

THE SAN PEDRO SUN VISITOR GUIDE

January 26, 2006

FREE

The Island Newspaper
Ambergris Caye, Belize
Central America



*ATV Jungle Exploration
& Creepy, Crawly, Cave
Creatures!*



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A European Holiday!



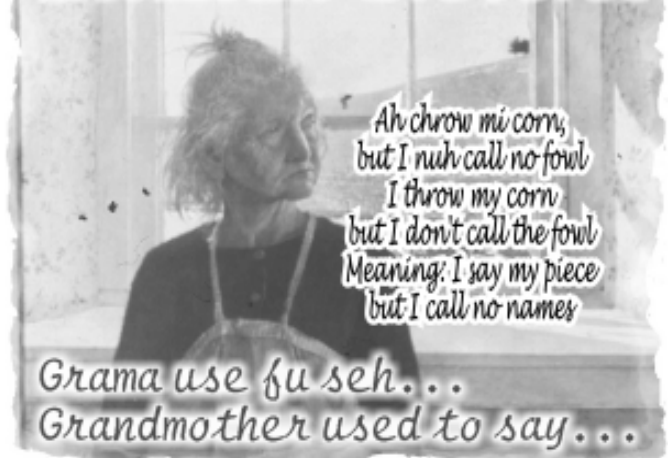
Lorieri Matias, from Italy, reading *The San Pedro Sun*. Directly behind him is the world-famous Eiffel Tower in Paris, France.



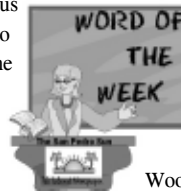
Richard Price (of Premium Wines & Spirits) and his wife, Maria (from Caye Caulker), at the Palace of Versailles in Paris, France.

Photos taken in unique and unusual places are preferred. Be sure to identify who is in the photo and where the photo was taken. Don't forget to include your names and what you were doing.

Belizean Proverbs



Language can link us with other cultures, no matter how foreign the tongue may be. In an effort to share this form of communication with our audience, *The San Pedro Sun* proudly presents -



Words of the Week. This week, we will present a few phrases in English and give you their Creole and Spanish translations.

Special thanks to Sylvana Woods for her help with the Creole translations. Enjoy!!!

English
Creole
Spanish

I want to buy a dress.
Ah waahn bai wahn jres.
Quisiera comprar un vestido.

English
Creole
Spanish

I don't like a one-story house.
Mee noh laik wahn dongstayz hows.
No me gustan casas de solo un piso.

English
Creole
Spanish

My brother just got a new car.
Mi bredda jos geh wahn nyoo weekl.
Mi hermano compro un coche nuevo.

The *San Pedro Sun* is mailed everywhere.

Publisher The San Pedro Sun Ltd.
Editor Ron Sniffin ron@sanpedrosun.net
Editor Tamara Sniffin tamara@sanpedrosun.net
Associate Editor Kainie Manuel kainie@sanpedrosun.net
Staff Writer Maria Novelo maria@sanpedrosun.net
Staff Writer/ Mary Gonzalez mary@sanpedrosun.net
Graphic Design
Office Assistant Nathalie Manuel nathalie@sanpedrosun.net
Mail
The San Pedro Sun,
P.O. Box 35,
San Pedro Town
Ambergris Caye, Belize
011-501-226-2070
(307) 460-4456
011-501-226-2905
E-Mail spsun@sanpedrosun.net
Internet/WEB www.sanpedrosun.net
Main Office #1 Fire Coral Street, San Pedro

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More foreign subscribers than any newspaper in Belize!

Greetings to my visiting friends

On behalf of the people of San Pedro Town, I extend a warm welcome to all visitors arriving to our shores. I assure you that your trip to "La Isla Bonita" will be no ordinary vacation. Our island is famous for its rich cultural diversity, where Mestizos, Creole and Garinagu blend to form a unique encounter. While here, I encourage you to explore the Caribbean Sea and find Belize's abundant treasures. Hol Chan Marine Reserve and Shark-Ray Alley are just two of the many spots where you can enjoy our coral reef formation and abundant and breathtaking sea life. San Pedro is also home to world-class fishing and scuba diving.

For the more adventurous, "La Isla Bonita" offers a wide array of water sports and for those looking to get a glimpse of the mystical world of the Maya, these historical ruins are just a short expedition away. You will also be able to discover Belize's vast cave systems and many natural sanctuar-



ies that are home to our country's unique flora and fauna.

Whether you are spending your honeymoon at an exclusive resort or looking for an adventurous, yet romantic escape, San Pedro is surely the place to be. I invite you to explore our home and see the many wonders it has to offer.

We welcome you with open arms. Bienvenidos a San Pedro!

Elsa Paz, Mayor,
San Pedro Town

QUESTION: What do you like to do here?



"Sailing, snorkeling and fishing." **Howard & Linda Stille** retired from jobs in Half Moon Bay, California, USA and travel. They stayed at Costa Maya Resort and Ruby's then went off on a TMM charter.



"Wife Hunting." **Jonathan Mullen** moved here from Los Angeles, California, USA where he was an architectural designer. He now lives in the south beach area.



"I came here to get SCUBA certified and I did it!" **Lynne Price** lives in the Los Angeles area of southern California and has just finished a college degree course in design. She stayed at a private residence up north.



"I like to visit with old people and sleep around." **Marty Casado** lives in Eugene, OR, USA and owns/maintains the web site and message board www.ambergris caye.com.



"Anything but stealing." **Allen "Tulu" Villanueva** lives in the airstrip area and is, among other things, a registered tour guide.

WOMAN ON THE BEACH

by Harriette Fisher

Watch for Harriette walking the beach with her camera.

What question will she ask you?

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Exploring the Jungle - ATV Style!

