige. This stretch of land is a principal location for surfing, sportfishing, whale watching, swimming and beach strolling. During low tide Tómbolo, a striking rock formation which is perfectly shaped like a whale's tail, can be seen between Playas Hermosa and Uvita.

Small and large with huge waves and protected coves with light

currents here is an overview of the most visited and most beautiful beaches of Costa Ballena (Whale Coast).

Playa Dominical is known for being one of the best places to surf in the world. It's the only beach with restaurants and hotels alongside. Due to its strong currents and undertow, it is the only beach that has lifeguards on duty.

Playa Dominicalito is accessed via the entrance before the restaurant "La Parcela". It's a rocky beach worn by the current to resemble a volcanic lava flow. It has calm waters and beautiful scenery.

Playa Hermosa offers miles of fine sand bordered by an old shaded coastal pathway. The current is calmer than other beaches.

Playa Uvita is situated North of Ballena Park. It's one of the most beautiful beaches in the region extending almost 9 miles long offering the chance to walk around the illustrious "whale tail" (or "Tómbolo" in Spanish), which can be seen only during low tide.

Playa Arco is a small lost paradise of waterfalls, wildlife and soft sands, ideal for those in search of tranquility. It is only accessible through the right hand side of Playa Ballena at low tide.

Playa Ballena is located in the heart of Ballena Marine National Park, where it is often possible to walk for miles upon its endless beaches without spotting another person.

Playa Piñuelas has calm waters and marine caves that form a small bay.

It's ideal for kayaking and swimming. Here it is common to see fishermen going about their daily chores. It offers a great opportunity to purchase fresh fish.

Playa Ventanas is a beautiful beach with rock formations and huge caves that can be explored during low tide. It has a small bay, perfect for swimming. It's accessed via a lovely flower lined path and a few colones allow you to park at the casita off the road.

Playa Tortuga is accessible during low tide and consists of gray sand ideal for long walks enriched by panoramic views of the Osa Peninsula. The beach is part of the Térraba river mouth, and during September and October different species of marine turtles go there to lay their eggs. There are strong currents which make it dangerous from swimming.

Some of these beaches are part of the National Park system and require a small fee which goes toward providing and maintaining sanitary services. Your ticket is valid for same day visits to the other beaches in the National Park system.



*Playa Ventanas*  
photo by Georg Kiechle

## Isla del Coco National Park

Ofentimes compared to the Galapagos Islands, Isla del Coco is a National Park over 300 miles off the southern Pacific coast of Costa Rica. It's been designated as a UNESCO World Heritage site and is currently ranked 7th behind Mount Everest and the Amazon River on New7Wonders' list of the top non man-made Wonders of the World.

Isla del Coco (also called Cocos Island) has a land mass of 24 square miles. It's dominated by dense, lush tropical rainforests, much like those seen in Costa Rica's south Pacific mainland rainforests. However, the island lacks the high levels of diversity seen in mainland forests because of its isolation.

The island is home to three endemic birds and many seabirds also roost and nest on this island. Great blue herons, green herons, and peregrine falcons can also be found on the island in certain seasons. As on many isolated islands, there are no native mammals. The only mammals on the island, which include deer, goats, rats, cats and pigs, were introduced by explorers. On their return voyages, these animal populations provided a useful meat source for the hungry seamen.

Forbes Traveler in August of 2007 named Isla del Coco one of the top 10 dive spots in the world and the PADI network ranked Cocos Island #6. Some of the largest schools of hammerhead

sharks in the world are consistently reported there. Encounters with dozens if not hundreds of these and other large animals are nearly certain in every dive. Jacques Cousteau has called it the most beautiful island in the world.

The island was formed by the same tectonic interaction that has created the Galapagos archipelago. It's summit is 2000 feet above sea level and it's blanketed in dense forest with steep



cliffs framing the perimeter. The island is also covered with more than 200 spectacular waterfalls, some spilling directly into the ocean.

Only several hundred visitors take the relatively costly voyage to Cocos Island annually, either by cruise or chartered yacht, and a significant portion of them come to use this natural laboratory for scientific endeavors.

