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Bulletin of the Rotary Club of Atenas









Count the fingers. This is the cute, cuddly one…

You cannot get through a single day without having an impact on the world around you. What you do makes a difference, and you have to decide what kind of difference you want to make.

--Jane Goodall

Meeting Highlights

This week's guest speaker was **Denise Gillen**, a retired senior zookeeper at the San Diego zoo. She came to Costa Rica to be a live-in sloth nanny for three years. Denise is blessed with the reputation of a spirited storyteller and she did not disappoint. Though it was a bummer that she didn't have a live ocelot, we did learn lots about the three- and two-fingered sloths.

- They are entirely different animals, having diverged from a common ancestor 30 million years ago. How long is 30M years? Bears and raccoons diverged from a common ancestor about the same time. The fact that the two different sloths look/act so similarly is an example of convergent evolution.
- Three-fingered sloths are the cute and cuddly ones. They're vegetarians.
- Two-fingered sloths are more aggressive, are omnivorous, and have canines that will leave a nasty, bacterial-filled bite. So don't pick them up.
- Both have extremely strong grips that can break fingers. So don't pick them up.
- Think twice when you are tempted to rescue them from the road.
- Both species are also prey for harpy eagles, which are no longer common in Costa Rica. The eagles are mentioned here because they are just so amazing in their own right. Too bad Denise didn't bring one of those, even better than an ocelot.

Denise wrote this cool book about her experiences.

As always, hyperlinks are active.

More Meeting Highlights

The balance of the meeting was an update on several noteworthy projects

- Fourth degree black belt **Lynn** is giving a self-defense class on September 24—World Polio Day—at Las Colinas del Sol from 3:30 to 5:00pm. This is a fundraiser to cover part of our club's commitment to Rotary International's End Polio Now initiative. For the 2026/27 year, our club has committed $500. Lynn is offering this class at 5000 colones. Contact Lynn for details.
- Seems like **Nancy**'s clothing drive for CAIPAD/APRODISA (the day center for Atenas residents with disabilities) has been a big hit. Give yourselves a round of applause. And if you haven't donated yet, you still can. Nancy will be making her presentation on October 7th. Come join us.
- **Leslie** has been reading to children at the daycare/preschool/afterschool program. If you'd like to participate and hang out with 3-to-6-year-olds, contact Leslie. There is a clearance form that needs to be filled out. Rumor has it that it can be found on our website AtenasRotary.org.



This one is not.



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- Speaking of which, stop by the website and check it out. Contact Lynn if you can't get in. She's put a lot of work into this. Least you can do, yeah?
- Asada and desk projects are moving at a snail's pace. The mayor's office has made provisions in next year's budget for the asada work. And **Mary Beth** may have a lead on some used desks in New York.
- Strategic planning committee will be having their first meeting in October.
- Finally, fundraising committee is hoping to raise money with restaurant participation and a tent at the community's monthly-ish fairs on the plaza. I bought a tent!

Member News & Happy Dollars

Today's guests:

- Denise, our sloth-loving storyteller and she had a birthday this past week!
- Ricardo, (3rd meeting) our local woman's futbol coach.
- Chip (3rd meeting) and Kenneth (2nd meeting)
- And Katja, Karen, Stephanie, Juan, and Ally (I believe all first-time attendees).

All joined the usual suspects: Eric, Lynn, Fabricio, Everett, MaryBeth, Leslie, John, Joe, Robin, and Nancy.

Happy People

- Mary Beth gets to go see fall leaves in upstate New York.
- Eric is doubly happy because of our great turnout and his anniversary (Lynn may have also been happy in there).
- Fabricio is happy to have ten healthy toes and maybe a healthy car.
- Nancy has a s&@t-ton of clothes to donate. So she's happy.
- And Ricardo expressed happiness for a personal life-changing event. We hope to see more of him in the future.

Upcoming Events

Next fundraising committee on September 24 at 9:00 at Robin's place. Out by 10:45 peeps! She's gotta work.

Lynn's self-defense class, also on September 24 at 3:30 at Las Colinas del Sol.

Bored meeting at Eric and Lynn's on September 25 at 9:00 (and yes, I know it's misspelled. Have *you* gone to one of these?)

Next Meetings

- October 1 **Margaret Centorceli** director of Arte Vive con Causa will be speaking about the 6th Annual Art & Music Festival from November 27th through November 29th, 2026
- Oct 15 **Shelly Robinson** and **Rainee Busby** will give us an overview of UPE, the new non-social collaboration tool. They will also introduce the new Health & Aging Support program.

PS: Check out the links. Some cool vids.