There is now a new thrilling way to explore the jungles of Belize – on an All Terrain Vehicle (ATV). As one of the many tours offered by Discovery Expeditions Belize, the Rainforest ATV tour provides guests a thrilling adventure while exploring under the high canopy of the rainforest.

This adventure begins at Pecarry Park, which is less than an hour from Belize City. To get there, take the Western Highway just beyond the 23 mile marker, then

Continued on Page 8



All Terrain Vehicles (ATVs) provide an exciting and fast way to explore the jungles of Belize. This tour offered by Discovery Expedition Belize leads to Mayan Caves in Pecarry Park just west of Belize City. Once you squeeze through the opening of the cave you are exposed to huge rooms and Mayan artifacts undisturbed for hundreds of years.

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Reef Brief

Contributed by Peace Corps Volunteer Nicki Vassak

As many are aware, the lobster season officially close next month on the 15th. A close relative of lobster, the shrimp, also occupies an important niche in the Belize fishing industry. Through the years, the spotlight has been on the shrimp industry as many local restaurant and hotel owners have voiced their concerns regarding the amount of shrimp made available for domestic sale. The increasing demand for shrimp in Belize has led to the arrival of many commercial shrimp aquaculture operations over the past decade. Aside from its importance as an export, as well as its appeal as a seafood delicacy, shrimp also possess a valuable role in the coral reef ecosystem and are linked to one of the most endangered of marine creatures.

Throughout the world there are over 2,000 species of shrimp that are found in shallow and deep ocean, as well as in freshwater lakes and streams. In addition to lobster, shrimp are closely related to crabs and crayfish. A semi-transparent body, as well as a flexible mid-section and fanlike tail, characterizes these creatures. Shrimp have evolved appendages allowing them to be skilled swimmers, as well as long antennae that assist in signaling approaching danger or potential prey. Most



Below: Tropical species such as the Mantis Shrimp lie in wait for passing prey. When the antennae of this shrimp signal that prey, such as small fish or crustaceans are near, the shrimp lunges and grabs its prey with miniature claws.

shrimp species range in length from three millimeters to more than 20 centimeters, with larger species known as prawns.

Tropical species, such as the mantis shrimp, can grow to be 55 centimeters. This species is often brightly colored and searches out a safe habitat in the crevices of rocks and coral. Hiding from predators also allows the mantis shrimp to lie in wait for passing prey. When the antennae of this shrimp signal that prey, such as fish or crustaceans are near, the shrimp lunges and grabs its prey with miniature claws. Another warm water

species is the coral shrimp, which feeds on tiny plants and animals and is also known for its symbiotic behavior of cleaning the debris from the scales of coral fish.


Shrimp reproduction varies with each species, but generally the male shrimp fertilizes the larger female, after which the female lays anywhere from 1,500 to 14,000 eggs! The female usually guards the mass of eggs for a few weeks until they hatch and larvae emerge. After passing through five different stages of development, the larvae become mature shrimp.

It is these mature shrimp that are targeted by shrimp trawls throughout the world. A trawl is essentially a fish netting device that is dragged along the ocean floor. In the early part of the decade, shrimp trawling became newsworthy when it was noted that the decline of sea turtles was linked to trawling; trawls were not only collecting shrimp, but also sea turtles. Since then, it has become mandatory that all trawls be equipped with a Turtle Excluder Device (TED), allowing sea turtles to escape from the nets.

In Belize, where there were once 11 trawls, now only five remain, all of which are reported to have TEDs. The primary area of trawling in Belize includes Victoria Channel and south of Belize City to Placencia. There has been a general decline in annual shrimp harvests which is likely due to overexploitation, despite a regulated closed season of April 15th - October 31st.

The Coastal Zone Management Authority and Institute is concerned with the current shrimp population and recommends that not only should the closed season be revised, but shrimping must be prohibited within a specified distance from the shoreline. In addition, it seems likely that commercial aquaculture facilities will continue to increase in an attempt to compensate for decreasing natural stocks.

If you have a topic you would like featured in Reef Brief, or would just like to help us, please call 226-2833, or e-mail: greenreef@btlnet.net



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Tailless Whipscorpions (Amblypygi) are a small and understudied group of arachnid characterized by long antenniform legs and raptorial pedipalps. An amblypygid is an invertebrate animal belonging to the order Amblypygi in the class Arachnida, in the subphylum Chelicerata of the phylum Arthropoda. Amblypygids are also known as Whipspiders. The name "amblypygid" means "blunt rump," a reference to a lack of the telson ("tail") carried by related species. Although the Tailless Whipscorpion belongs to the Arachnid class, it is neither spider nor scorpion, but something in-between. At first glance this handsome specimen, *Phrynus parvulus* (Arachnida: Amblypygi) looks like a spider, and is very common in Belize.

Amblypygids live in tropical and subtropical regions throughout the world and during the day can be found in holes under rocks and stones which they dig using their large pedipalps. They are also found in rock crevices, under rotten logs, in plant debris and in caves. Typically only one individual resides in a crevice; however, it has been noted on a few different occasions a crevice being inhabited by both a male and a female. There can often be up to 13 or more different individuals residing on one tree trunk.



Amblypygids may range from 5 to 40 mm. Their bodies are broad and highly flattened, and most are dark red in color. They have a large pair of grasping appendages near the mouth, called pedipalps, that have many sharp spines. The prey is seized between the two pedipalps and are used to hold and crush the prey between special teeth on the inside of the trochanters (the second segment of the leg) of the

front legs. The meal is then transferred into the chelicerae (jaws). The first pair of legs has evolved into sensory, tactical appendages, and are long, delicate, and whip-like, with many fine hairs. Amblypygids often move about sideways on their six walking legs, with one "whip" pointed in the direction of travel while the other probes on either side of them. Prey is located with these "whips" and at the end of the abdomen is a whip-like, sensory structure called a flagellum.