Isla del Cocos was first discov-

ered by a Spanish explorer in 1526. Shortly thereafter explorers and pirates used the island as a place to stop on their journey to restock on food and fresh water. Ships' names are carved into the rocks on the North Eastern part of the island lending credibility to a history of intrigue and plunder. According to legend, from the 17th to mid-19th centuries, such bandits as William Davis, William Thompson, and "Bloody Sword" Bonito buried treasures on Cocos. Anyone who unearths Thompson's Lima Booty will have to make space in their safety deposit box for the gold and silver bars, church artifacts, and solid-gold Virgin Mary statue (see story below). The history of Isla del Coco and the prospect of discovering hidden treasure have fueled explorers and imaginations for centuries. More than 500 booty pursuing expeditions have failed and Robert Louis Stevenson's Treasure Island was inspired by the lore.

Permission to enter Cocos Island National Park must be granted by the park service (admission is \$15, 506-2283-0022). There are no overnight accommodations on the island and camping is strictly prohibited. To get there most tourists use the services of a tour company.

To cast your vote for the next New 7 Wonders of Nature check out [www.new7wonders.com](http://www.new7wonders.com). Winners will be announced in 2010.

## The Great Treasure of Lima

The most famous Cocos hoard of all is the "Great Treasure of Lima." In 1820, as José de San Martín advanced on Lima, the Spanish Viceroy realized he had better remove the stores of gold and silver under his command. Officials of the Spanish churches in the city agreed about their ecclesiastical riches, which included a solid-gold, gem-encrusted, life-size image of the Virgin Mary.

Figuring that hiding this wealth anywhere near Lima would be foolish, the Viceroy entrusted it to William Thompson a British sea captain, a known and respected trader. The Viceroy's plan was to have Thompson

sail around with the treasure stowed aboard his ship the Mary Dear, until the political situation improved. At the time it was worth between \$12 and \$60 million and was too great a temptation to Thompson and his men. Out of sight of land, they cut the throats of the Viceroy's appointed guard, tossed their bodies overboard, and made haste to Cocos, where they duly buried the treasure.

Thompson and his crew decided to split up until things simmered down, then meet to divvy up the spoils. But not long after leaving Cocos, the Mary Dear was picked up by a Spanish man-of-war. The crew was put on trial for

piracy, convicted, and hung -- all except for Thompson and his first mate, who agreed to lead their captors to the stolen goods if their lives were spared. Soon after they stepped on Cocos under an armed guard they escaped into the jungle and were never found. According to some versions of the story, the pair were later picked up by a whaler and taken to Puntarenas where the mate contracted yellow fever and died. William Thompson seems to have vanished shortly thereafter, and there is no indication that he ever returned to Cocos Island.





When I was in the sixth grade my teacher asked me to write a report on my favorite animal. Don't ask why but I didn't write about my beloved cat, the popular dog, polar bear or tiger. I wrote my paper about the hammerhead shark. Perhaps I was an odd child but the hammerhead (not just any shark) has always intrigued me. Is it the way they silently glide in the depths of the ocean to sneak up on prey? Maybe it's the way they look at you from a couple of very odd angles. Whatever the reason, 30 years later I'm doing my second report on the hammerhead shark. I hope it will be slightly better written.

Hammerhead sharks are found in warm tropical and subtropical waters along continental shelves and coastlines all over the world. They seem to prefer staying in regions which have pinnacles or sea mounts which reach from great depths practically to the water's surface. Which could explain why they collect around Isla del Coco.

All hammerheads have a projection, like a flattened hammer, on each side of the head with eyes and nostrils at the tips of the extension. The wide-set eyes give them a better visual range than other sharks. The hammer-shaped head also gives these sharks larger nasal tracts, increasing the chance of finding a particle in the water by at least 10 times as much as other 'classical' sharks. Like all sharks they have echolocation sensory pores and the hammerhead's are distributed over a wider area allowing them to sweep for prey more effectively. These sharks have been able to detect an electrical signal of half a billionth of a volt which allows them to detect, among other things, the electrical fields created by prey animals. Latest research also shows that these sharks can make use of the earth's magnetic field during their migrations.

