In this week’s issue:

**Yumil**

A Great Mayan Culinary Adventure

**Raccoons**

Lively Critters of the Caribbean

**The Crystal Skull**

Is it truth or all a Myth?

Diners are given the royal treatment at Yumil, where Mayan culture meets modern cuisine for a unique blend.

What does this beautiful piece of Mayan Pottery have to do with Yumil? You can take it home as a souvenir!

It is estimated that without the use of modern tools, the creation of this crystal skull would have taken 300 years!
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 sanctuaries 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.

Bienvenidos a San Pedro!

Elsa Paz, Mayor, San Pedro Town
Bartholomew Roberts, pictured above preferred to wear fancy gentleman’s clothes: a rich crimson waistcoat and breeches, a hat with a red feather and a diamond cross hanging from a golden chain around his neck.

Bartholomew Roberts, referred to as the “Great Pirate Roberts,” roamed the seas in the early eighteenth century. Pirate Roberts’ reputation grew immensely as he traveled the coasts of North and South America to the extent that guard ships stationed in the West Indies were reluctant to get involved with him, and even seemed to sail out of their way to avoid confrontation. But, who was the Great Pirate Roberts?

Bartholomew Roberts was one of the most successful and menacing pirates in the Golden Age of Piracy. Although, he had a brief career, less than four years, during that time he was able to capture a mind staggering total of more than 400 ships and over fifty million pounds of loot.

Born in Southern Wales in 1682, John Roberts became Bartholomew Roberts in June of 1719 when the ship he was third mate on was captured off Ghana by Howell Davis, another great pirate of the era. Roberts had been engaged in purchasing slaves for the Royal Africa Company. Upon his capture, Roberts was forced to join Davis’ crew. About a month later, Davis was ambushed and killed by the governor of Principe Island. In his short time on the pirate ship, Roberts proved his competency and superiority, so the crew elected him Howell’s successor. Hence, he became known as “Black Bart” and sailed the seas looting wherever he went. Growing tired of the pickings off the Guinea Coast, Roberts sailed to the Brazilian coast.

Roberts sailed for Brazil during which time he managed to capture a Dutch ship and burn an English slave ship. “Black Bart” was perhaps the most successful pirate of all time; he encouraged prayer, drank a lot of tea instead of alcohol and forbid drinking and gambling. He preferred to wear fancy gentleman’s clothes: a rich crimson waistcoat and breeches, a hat with a red feather and a diamond cross hanging from a golden chain around his neck.

Roberts was known as a tall, dark, and attractive man, with “personal bravery, though he applied it to such wicked purposes.” In time of action, he was known to carry two pairs of pistols at the end of a silk sling across his shoulder. Black Bart’s boldness was reflected in his reliance on the unusual, relying on the both surprising and awe-some. For example, Roberts and his crew, sailed into Trepassey in New-Continued on Page 14
Located at the Belize Yacht Club’s prominent Convention Center is San Pedro’s newest culinary sensation – Yumil. Inspired by the rich Mayan culture and heritage, Yumil, aptly named after the Maize God, promises to delight you in more ways than one and you can be certain that Yumil is more than your regular dining experience. The charming staff, delicious menu, and diverse amenities guarantee an exceptional dining experience.

Chief Executive Officer (CEO), Sergio Torres, is no stranger to the hospitality business. For nearly two decades his experience has come from working with some of the world’s most distinguished hotels, such as the Marriott and Hilton conglomerates. Born in Guatemala and raised in Belize City, Mr. Torres told The San Pedro Sun that he has always been fascinated with the Mayan culture, and was very inspired to incorporate the Maya culture into the classic Latin style of the restaurant. He emphasized that top priorities are customer service and the meals. Trained to be attentive and amiable by nature, the wait staff wears white Guatemalan shirts embroidered with colorful flowers. Mr. Torres points out that many of his staff are of Mayan descent, and that while working there they are also discovering their own heritage.

As you enter the second floor restaurant, customers are greeted by the hostess who welcomes you into the spa-cious and elegant bar. Exotic and inviting, the large wooden bar begs of quality time spent sipping martinis and savoring fine cigars. The capable and outgoing bartenders whip up the cocktail of your choice and whatever your tastes may be, Yumil’s drink connoisseurs will gladly prepare that special concoction just for you.