Due to their nocturnal habits, secretive nature and geographical distribution there have been very few studies of feeding behavior in this group. It is known that they are purely nocturnal hunters feeding mostly on insects such as cockroaches and grasshoppers, though they also eat worms and slugs. They spend the daylight hours in holes under rocks and stones which they dig using their large pedipalps.

Interactions among individuals seem to be relatively rare and are usually between two males (aggressive interactions) or between males and females residing in the same crevice. When males meet in the absence of a female, they seem to have a ritualized posturing display which involves opening one palp, raising their bodies in the air, and holding that position. However, if a female is involved, they engage in actual combat, locking their chelicerae and palps together and may fight more or less continually for more than an hour and a half.

Although these animals may look extremely dangerous and frightening, they are in fact harmless. Unlike some spiders and scorpions, amblypygids do not have venom glands. They are rather docile creatures that are easily frightened. In response to potential threats, amblypygids use their speed for escape.

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ATV Jungle Exploration



The highlight of the ATV tour is to explore the Mayan Caves. Here the guides will show you Mayan pots and dishes that were left undisturbed since the Mayan left the area hundreds of years ago. The well informed Tour Guides share the history of the cave and even show ashes left from one of the last fires burned inside the cave centuries ago.

turn south just four miles. This easily accessible location allows visitors to make an easy day-trip whether they are staying on the Cayes or arriving by Cruise Ship. Once you arrive at the location, experienced guides will brief you on safety procedures for ATV handling, outline the route to be taken and issue protective gear and helmets.

Once you are properly prepared, it is now time to explore the jungles of Belize on trail laid out over 100 years ago by loggers in search of precious Mahogany trees. The tight fitting helmets block out the roar of the engines. Although thrilling at any speed, these ATVs will not reach speeds above 30 or 40 miles per hour and trail guides make sure guests are not reckless when exploring the back country.

The trails are a good mix of various challenging terrains leading to the stop of the day – the Maya Caves. The Mayan caves offer a huge expanse of under-

ground wonder. After adjusting your individual headlamp, you squeeze through the mouth of the cave that opens up into a huge auditorium of stalagmites and stalagmites. Among the crevices throughout the caves you will find amazing pottery and other remnants left behind by the Mayas between 900 and 1500 BC. These caves were considered portals to the underworld and used for important ceremonies to appease the Mayan Gods.

As you explore the cave, your capable guide Raymond Brakeman, describes the history and geographic details of the cave. Brakeman is among 20 guides working for Discovery Expeditions that grew up

in Gracie Rock Village in Peccary Park. Brakeman explains that these caves even serve as a natural hurricane shelter for the residents of Gracie Rock. The cave is also shelter for many bats and other interesting creatures such as the Tailless Whipscorpion (see related story, Page 6).

After this stop, it is time to loop back to home base via jungle trails. Although the trails were muddy from a recent rain, the ATVs easily maneuvered the trails. The 4-wheelers are easy to drive with automatic transmissions – no clutch or gears to mess with.

The trails wind through the mountains, just tapping the surface of this four thousand acre park. Guides also offer tours in survival skills and soon will add a repelling adventure and “The Beast,” a 10 ton amphibious vehicle that will traverse both land and water in the area. For more information, visit www.discoverybelize.com. A special thanks goes to the Belize Tourism Board for inviting members of the local media to experience some of the many tourist opportunities offered in Belize as part of Tourism Awareness Week.

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Tourist Information

Belize Tourism Board - 223-1910.

Belize Tourism Industry Association (BTIA) - 227-5717.

San Pedro Tourist Guide Association 226-2391.

Church Services

San Pedro Roman Catholic Church
Sun. Mass: 9 a.m. English; 11 a.m. Children's; 7:30 p.m. Spanish; Sat.: Confessions 5-7 p.m.; Mass or Communion Service every night at 7:30 p.m.

Living Word Church Service Sun. 10:45 a.m. Bible study Mon. 7:30 p.m. We do Christian charity work. 226-2950.

Assembly of God Church on Angel Coral St. T-W-Sat.-Sun. at 7:30 p.m. Christian Radio FM 101.3.

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Fire 226-2372
Wings of Hope - Medical emergency air ambulance. Phone: 223-3292.
Lions Health Clinic - 226-4052; emergencies 600-9071 or Hours: Mon.-Fri., 8am to 8pm; Sat., 8am - noon.
Los Pinos Clinic 602-6383 and 226-2686.
San Pedro Chiropractic Clinic 226-4695

Hyperbaric Chamber - 226-2851, Dr. Otto Rodriguez - 600-0287 or 226-2854. Antonia Guerrero - 600-5475 or 206-2152. Eleazar Portillo - 610-4560 or 226-3195.

San Pedro Polyclinic II - 226-2536. 8-12 and 2-5, Mon. to Fri. Emergencies 226-2555/2918 or 606-3864.