Hammerheads can grow to 20 feet long and can weigh as much as 1,000 pounds. They have a spiral shaped intestinal valve which means that food will pass through the intestines at a remarkably slow pace. This makes it impossible for hammerhead sharks to eat often, and their growth rate is therefore very slow. They save energy by not swimming around a lot. Hammerheads are the most negatively buoyant of sharks. The liver of a Hammerhead shark is filled with oil that has a lower density than water. This provides enough buoyancy for the hammerhead to float in the water rather than swim. They often look very gracious when they float around, slowly scanning the bottom for food.

Hammerheads can sometimes form schools that contain up to 500 individuals, which is very unusual for sharks. They only school during the day and always spend the nights separated from each other. There seems to be an established order of dominance in every school, where the "rank" of each individual hammerhead shark is determined by size, age and sex.

Hammerheads

eat skates, stingrays, squid, octopus, fish (sardines, herring, tarpon, jacks, grouper, flatfish), crustaceans and on occasion other hammerhead sharks. They are particularly fond of rays and will use the "hammer" to pin the ray down while eating the wings bite by bite but don't hold it against them.

The average lifespan is 20-30 years. Reproduction occurs once a year and can produce as many as 55 pups. Once the pups are born the parents do not stay with them and they are left to fend for themselves.

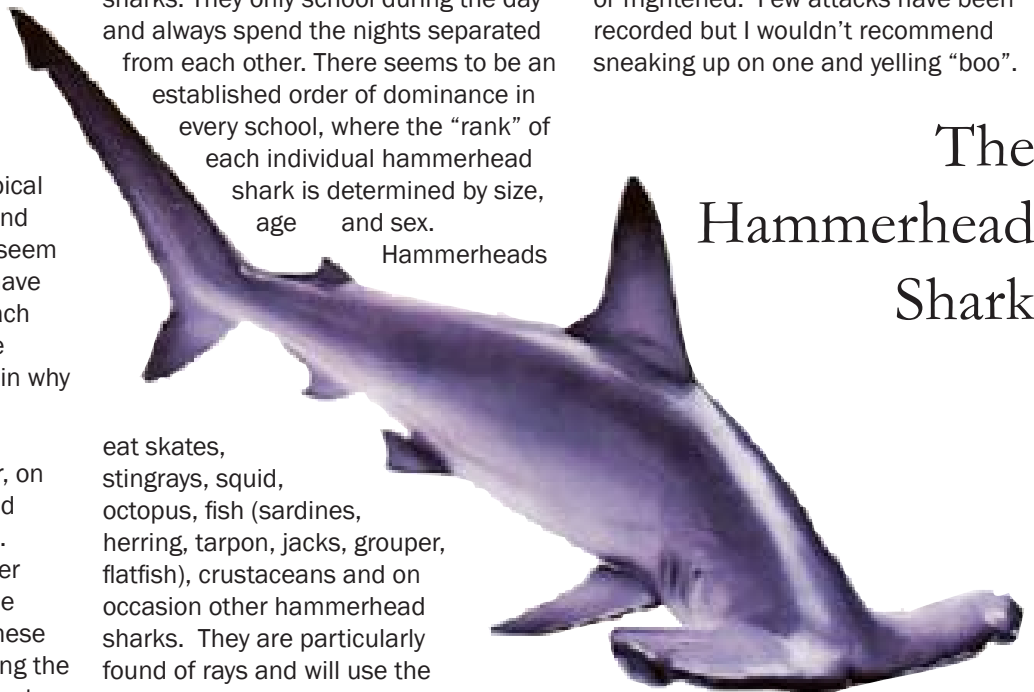
A couple of interesting facts about hammerheads include; hammerheads are one of the few creatures in the animal kingdom to acquire a tan from prolonged exposure

to sunlight, a feature shared by pigs and humans. Tanning occurs when a hammerhead is in shallow waters or close to the surface for long periods.