Once you are ready to delight your taste buds with a delicious meal, you can choose to sit either on the outside terrace under an umbrella while you enjoy the sights and sounds of this tropical paradise, complete with a spectacular view of Belize’s Barrier Reef, or inside in their intimate dining room. Situated under a huge, thatched palapa roof, the room is splashed in bold tropical colors of saffron yellow and hibiscus red. Yumil embraces the seductive atmosphere of colonial Cuba, reminiscent of the Bogart, Bergman classic film Casa Blanca and the popular 2004 movie Havana Nights. Sensual lighting, smooth Latin tunes and quaint table settings invite you to sit and bask in the warm, romantic surroundings.

Wherever you decide to enjoy your meal, you can be certain that Yumil’s atmosphere will enchant and delight you.

The menu is a palate of Caribbean and Mayan delights, with splendid choices such as tender steaks wrapped in bacon, savory lobster Thermidor or fabulous pasta creations. At Yumil, the choices are extensive and ever changing. The able and masterful chefs blend flavorful Mayan ingredients with the freshest foods to bring you a first class, ylil: An Authentic Mayan Taste Trip

Continued on Page 5
sumptuous meal, whether you are having a simple appetizer or an elaborate dinner. Yumil aims to please, whether you are there for dinner, lunch or breakfast.

For lunch, Yumil shines with divine salads (the balsamic steak and feta cheese salad – exquisite), tasty soups (conch chowder or seafood soup are a must), and scrumptious burgers and sandwiches (Philly steak sandwich or Mayan meatball sandwich).

At Yumil, you can be certain that your day will begin perfectly with breakfast dishes such as the Splasher – a toasted Bagel sandwich with fried egg, crisp bacon and sliced tomato; Blueberry pancakes; Eggs Benedict; or the Ix Chel breakfast – six ounces of Sirloin Steak, pan broiled to your desired taste and topped with a poached egg and served on an English muffin.

For those who may be a late riser, you will be pleased to know that Yumil serves breakfast any time of the day! An amazing restaurant offering wonderful amenities, Yumil, is fast gaining the envious reputation of the must go to restaurant. At Yumil, you can truly embrace the Mayan culture. After you have ordered the meal of your choice, the waiter brings over a booklet for you to read while you wait. This book teaches you the way to write your name in Mayan glyphs. The concept

Apart from the fantastic decor and great service, the food at Yumil speaks highly of the trained chefs. With high quality ingredients such as Rib-eye steak, creatively served on an island of mashed potatoes, surrounded by fresh steamed vegetables, the meal is a feast for the eyes and palate.

Not only are the artwork pieces available for sale, but the centerpieces, which are beautifully decorated Mayan pottery, are also available as a souvenir. Customers can choose to have their names engraved in Mayan Glyphs onto the pottery for an even more authentic gift to take home!

Casa Cayo Real Estate
Serving Belize from the Mountains to the Reef!
www.casacayorealstate.net

FEATURED PROPERTY
Perla Escondida Condominiums
$169,000 to $220,000 US

FEATURING PROPERTY

Perla Escondida Condominiums

$169,000 to $220,000 US

Beachfront Condominiums located just south of San Pedro Town. 2/2 fully furnished units. Great income potential. Manicured Beach, Pool, and rooftop sun deck are only a few of the amenities. Condominiums of this size and affordable price are hard to find. GOB says barges are moving soon...act fast as prices will soar!!

RECENTLY REDUCED PRICING ON THESE GREAT HOME SITES!!!

Tres Cocos Home Sites -$250,000 Each These beachfront home sites are located immediately south of San Pedro Town. Some of the very best estate sites on the island. Three sites available totaling 150’ of beachfront.

Coconut Beach - $175,000 US - Home sites available north on Ambergris Caye. These 100’x200’ sites are on some of the prettiest beach on the island. Sites available are 2A, 3A, and 8A. Call or stop by for a map. Price is per site.

Club Caribbean Home Sites - $14,950/$85,000 US - Beachfront and interior home sites located south of San Pedro on Ambergris Caye. These sites are some of the most affordable on the island of Ambergris Caye! NEW - Backfilled sites with seawall coming soon $130,000 US each. Reserve Yours Today! Selling fast!

Santa Matilda Subdivision Home Sites - $35,000/$65,000 US - Affordable interior home sites available north on Ambergris Caye.

Punta Azul Home Sites - $7950/$15,900 US - 75’x115’ interior home sites with ocean views located north on Ambergris Caye.

Island Park Estates Home Sites - $145,000/$360,000 US - 80’ beachfront home sites with bulkhead, native vegetation, high ground. Interior sites also available.