Ambergris Hopes Clinic - 226-2660, Emergencies: 606-2316

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Mexican Embassy - 223-0193

Guatemalan Embassy - 223-3150

Honduran Embassy - 224-5889

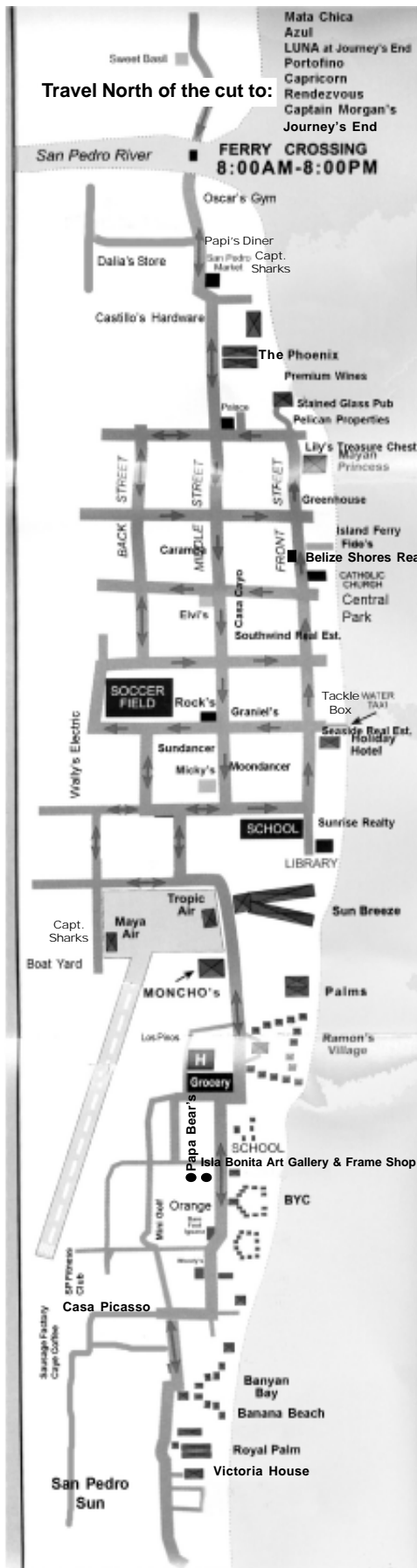
Miscellaneous

The Lions Club of San Pedro relies on income from its Friday and Saturday Night BBQ to support the needy community. Help a great cause - have dinner with us!

Green Reef A non-profit organization dedicated to the promotion of sustainable use and conservation of Belize's marine and coastal resources. greenreef@btl.net

San Pedro AA - 226 4464, 600 9061

Saga Society A non-profit "humane society" to address the stray cat and dog population in San Pedro. Phone 226-3266.



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THE SAN PEDRO SUN VISITOR'S GUIDE



Dining Out...



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RAMON'S VILLAGE - Enjoy breakfast, lunch and dinner in a Mayan atmosphere or on the veranda overlooking the Caribbean Sea. Coconut Drive. Phone 226-2071.

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EXECUTIVE SERVICES - Let Us Expedite All Your Needs! Liquor & restaurant licenses for January are due now, and we can help expedite the process! We are also consultants for work permits, retirement status, small claims and legal affairs. We'll do all the traveling for you and get your paperwork pushed through. Call 606-8311 or e-mail belizedistrict@yahoo.com

DandE's FROZEN CUSTARD and SORBET - If you like ice cream, you will *Love* DandE's Frozen Custard! Delicious cones, shakes, sundaes and splits. Located on Pescador Drive next to Caramba Restaurant. Closed Wednesday. Phone 608-9100.

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The San Pedro Sun
Visitor Guide

EVERY WEEK we print a new edition covering the "good news" about San Pedro and Belize!

Contact the San Pedro Sun for more information.
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Preparing for a Day Trip



Visitors are advised to dress sensibly for daytrips, especially as many trips are done by boat. Ample sunscreen, proper clothing and shoes can make the trip much more comfortable.

The classic Boy Scout motto "Be Prepared" could not be better words of advice for those planning a day trip. Be it a day of fishing, Manatee watching, or a jungle trip to exotic Mayan Ruins, there are a few items you should not leave your hotel with out, and a few things to remember that will help assure that you have an enjoyable (and safe) experience. Although some of these tips may seem obvious, it is easy to over look them in the excitement of your anticipated adventure.

If you have reserved your trip through

your hotel or a tour business you will most likely have a voucher. Many of these businesses list on their vouchers what they recommend you bring. Chances are you will be traveling by boat and there are things you should prepare for. Please don't forget to bring your voucher when you board the boat. Many times folks have to sit and wait in the boat while someone boarding has to run back to their room to retrieve their forgotten voucher. Most excursions pick up people at the docks along the front

beach and people who hold things up ultimately make the trip late. That said, if you are waiting to be picked up at 7:00 a.m. don't panic at 7:30 that you missed the boat. Chances are your charter was held up for a dozen different reasons. When a boat does arrive, be sure to find out where it is going, as there are several different tour companies and tours offered on the island.

If you are transported by motorboat, you can expect wind, sun and sea spray. The combination of all three can leave you feeling like you just tangoed with a tornado. If you have long hair, plan on tying it back, braiding it is even better. Hats are always a good idea, but if you cannot secure it on your head, you should be prepared to fish it out of the sea on the first good breeze that comes along. Don't forget sunscreen, and if you are swimming during the trip you should reapply often. Even on a cloudy day the sun can filter through, and with the reflection on the water you can get a lot of sun without realizing it.



If you are wearing shorts don't forget to apply sunscreen to the tops of your legs and feet, you will be in a sitting position on the boat and these sensitive "haven't seen the light of day" areas tend to burn fast. Most boats do not have rest rooms, so be sure to take care of business before boarding, or you may find yourself in an embarrassing "over-the-boat" moment. Remember, many of the rides into the main land take well over an hour

Continued on Page 15

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What's in a boat name?



Boats are a normal sight around our clear waters, but have you ever wondered what the story is behind their names? Having picked out a boat, most captains then have the difficult task of naming the boat. Many take the obvious route, naming the boat after their wife, sisters and/or a loved one. Some however, let their imaginations run wild and end up choosing some intriguing, original names that just grab your attention.