It may be hard to believe but in May 2007 scientists discovered that hammerhead sharks can reproduce asexually through a rare method known as parthenogenesis, as they have the ability to fertilize their own eggs. At first the announcement was considered skeptically, since a female shark can store sperm inside her for months, even years, but it was confirmed through DNA testing that the pup lacked any paternal DNA. This is the first documented case of any shark doing this.

Hammerheads are considered dangerous but are normally not aggressive toward humans, in fact most incidents with humans are probably defensive after the shark was surprised or frightened. Few attacks have been recorded but I wouldn't recommend sneaking up on one and yelling "boo".

## The Hammerhead Shark



---

*"Those who dwell among the beauties and mysteries of the earth are never alone or weary of life."* Rachel Carson

# Welcome to the Neighborhood

We'd like to welcome Craig and Sue to our community. Craig is a graduate of the University of Massachusetts - Amherst and is an Assistant Vice President with American International Group (AIG) in Boston having had various responsibilities over the last ten years. Susan is a graduate of both the University of Rhode Island and the Massachusetts College of Pharmacy and is a pharmacist providing consulting services to several nursing home facilities in Southeastern, MA, Cape Cod and Nantucket.

Craig and Sue both grew up in Western Massachusetts and later moved the Boston area for both educational and career pursuits. They reside in Plymouth, MA with their three year old yellow Labrador retriever, Fenway (hmm, do you think they're Red Sox fans?).

Their interests include travel, the outdoors, exercise and most importantly being near the ocean. They love the beach and wish they could snorkel and play golf a lot more than they do.

Craig and Sue immediately fell in love with Costa Rica and are looking very forward to their future trips to take in more of it's beauty, culture and most importantly, meet and spend time with their new neighbors. They can't wait to take it all in.



*“Friendship improves happiness, and abates misery, by doubling our joys, and dividing our grief.”*

*-- Joseph Addison*



We'd also like to welcome Dave and Erica. Dave has been the Senior Vice President of Career Sales, Long Term Care Division, for Genworth Financial since December 2004. He joined the financial services industry in 1990 with Lutheran Brotherhood, where he worked for 12 years. Starting off as an agent, and then General Agent, Dave was elected Chairman of LB's General Agent Advisory Council, and after consecutive years leading the Garden State Agency to Agency of the Year honors, was inducted into Lutheran Brotherhood's Hall of Fame. As the Executive Vice President and Chief Marketing Officer from 1998-2002, LB experienced it's three best sales years ever, and merged with Aid Association for Lutherans, forming the

largest Fraternal Benefit Society in the country, with nearly 3000 advisors and more than 2.5 million members. Before moving into financial services, Dave enjoyed a successful 14-year career as a player, coach, and general manager in the European Professional Basketball League, coaching in Spanish, French, and Dutch. Currently, Dave serves on the LIFE Foundation Board and GAMA's Executive Management Cabinet. Dave is also an active member of LIMRA's Distribution Leader's Round Table. Dave is a graduate of Penn State University, where he was captain of the basketball team. In addition, Dave completed the Advanced Management Program of the Wharton School at the University of Pennsylvania.

Erica is SVP, and Head of Relationship Management and Client Services at ING Investment Management. In her role, Erica brings together all of the elements of relationship management, as well as the operational aspects of client service, in order to provide clients with seamless coordination throughout the organization. Erica recently joined ING after 22 years experience in

the financial services industry. She spent the past 15 years at General Electric, with 10 of those at GE Asset Management, where she held a number of positions, including Six Sigma Leader, Global Compliance Leader and most recently, Vice President of Client Investment Management Services. Her responsibilities included all client facing interactions, ensuring delivery of the highest levels of service.

Dave and Erica are planning on retiring to Ojochal within the next few years and living out the next forty years together with lots of relaxation and sunshine. They can't imagine a healthier place to live, ... in a more peaceful setting!