Continued from Page 4
An unlikely critter of the Caribbean, the Northern Raccoon (*Procyon lotor*), is extremely adaptable, being found in many kinds of habitats and easily living near humans. This familiar “bandito” ranges from North and South America and a few tropical islands, such as Ambergris Caye. They have been introduced to parts of Asia and Europe and are now widely distributed there as well. The raccoon family also includes the New World crab-eating raccoon, *P. cancrivorus*, which is a semi-aquatic, reddish-colored South American species. Other species that are found on Caribbean islands include the coatimundi, cacomistle (ring-tailed cat), and kinkajou as well as the red panda. Raccoons require ready access to water, and live in a variety of habitats, including marshes, forests, prairies, cities and suburbs. Population densities vary widely with habitat type. Rabies may substantially impact population densities, with populations doubling in density during times of low rabies incidence.

Known as *mapache* in Spanish, the most distinguishable characteristics of the raccoon are its black mask across the eyes and bushy tail with anywhere from four to ten black rings. Raccoons have a highly developed tactile sense. Their human-like forepaws resemble slender human hands and are especially sensitive and enable the raccoon to handle and pry open prey and climb with ease. Both their forepaws and hind paws have five toes. They usually pick up food with their front paws before putting it in their mouth. With their fine sense of hearing, raccoons are also especially alert. Similarly, raccoons have excellent night vision. Coloration varies with habitat, but tends to range from grey to reddish brown to buff. Raccoons are stocky in build and generally weigh from six to seven kilograms. Weight varies with habitat and region, though, and can range from 1.8 to 10.4kg. Raccoons are capable of achieving body masses made up of 50% body fat, but it is mostly raccoons in the northern parts of the range that become this fat. Males are usually heavier than females by 10 to 30%. Body length ranges from 603 to 950 mm. Their tails comprise about 42% to 52% of their length, from 192 to 405 mm. Their common gait is a shuffle like walk, however, they are able to reach speeds of 15 miles per hour on the ground. Raccoons climb with great agility and are not bothered by a drop of 35 to 40 feet. As well as being excellent climbers, raccoons are strong swimmers, although they may be reluctant to do so. Without waterproof fur, swimming forces them to take on extra weight. Raccoons may live up to 16 years in the wild, but most don’t.

Just the sight of a raccoon brings to mind mischief. Pictured above are two raccoons who are probably up to no good!
Yumil  Continued from Page 5

may not be the easiest to understand, but Yumil’s staff will gladly assist you. Once you have figured out how your name will look in Mayan, Yumil offers you the choice of having it painted or sculptured into a work of art by a skilled local artist. A true souvenir!

Yumil’s walls are beautifully decorated with colorful, exquisite works of art that are available for purchase. Not only are the paintings for sale, but so are the unique pottery centerpieces on the tables. The centerpiece of your choice can also be inscribed with your name in Maya to make the piece even more special and unique. Through a partnership with local galleries, Isla Bonita Gallery and Frame Shop and Orange Gift Shop, not only can you enjoy and admire the artwork but you can take a part of Yumil home with you.

Yumil also has a wide array of cigars for sale. Those who enjoy the great taste of a good cigar have fun choosing a cigar from Yumil’s humidor. After a delightful dinner, a fine cigar such as Cohiba, Bolivar, Romeo y Julieta, Hoyos de Monterrey, Montecristo among others is a great treat to enjoy along with your favorite after dinner cocktail.

After evening diners are satiated, the Yumil dining room is transformed into an intimate after-dinner dance lounge where guests can cumbia the night away. Yumil’s expert disc jockey plays the wonderful beats of, salsa, merengue, cumbia and other Latin beats to entice you into getting out of your seat and dance while enjoying the wonderful ambience, along with a few yummy drinks, of course.

With its grand opening, Yumil proudly opened the doors for service on October 8th, 2005. Customers enjoyed their meals to the last bite. Ken and Tina Mander of the United Kingdom stated, “The Steak and Feta Cheese was absolutely to die for as was the Rib Eye Steak! Definitely recommend this restaurant to everyone!” Greg and Kathy Pasier of Houston, Texas, USA stated, “The seafood was excellent!”

With these high praises, Yumil has also introduced the Sunday Brunch. You can enjoy the buffet style brunch of tender steak bits with eggs, muffins, and fresh fruits. Of course delicious lunch items are available along with the Belizean mainstay of stewed chicken with rice and beans. All you can eat for a reasonable price. So, bring the entire family to delight in Yumil’s Sunday Brunch.