Many captains entertain classic superstitions, regardless of whether friends and family will be embarrassed or offended by the name chosen. Giving a boat/vessel a name is steeped in tradition and history and the reasons are practical, as well as sentimental. According to a survey conducted in the United States, many boaters claimed they named their boats/vessels by special women in their lives. Anthropologists have found that in addition to attesting to the relationships fishermen have with wives, girlfriends and daughters, fishers also choose names that project hope for 'victories' and successes at sea.

Nowadays, naming a boat has grown into a ceremonial act, known as a christening. Whether it is a ship in a large fleet or a smaller, personal watercraft, receiving a name is a necessity, according to mariner tradition. The ancient Egyptians allegedly began the tradition of naming boats

centuries ago on the Nile River, and boat owners have been racking their brains ever since for the perfect boat name. If you want to get boat owners talking, ask them how they arrived at the name they gave their boat. In fact, most will confess that they spent far more time thinking about a perfect name for their boat than for their own children.

It's interesting to note that there are superstitions in the boat naming process as well. One superstition in particular revolves around whether or not it is okay to rename a previously-owned boat. It is believed that if a boat owner would change the original name of the boat, that the individual would have bad luck such as having motor problems, or investing a whole bunch just to make it a good working horse.

Another superstition holds that

since a boat's name allegedly reflects its personality, then the name should always have a positive spin. In other words, it is a case of "what you name is what you get." An owner may think that bestowing the name of "Last Dollar" is a humorous way to reflect how much money has been invested in the boat; however, those who believe in this superstition would say that the boat will ultimately be more trouble

than pleasure.

One of the more telling findings about the naming process is that boats named after people most often show relationships of the fishers' own choosing, rather than inherited relationships. Names used, more often than not, pertain to wives, girlfriends, daughters or friends or are composites of several names (boat captain's choosing), rather than to mothers or sisters (inherited). It's

also an interesting note that naming a boat after a significant other is slightly more popular than naming it after children.

This naming process also seems to be deeply ingrained in the commercial fisherman's psyche. Many believe it is a smart marketing move to name your boat after your company, and instill your brand at every port. Even then, the boats usually have an individual name as well. Some boat owners claim that when a boat is named and christened, energetically, it has been enlivened, and from that point on must be treated with the same respect as we would a person.

The San Pedro Sun made an attempt to get comments from our local boat owners in San Pedro. Our task was made easy as the boat owners were willing and more than pleased to have their boats featured in our survey. So, with all said, we can attest to the fact that the names of boats do indeed have a story or distinct meaning to their owners. After all, to many of them, their boats are part of their passions and dreams - so why shouldn't they have names that help them define who they are and what they enjoy? Please turn to **Page 15** for some of the responses we got!

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Boat Names

Continued from Page 14

Question:

“What is significance of the name on your boat?”

Francisco Gutierrez, “My boat got its name from my grand daughter Laurie”



Pete Graniel, “The name on my boat has an interesting story behind it; it got its name from a close friend of mine who had problems with his demanding wife. My friend eventually divorced her and I thought the name “Free at Last” was appropriate enough.”



Pedro Graniel, “I decided to name my boat after my daughter, Elise”



Preparing for a Daytrip

Continued from Page 12

and can be on choppy waters. Early morning trips can be a bit chilly, and a light, long-sleeved shirt can provide warmth, as well as sun protection. Depending on the weather there can be a good amount of sea spray, so it is possible that what ever you wear and bring along might get wet. Zip lock bags work great to protect your valuable camera and other items. Of course, a beach towel is a must as well. Don't worry about getting a little wet, just sit back and enjoy the refreshing sea spray while taking in the transparent azure waters.

If you are on a snorkeling trip you should be sure that a) you have your equipment, b) you rented equipment or c) the tour is providing you with equipment. If you are a first time snorkeler remember that the guides are there to help you, they are pro's at this. If you are fishing, find out in advance what, if anything, you are expected to bring. Again, most fishing boats provide the poles and bait.

Many of the day trips offer jungle excursions to near-by Mayan Ruins or to the Caves Branch River for some incredible cave tubing. On any trip that involves walking, the rule of thumb is “sensible shoes.” You will be walking

Continued on Page 17



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Condos/Homes & Commercial Property

Caribe Island Resort- located approximately 4 miles south of San Pedro Town Center. Well established with 27 units!

(M59) Unit 3, Beach level one bedroom/one bath Junior suite: \$152,000 US.

(M56) Unit C16, First floor one bedroom/one bath Junior Suite: \$185,000 US.

(R46) Unit D25, First and second floor 3 bedrooms/3 baths Master Suite: \$350,000 US.

(H29) Unit D26, Second floor one bedroom/one bath Junior Suite: \$180,000 US.

Exotic Caye Beach Resort (J6) - Unit 3D - 1 bedroom unit with a loft. Has split palm with thatch roof. All new appliances \$105,000 US.

Residential home at Spanish Reef (D18) Two storey concrete house with bedrooms/2baths apartment upstairs and one bedroom apartment downstairs. Home sits on a large lot 2 rows off the beach. \$298,000 US.

Residential and Rental property in San Juan! (A21) 50' x 75' lot, two story concrete house with (7) rental rooms and two bedrooms/one bath owners apartment. Very fairly priced at only \$350,000.00 BZ or \$175,000 US.

Mata Grande Residential (S51) Private two level concrete home on large second row property available at Mata Grande. Upstairs owners quarters with 2 bedrooms / 2bath, wraparound porch, caretaker apartment, workshop and laundry room. Very good price at \$275,000 US.

Raw Land

Santa Paula (L19) - Secluded lot in the Santa Paula area. 80' x 80'. \$60,000 US.

Boca Ciega (G31) Beachfront acreage in Boca Ciega, 3.5 miles south of town.