If you'd like to contact a new owner or would like to be introduced in an upcoming newsletter please contact us at [info@PacificLots.com](mailto:info@PacificLots.com)

# April 2008 Tour pictures



*“I advise anyone traveling to CR to do so with a tour guide (we would have missed the most beautiful and impressive things if it hadn't been for Steve).”*





Our April property tour was great. Not only did we get to spend some quality time with new friends and neighbors, but the trip overall was just plain fun. On this trip we elected to supply two girls' orphanages in San Isidro del General much needed sewing supplies and were very happy with the tour group's generosity (see note from Rhonda below).

On our tour some of the couples in the group elected to sport fish out of Quepos so we put them on our favorite boat. They boated a 250 pound black marlin, about a half dozen sail fish and a nice catch of yellowfin tuna. All were let go unharmed except enough tuna to feed our group. The Chef at Villa Rio Mar prepared the tuna three ways, appetizers of tuna carpaccio with wasabi, diced pieces of tuna in a sesame ginger marinate and a main course of tuna rolled in sesame seeds and lightly braised. Total cost per plate of \$5.00 including vegetable and potato feeding 12 of us for \$60. How can you beat it? Our next tour is scheduled for July 12<sup>th</sup>-21<sup>st</sup>.

We were pleasantly surprised to see the new Hospital De Osa now open for business. We also marveled

at the progress on the bridges as we drove down the Pacific coast. The new bridge in Parrita has beams laid and the bridge in San Buenas, south of Tres Rios, is nearly ready for pavement. We tracked further progress on the new international airport, visited a few weeks ago by an international aviation committee who gave the progress a resounding two thumbs up.

We were also impressed with the number of new houses going up in our developments. The most recent count shows 77 custom homes in the design phase or under construction. That's a lot of houses going up at once but each one looks more impressive than the last one. If you haven't yet seen the new DVD we have recently released, you can request one by visiting [www.pacificlots.com/DVDsignup.html](http://www.pacificlots.com/DVDsignup.html).

We've again been invited to the Ultimate Event, held by International Living at Cancun, Mexico at the end of May. For information about this event, see [http://www.internationaliving.com/events/upcoming\\_events/wealth\\_building\\_and\\_protection/ueiii/\(promo\)/event](http://www.internationaliving.com/events/upcoming_events/wealth_building_and_protection/ueiii/(promo)/event).

The Southern region continues to honor the three story height restriction on all building and tougher zoning requirements than



elsewhere in the country. As always we're meticulous about obtaining all permits and carefully preserving the environment (see a note from the Mayor below). In fact, several developments have recently been shut down due to environmental violations. The area has successfully avoided the over-development, high rises, septic issues, water shortages and billboard proliferation plaguing Guanacaste and the Nicoya Peninsula as well as the central coastal region around Jaco. Come see why the Southern Pacific region is getting so much press and attention before everyone else discovers it first. Once the new international airport is opened, prices will never be this low.

*Stephen Linder*

Steve@PacificLots.com  
305-295-0137

MUNICIPALITY OF OSA  
OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

MUNOSA-2007

I, Jorge Alberto Cole de Leon, in my position of Mayor of the Municipality of Osa indicate that in review of municipal registers from our Taxation office and others, Ventana Del Pacifico SA and associated corporations are up to date with payment of all municipal taxes and that they have complied with all requirements in their existing developments found in the County of Osa. Furthermore, they have always maintained a good relation with this municipality.

Therefore, this municipality will extend building permits for any of these developments as long as the specific projects complies with all existing legislations

Sincerely,

Alberto Cole de Leon

Mayor of Osa

CC: Archive

*Steve and Kristina,*

*I would like to thank you and your group for being so generous in your donations for the older girls orphanages. There were so many beautiful fabrics. Patterns are hard to come by, so that was great also. The sewing tools are much needed too, as it is hard to produce a set for each of the girls. The more that we have, the more we can teach them at one time. I just want you to know that I appreciate all of the trouble that you went to to bring these things. Your generosity and concern for these girls touched our hearts. It is good to know that people not even living in this country care as much as we do.*

*Rhonda Bulkley*