CEO Sergio Torres along with food and beverage manager Deona Pilgrim welcome you to what will certainly be a fabulous explosion to all your senses. Visit Yumil for breakfast, lunch, or dinner from 6:30 a.m. to 10:00 p.m. – the restaurant does not close any hours in between. Enjoy the after hours dance which goes on until 12 midnight. But, begin your Sunday right with a family brunch which starts at 6:30 and goes on until 2:00 p.m. Come enjoy the sensation that is Yumil, only at the Belize Yacht Club’s convention center.

Enjoy the spacious and elegant bar, where Yumil’s drink connoisseurs will gladly whip up the drink of your choice.
In Channel 7 News’ ongoing series “Glimpses into the Past” with Belize’s Chief Archaeologist Dr. Jaime Awe, News Director Jules Vasquez has taken viewers into caves, atop Mayan temples, and gone through many mysteries of Mayan civilization. Throughout, Dr. Awe has steered clear of controversy, siding mostly with conventional theories of the rise, reign and fall of the Mayas. But, the discipline and study of archaeology is not just cold facts and carbon dating, there is a bit of entertainment to it as well. And at the border between archaeology and quackery is the Crystal Skull.

It is one of the greatest and most bewildering mysteries of Belizean archaeology but more than that, the Crystal Skull is one of the most visually stunning objects known to mankind. It is all these things and the subject of an ongoing dispute in archaeological circles: is it real, or is it a hoax, is it Mayan pre-Columbian, or European modern and does it really matter anyway.

In an interview with Dr. Awe, he stated, “After the Jade Head, I think that the Crystal Skull is very likely the second most famous, or perhaps the most infamous artifact,” says Dr. Awe. Infamous mostly because of a man, Mitchell Hedges, a British explorer and adventurer who claims he found it at Lubantuun in Punta Gorda located in the Toledo District in 1927. “In 1943, Mr. Mitchell Hedges wrote an autobiography and he claimed that he found the Crystal Skull at Lubantuun. His stories led him on to great fame as an adventurer, great enough for a meeting with the queen. When he died, his only heir, stepdaughter Ana Mitchell-Hedges continued with that fame. Their fame is unrivalled, but Awe says it’s built on a myth. New evidence shows that Hedges’ Lubantuun story is easily and resolutely debunked.

“We know that Sotheby’s was auctioning the Crystal Skull in 1943. Why do we know that? Because the British Museum tried to purchase it but the gentleman that they sent to purchase it was only able to produce 350 pounds and he recorded that he lost the bid to an adventurer by the name of F.A. Mike Mitchell-Hedges who bought it for 400 pounds. 1943, that’s when Mitchell published his autobiography, a book called Danger, My Ally, in which he told the story of how he found the Crystal Skull at Lubantuun. His stories led him on to great fame as an adventurer, great enough for a meeting with the queen. When he died, his only heir, stepdaughter Ana Mitchell-Hedges continued with that fame.

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“So why did he make up the story? Dr. Jaime Awe thinks he might have a plausible answer. “I think that the reason why he claims that it came from the elders of the village, which would have to be San Pedro Columbia in Toledo, said to him, ‘you can keep it.’ Now I am certain that if any cultural group saw this and knew that this was something from their heritage, they would not have said, ‘oh no take it, go with it.’” Dr. Awe continued, “And thereafter they took it to England, because Mitchell Hedges was an English man, and he was actually down in Lubantuun at the time when the British Museum from London England was doing a research project at Lubantuun. Now this is what he claims but interestingly nothing is said, and nobody knows anything about this Crystal Skull until 1943.”

Now there are other things that we also know. So that would make sense why Mitchell-Hedges doesn’t publish anything on it until 1943, after 1943, in other words after he bought it,” said Dr. Awe.

Continued on Page 9
Lubaantun is because he was trying to legitimize the object. He was trying to say this is a real artifact. Now I don’t know why Mitchell-Hedges may have wanted to do that because he didn’t need to do that. There were all kinds of tests done on this thing and this is a unique object. It is an artifact. And today we also know that the Aztec culture in Mexico had produced several Crystal Skulls, none as beautiful as the Crystal Skull from Belize, but nonetheless there are several of them and we have images of them.”