175' beach frontage and 60' lagoon frontage. \$348,000 US. Cash only

Ambergris Bay (G30) 65' of beach front and 150' depth on the west coast of Ambergris Caye. Price \$60,000.00 US

Palm Bay Club (C41) Lot # 111 - 4th row lot, 100' x 100'. Only \$18,000 US.

Corozal Town Center (R31) 7 1/2 Acres of prime real-estate, road accessible on 3 sides, beautiful mature trees, cleared & ready to develop all amenities available. \$110,000 US.

San Marcos (R29) 50 X 90 - Price is Right at \$38,000 US.

Eden Isle (R27) Caye Caulker Lot #407 - 75' x 90' - 4th row lot, but only 285' off

Boca Del Rio (P42) 3 connecting lots located on the waterway just before you

cross the river cut. \$210,000 US.

Robles (D17) Lot 31A measuring 75' of beach front x 300' & 31B measuring 150' x

300'. Terms available! Asking price for both lots only \$149,000 US.

Dig It

By Dr. Herman Smith



Dr. Herman Smith was the only PhD archeologist to reside in Belize. He was noted in his field as a foremost researcher and expert in the coastal trading of the Maya and headed the archaeological development of Lamanai in Belize. Herman discovered and contributed much to the body of knowledge of the Maya once living on Ambergris Caye. If asked about this subject, he would gladly inform his listeners of the Maya past with detailed length and expansive arm waving. His humor accompanied these mini-lectures, eliminating any academic dryness and endearing him to the students and groups that he worked with on sites around the island.

He lived in Belize for over 12 years and eventually obtained Belizean citizenship. Dr. Herman Smith - U.S. Marine Corps pilot, decorated Vietnam veteran, archeologist, friend, and husband died on March 10th, 2000. Above all his many accomplishments from fighter piloting to practicing archeology - is that Herman was a friend to all in San Pedro. He contributed countless articles to The San Pedro Sun, articles that we are pleased to share with you once more.

What a way to make a living



The author, not dressed to the nines!

Archeological expeditions, particularly where excavations are involved, are almost never dull. Aside from the interaction between the various expedition members from diverse backgrounds, there are invariably exciting finds, blossoming summer romances and sometimes downright goofy behavior.

I learned years ago that I wasn't nearly such a good judge of character as I thought. When I sought volunteers for expeditions in Belize I got

it in my head that I could avoid complications by conducting personal interviews with potential participants. It only took one field season to demonstrate that I was better off trusting to blind luck.

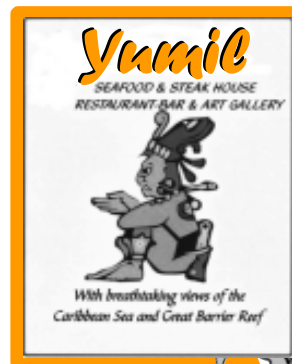
One summer, we planned a two-month long excavation of two Maya sights, on the north end of Ambergris Caye. Living conditions promised to be pretty rough as we would be living in tents, rationing fresh water and bathing in the salt water lagoon using Joy detergent. In addition to the heat, dirt, mosquitoes, Doctor Flies, scorpions and coconut crabs that loved to share tents with humans, there was the isolation in a small camp over twenty miles from running water and ice that I felt wouldn't be for anyone but the heartiest volunteer.

I needed sixty people to complete the crew and had selected fifty-eight when there was a polite knock on my office door. In walked two attractive women I guessed to be in their late

thirties who were absolutely dressed to the nines. Dripping with diamonds and clutching their Gucci purses, they looked all the world as if they had just come from a fashion show or a meeting of the Junior League. It was clear that these ladies were from the privileged class, having gone to the right finishing schools and seen the best orthodontists from the time they were children. Both, it turns out, were di-

vorces having recently parted company with their wealthy spouses and were ready for some real adventure. Instinct told me to hustle them out the door but as I listened to their enthusiastic pleas. I confess I weakened. They were, after all, well educated and not without charm. After a few minutes, I caved in. I decided to accept their applications, whereupon

Continued on Page 18



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San Pedro's Largest Gift Shop

Preparing for a Daytrip Continued from Page 15

on jungle pathways that can be slippery when wet and on surfaces that are uneven. A pair of tennis shoes or a fitted Teva-like sandal is your best bet, slip-on sandals and any kind of heel is a just a bad idea.

The larger tour companies, like SEArrious Adventures and SEAduced, stock their boats with coolers full of soda pop, water, Belikin beer and if you are lucky, rum punch. Most guides are attentive and generous, if they have something you need or forgot they will gladly share or accommodate you as best as possible.

Last, but not least, always day-trip with a small amount of cash. Even if the land part of your trip includes meals, you may decide you want an additional beverage at the local restaurant or come across a trinket you can't live without. If you don't spend the cash on your trip, and you enjoyed your journey, your guide will certainly appreciate a tip. Remember that this is his job, and that he might do the same trip day after day during the peak tourist season. Was he enthusiastic, friendly and helpful? If so let him know you appreciate the way he shared his incredible world with you.

By the end of the day you will be tired and elated by the unique experiences of the day behind you. Although you may be eager to pack in as many things in a day as possible while on your vacation,

chances are that when you do return to your room you will be ready for a shower, a low-keyed dinner and bed. Planning a big dinner (with reservations that you may be late for) and a night on the town may not sound all that exciting by the end of your day.

Chances are you will cherish the memory of your day for many years to come, and the more prepared you are the more you will enjoy your Belizean adventure.

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Good Things To Know About San Pedro Town & Belize

Government
Belize has been an independent nation since 1981. It is a member of the British Commonwealth of Nations.

Ambergris Caye
Ambergris Caye is twenty-five miles long; its width ranges from a few hundred feet to over four miles. Northern Ambergris Caye is separated from the southernmost tip of Mexico's Yucatan Peninsula by a small channel. After arriving in Belize City, a short fifteen minute airplane ride gets you to San Pedro, or if you would rather take the scenic route, an hour's boat ride will get you there as well.

Language
English is the official language and is widely spoken, as is Spanish. Other languages include Creole, Garifuna, Mayan and German.

Climate
Belize weather is characterized by two seasons: a rainy and a dry season. Most of the year's rainfall occurs during the period of June to November, that is, the rainy season. The average temperature varies from 81°F/27°C along the coast to 69°F/21°C in the hills. The coldest month is January while the highest temperatures are experienced during the month of May.

Cash & Currency
U.S. dollars are accepted as currency countrywide. The common exchange ratio is \$2BZ/\$1 U.S. Licensed moneychangers offer a slightly higher exchange rate, ranging from \$2.05BZ to \$2.12BZ, depending on the current market.
Nearly all hotels, restaurants and shops accept Visa, Master Card and travelers' checks. Street vendors and smaller establishments in remote areas may accept only cash or travelers' checks.

Sales Taxes
Belize's sales tax is set at 9% and it is applied to all goods and services, except for telecommunications. There is a 9% hotel tax. Some hotels also add a 10-15% "service charge" to the bill; inquire about this when checking hotel prices.

Transportation
The streets are sand, which is great for walking or bike riding. There are few cars; instead, the vehicles of choice are electric golf carts, which are available for rent. Please remember that all golf cart drivers MUST have a valid drivers license. Drive with caution, there are many speed bumps around the downtown area that are not marked and always be on the lookout for potholes. Taxi service is available everywhere south of Boca del Rio. Around town the average fee is \$7BZ. Some local business, as well as resorts, rent bicycles.

Telecommunications
All telecommunications services (direct dial phones, fax, telex, cable) are available. There are several "Internet Cafe's" on the island where you can access the internet through high-speed internet or satellite connections.

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Caribbean Pork Chops



- seeded and chopped
- *2 tbsp. chopped fresh cilantro
- *3/4 tsp. cinnamon
- *1/4 tsp. nutmeg

Directions:

Prepare marinade in gallon-size sealable plastic bag, combine pineapple juice, wine, 2 teaspoons oil, salt and pepper. Add pork chops. Seal bag. Refrigerate

Ingredients:

- *1/3 c. pineapple juice
- *2 oz. dry white wine or pineapple juice
- *1 tbsp. + 1 tsp. olive oil
- *1/4 tsp. salt
- *1/8 tsp. freshly ground pepper
- *4 (3 oz.) boneless loin pork chops
- *1/2 c. chopped onion
- *1/2 c. poblano pepper, seeded and minced
- *3 med. tomatoes, blanched, peeled,

at least 2 hours or overnight, turning bag over occasionally.

Prepare sauce, in small saucepan, heat remaining 2 tablespoons oil. Add onion and poblano pepper; cook, stir frequently 5 minutes until tender. Add remaining ingredients. Simmer 3 minutes.

Drain marinade into sauce. Bring to boil and simmer 10 minutes. Meanwhile grill chops 7 minutes on each side or until cooked through but still juicy. Serve each chop with sauce.



Dressed in fashion straight from the catwalks, with safari-esque themes, two lovely ladies, recently divorced, proved to Dr. Smith that archaeology knows no fashion boundaries!

they commenced a sort of cheerleader routine while giving me air kisses to both cheeks. My reasoning was along the lines of – what the hell, if nothing else they will provide some comic relief and if they cave on me I can always send them home.

The day they were to arrive in San Pedro, I waited anxiously at Tropic Air to collect the volunteers and start the long boat trip to Rocky Point. The door to the aircraft opened and out stepped my two cupcakes. This time I just knew they had made a special trip to Nieman-Marcus to get outfitted for the expedition. They looked

like they both had starring roles in one of those god-awful 1960's jungle movies ... you know, with leopard skin trim on their safari jackets, bush clothing that you don't get at the Army-Navy store and (I'm NOT making this up) pith helmets with little fans in the brim that were powered by solar panels on top of the hat. All they needed to complete the look was an elephant gun.

The first day in the excavation I decided to put these two in a relatively safe area and assign them a task I thought they could handle. To my surprise they did a very credible job and never complained about the bugs, dirt, sweat and broken fingernails. By the end of the first week, they had succeeded in making friends with everyone and provided all of us with a great deal of merriment with their running conversations. It was sort of like having Bette Midler and Goldie Hawn digging next to you.

Toward the end of the second week, I suddenly heard a series of ooooooh sounds that women usually reserve for moments of extreme ecstasy. You have probably guessed by now that the two best dressed archaeological volunteers in all of Christendom had found the jade. Great scholars they weren't, but those gals could spot jewelry at four hundred yards in the dark!



LUNA, Ambergris Caye's latest trendy restaurant, is now open. Serving Palm Tree Cuisine, a fusion of Central American and Caribbean delicacies, **LUNA** offers a selection of fresh local seafood, tender meats and exotic vegetables prepared by our renowned chef.

Menu selections include: Jerk Seared Sea Scallop Crouton, Smoked Oyster Bruschetta, Spinach Pesto Goat Cheese Salad, Rib-Eye Steak Argentino, Almond Nut Crusted Grouper, White Chocolate Pudding laced with a cardamom anglaise sauce, Strawberry & Mango Ice Parfait.

LUNA boasts an atmosphere of relaxed elegance and style, with inventive cuisine in an enchanting setting.

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Wolfe's Woofers by Dennis Wolfe

Professional Worrier

"Casey, how long have we known each other?" I asked.

"Well," Casey said. "I used to go to Sandal's Pub seventeen years ago when you and Charlie used to play music there. I reckon we actually first met back then."

"Yeah, that's about how long I figured," I said.