Indeed there are several, but those skulls look nothing like this one, which experts say was never touched with metal implements. Awe says that while Mitchell’s story may be bogus, the Crystal Skull is not.

“Most of us believe it is a post classic object so it is made during the height of Aztec civilization which goes from 1200 to about 1400 AD. So it is ancient. It was produced before Europeans came to the New World, without a doubt. People have done tests on it,” says Dr. Awe. So if it was a Pre-Colombian object, with a possible origin in Mexico, why is Belize so eager to claim it?

He continues, “It is of dubious origin. I guess that is the best way to put it and it is not like the Jade Head. The Jade Head is of definite origin. Because remember if it was a fake, I would say don’t bother. But it is not a fake, it is a real pre-Hispanic or pre-historic object. Thus it is an artifact, a valid artifact, and if people have it claim that it came from Belize, then I say give it back to us. If I knew that it was a fake I would say no.”

But unlike some in the archaeology field who frown on the dubious skull, Awe would never say no to the object. Why? “Because it is an amazing and unique piece of art and it is very sexy and if we could have it here in Belize, let’s do it. I am all for it.”

So while Anna Hedges, now in her late 80’s, clings to the skull and its dubious fame at her home in Canada, Awe says Belize’s Department of Archaeology will keep asking her to return it to the place she claims is its home, Belize, because if she’ll stick to that story, so can we.

Awe’s predecessor, the late Harriot Topsey made a trip to Canada to personally request that Ana Mitchell Hodges bequeath the item to Belize. She gave no commitment, and to this day there is no indication what she will do with the skull.
A Lover’s Paradise

To Joan

I
How can it be,
That tropic beauty beguiles us.
What do we see,
In a land warm and bounteous.

II
Why does a rose,
Bring back a forgotten love.
Making long-lost friends,
Into happy, new beaux -
Then coupling those hearts,
As in heaven above.

Just touch and be near to -
Bring sighs and sights.

III
And where is our love’s,
One and true place.
A sweet special somewhere -
Bringing a warm glow,
To your charming face.

A rendezvous to build,
New warmth and desire.
And rekindle at long last,
Our love’s smoldering fire.

IV
Find it on an island’s,
Soft afternoon showers.
Lost in its warmth,
Of pleasant hours:

From its fair mountains,
To a Caribbean breeze.
Search the world around us,
In a quest to believe.

Her charms having found us,
We need search, never more.
The warm zephyr’d magic,
Of lovely Belize.

R. L. Lyons

My wife, Joan, and I stayed on Ambergris Caye and had a wonderful time at Belizean Shores Resort.

Everyone on the caye was kind and helpful. The area has just the right balance of wonderful people and perfect diving locales. A place that could make retirement a joy. My wife loved to dive for hours at a time. I now am beginning to see what Hemingway found so charming in these islands.

San Pedro Roman Catholic School – Brightening the minds of San Pedro’s youth. Contact Principal Roxanni Kay – 226-2550, roxanicruz@yahoo.com

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

Lions Club of San Pedro – Relies on income from its Friday and Saturday Night BBQ to support the needy community. Help a great cause. Contact President Isela Graniel – 226-2028.

The Governor General’s Music in Schools Program, San Pedro Chapter – c/o San Pedro Town Council, P.O. Box 54, 226-2198, g_gmusicinschoolsspc@yahoo.com An organization created to develop and promote the love of music and the practice of the arts throughout Belize.

San Pedro High School – Helping students “Anchor in Success.” Contact Principal Angel Nuñez or Chairperson Mrs. Martha Guerrero at 226-2045/2010/2043.

SP AIDS Commission - A non-profit organization that helps educate and inform the society in ways to help AIDS victims and their families.

San Pedro Public Library - A public service that helps promote the importance of literacy and education for the betterment of lives and the community. 206-2028.

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Reef Brief
By Green Reef Peace Corps Volunteer Nicki Vassak

Are fish farms the way of the future for Belize?

Aquaculture is one of the oldest forms of farming, having originated in China thousands of years ago. According to the Belize Fishermen Cooperative Association the term is defined as: The rearing of aquatic plants and animals in a controlled natural environment, or in man-made ponds, at densities greater than those found under natural conditions; primarily by controlling one or more phases of their biological cycle, or the environment in which they develop.