"Why was you wondering?"

"It's because I noticed a change in you over the last few years," I told him. "You used to always seem worried. Now, it's like you don't have a care in the world."

"I was worried back then," Casey said. "I worried about my health, about money, about my girlfriend, about business and a whole lot of things. I don't worry no more, though."

"It seems so," I said. "How did you manage to quit worrying?"

"I hired me a professional worrier for a thousand dollars a week. I ain't had a single problem since then."

"A thousand a week!?" I said. "How in the world are you going to pay him a thousand dollars a week?"

"The hell with him," Casey said. "That's his problem."

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Trivia Tidbits

*The church of Santa Maria delle Grazie in Milan was bombed during World War II. Miraculously, Michelangelo's Renaissance masterpiece "The Last Supper," which was housed there, survived. Today it is being restored to its original beauty.

*Alcoholics are twice as likely to confess a drinking problem to a computer, than to a doctor, say researchers in Wisconsin.

*The average male adult can bench-press 88 percent of his body weight, having 70 to 80 pounds of muscle.

*A mother giraffe often gives birth while standing, so the newborn's first experience outside the womb is a 1.8-meter (6-foot) drop. Ouch!

*Most tin is used to make containers for food and pastes. Over 100 billion such containers are manufactured each year.

*All the planets in our solar system could be placed inside the planet Jupiter.

*The Sun produces more energy every minute than all the energy used on Earth in a whole year.

*Popcorn was banned at most movie theaters in the 1920s because it was considered too noisy.

*The orchid is named after the male genitalia. Its botanical family name, Orchidaceae, means "testicles" in Greek and may derive from an early notion that the orchid possessed aphrodisiac qualities.

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 - ❖ **Caye Villas** – Beach villas with pool.

2 bed, 2 bath, fully furnished	\$394,000.
2 bed, 3 bath, fully furnished	\$395,000.
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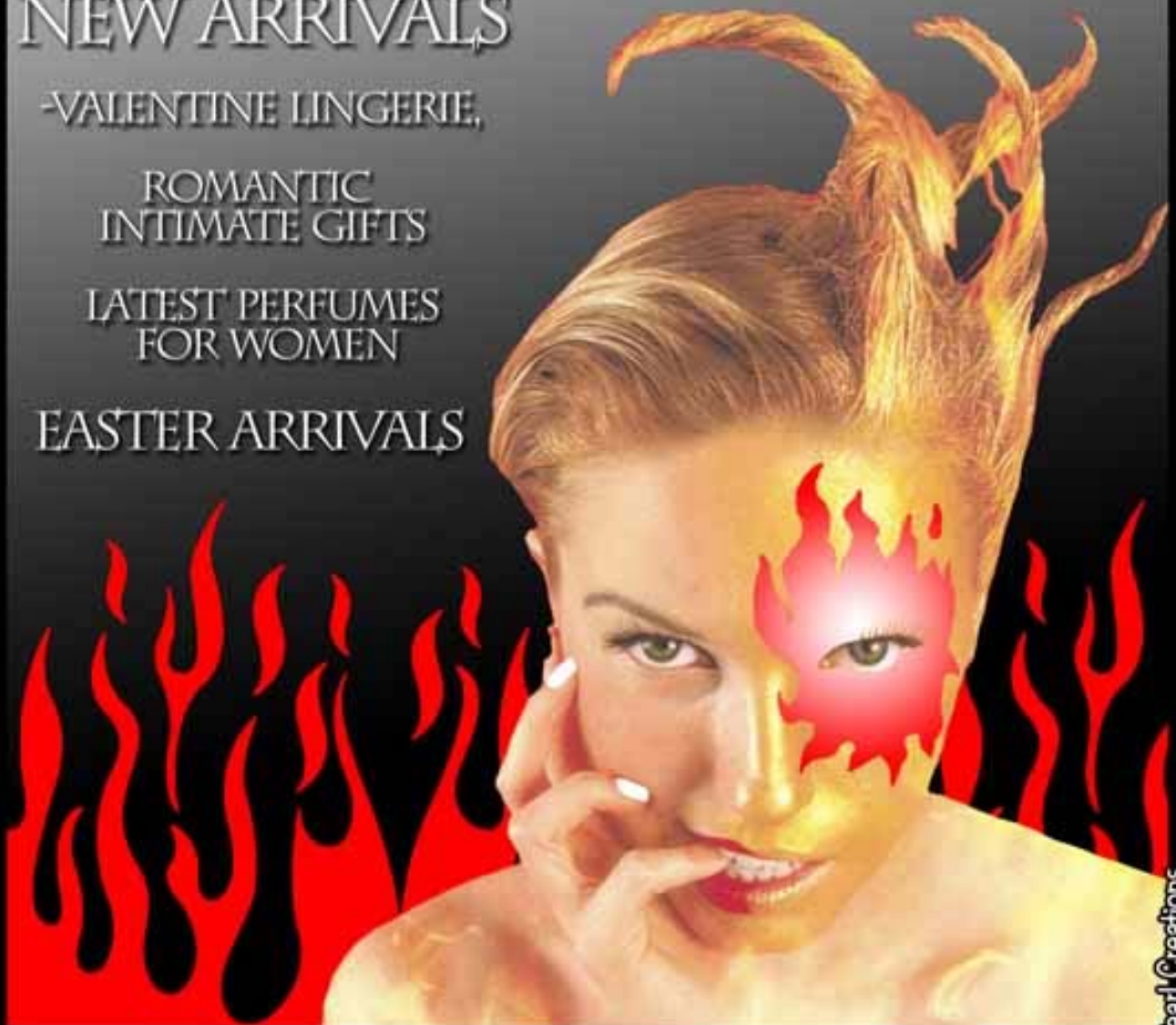
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