With the ever-increasing demand for seafood products, natural stocks are diminishing rapidly, creating worldwide concern about the measures that must be taken to preserve natural fisheries. While the normal yield of the sea is approximately two kilograms/hectare, and freshwater fisheries about 12 kilograms/hectare, farm ponds have been known to produce up to 5,000 kilograms/hectare. In addition to food production, aquaculture products can be utilized for genetic engineering, bio-medical research and pharmaceutical purposes.

Belize possesses several competitive advantages that present a bright future for its aquaculture industry. The tropical climate allows for year-round production; wide-ranging habitats exist for different types of culture methods; there is a labor market surplus, and the geographical location provides proximity to international market destinations. In addition, Belize’s government provides fiscal incentives to investors, providing for corporate tax holidays and duty exemptions on equipment, among other things.

However, despite these advantages, aquaculture also demonstrates potential to damage the environment and to contribute to the collapse of Belize’s fisheries if it is mismanaged or done without consideration for its external impacts. The heterogeneity of aquaculture systems, in size, location, and contribution to the local economy, makes it difficult to characterize the industry as “good” or “bad.” Each type of aquaculture system has legitimate benefits as well as serious costs, and because aquaculture products are traded on an international market, there is a responsibility to promote sustainable aquaculture.

For this reason, there is a great local awareness of the value of aquaculture as it pertains to the sustainability of natural fisheries. The Belize Fishermen Cooperative Association, Ltd. (BFCA), which provides legal, educational and technical services to its members, has recently been focusing its efforts on training programs, in order to assist local fishermen in making the transition to farm-based fisheries. The BFCA works closely with the Fisheries Department and some foreign aid organizations to work toward the common goal of fishing sustainability.

Currently, the majority of investments in Belize aquaculture are in shrimp farming. Other species cultured here include the Australian Red Claw Lobster and fin fish, namely Tilapia and Red Drum.

The majority of investments by the Belize Fishermen Cooperative Association Ltd. are in shrimp farming. However, other species including the Tilapia and Red Drum are also cultivated.

The reef brief is followed by a real estate advertisement, which is not relevant to the content of the text and is not included in the natural text representation.
The Raccoon
Continued from Page 6

make it past their second year. If they survive their youth, raccoons may live an average of 5 years in the wild. The primary causes of death are humans (hunting, trapping, cars) and malnutrition. Raccoons escape many predators by remaining inactive during the day in a den. While active they remain alert and can be aggressive. They are preyed on by large predators such as coyotes, wolves, large hawks, and owls. Their young may be taken by snakes as well.

Raccoons don’t travel any farther than necessary and usually just far enough to meet the demands of their appetites. They are nocturnal, opportunistic omnivores and find much of their food in water. They will eat almost anything, including frogs, crayfish, birds, eggs, mice (and other small mammals), fruit, nuts, plants, crops, and garbage. They travel in straight lines between their dens and rich food patches. In some habitats plants provide a larger percentage of a raccoon’s diet than animals do. In some areas, corn is the most important item in their diet. Generally raccoons consume more invertebrates than vertebrates. When water is available they may dip their food before eating; this so-called “washing” is associated with behaviors used for location and capture of aquatic prey, such as crayfish and frogs. Raccoons have adapted to include trash and other food available in suburban and urban areas in their diet. Some raccoons eat carrion from road killed animals. Raccoons impact the population sizes of their primary prey items. In some areas where they eat mainly one type of prey, such as crayfish, this can have a large impact on community composition.

Home range diameters are typically from 1 to 3 km. During the mating season, raccoon males frequently expand their home ranges, presumably to include the home ranges of more females as potential mates. Females are sometimes found temporarily denning with males during the mating season. After mating there is no association of males and females. Primarily a solitary animal, the only real social groups raccoons form are that of mother and young. Occasionally a male may stay with a female for a month prior to breeding and until after the birth of their young.

Raccoons generally have one litter per year. Litter sizes range from 3 to 7, but are typically 4. The gestation period is 63 to 65 days. Sexual maturity often occurs in females before they are one year old, and in males at two years. Mating season is from February through June, with most mating in March. Northern populations tend to breed earlier than southern populations. Young are born blind and helpless in a tree den, their eyes open at 18 to 24 days of age, and they are weaned after 70 days. Newborn raccoons do not have black eye patches or a ringed tail; these develop after a few days. By 20 weeks old the young regularly forage with their mother at night and continue to stay in the den with her. The young remain with their mother through their first winter, be-

Jose shows off his baby pet raccoon, “Princess”, while brother, Javier looks on.

Raccoons as pets: Raccoons raised by humans may make suitable pets; however, raccoons are not domesticated animals. Those who so live with them find they make fascinating and funny companions, although prone to a little, or maybe lots, of mischief. Training a raccoon is an intensive and ongoing process, and the raccoon may still have behavioral problems like biting and destructive play. Raccoons are susceptible to distemper and rabies and may carry roundworm. Captive raccoons may develop obesity and other disorders because of unnatural diet and lack of exercise; furthermore, it may be difficult to find a vet who is willing to deal with them. In any case, it is best if the raccoons are very used to being handled a lot and from an early age. This will help make them more sociable and less prone to bite. Raccoons are prone to biting, especially if they feel threatened, so be prepared that this may happen. Be prepared to make a commitment to a raccoon. They need lots of care and attention, as well as supervision. If well cared for it is reasonable to expect them to live for ten to fifteen years, so the commitment is not to be taken lightly. You also need to consider what will happen should you no longer be able to keep the raccoon. Raccoons raised in captivity and released often do not adapt to life outside. They can’t go back to wild living once being used to the pet life.
The Raccoon
Continued from Page 12
coming independent early the following spring. Mothers and young often den nearby even after they have reached maturity.

Raccoons may be a nuisance to farmers. They can cause damage to orchards, vineyards, melon patches, cornfields, peanut fields and chicken yards. Their habit of moving on to the next ear of corn before finishing the first makes them especially damaging to fields of both sweet corn and field corn. Raccoons also carry sylvatic plague, rabies, and other diseases and parasites that can be transmitted to humans and domestic animals.

Raccoon pelts have been harvested since the colonial period. During the 1920s, “coon” coats were popular making a pelt worth about $14US. Although demand is no longer as high, raccoon pelts may still be sold as imitation mink, otter, or seal fur. Raccoons are also eaten in some areas.

Since the turn of the century raccoon populations have grown and their distribution may have expanded. Their ability to adapt to human-dominated landscapes has contributed to their expansion in numbers and range. Small, isolated, island populations of raccoons may, on the other hand, be threatened. Recent authors consider some island species of raccoons to be conspecific (of the same species) with Procyon lotor. These subspecies are found in Mexico on the Marias Islands and Cozumel, in the Bahamas and on Guadeloupe Island in the French Antilles. These are all considered endangered.

The San Pedro Sun Virtual Taste Trip
Bananas have forever been associated with tropical, lush settings. A slice of the following recipe will certainly remind you of sultry San Pedro Town.

Old Fashioned Banana Cream Pie
Ingredients:
* 1 pie crust (9 inch), baked
* 3 tablespoons cornstarch
* 1 2/3 cups water
* 14 ounces sweetened condensed milk
* 3 egg yolks, beaten
* 2 tablespoons butter
* 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
* 3 medium bananas
* lemon juice
* whipped cream

Method:
* In heavy saucepan, dissolve cornstarch in water; stir in sweetened condensed milk and egg yolks. Cook and stir until thickened and bubbly.
* Remove from heat; add butter and vanilla. Cool slightly. Slice 2 bananas; dip in lemon juice and drain. Arrange on bottom of prepared crust. Pour filling over bananas; cover. Chill 4 hours or until set.
* Spread top with whipped cream. Slice remaining banana; dip in lemon juice, drain and garnish top of pie. Refrigerate leftovers.

Serving Size: 6

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The Pier Lounge
"Don’t Miss Our Annual Halloween Party"
The Great Pirate
Roberts
Continued from Page 3

foundland, with a sloop of ten guns manned by sixty men, with “black colors flying, drums beating and trumpets sounding.” There were twenty-two ships in anchor in the harbor at that time, and all the crews immediately withdrew from the site and fled to safety off shore.

In January 1720, Roberts took piracy into another level when he chose to target the people of Martinique. Roberts added a 32 gun Dutch slaver which he used to trick the inhabitants of that quaint island. Roberts sailed the Dutch slaver past the harbors of Martinique and signaled the Frenchmen that were stationed there to visit Saint Lucia. He told them of a profit to be made buying slaves there. Roberts waited for his prey at Saint Lucia and seized and destroyed 14 French ships. The French prisoners were severely tortured and some were killed. The “fortune” was replaced by an 18 gun brigantine re-

Main, having lasted over a year in the Navy infested waters of the Caribbean. At this time, he returned across the Atlantic to sell his stolen wares and to plunder the African coast.

On February 5th, a British man-of-war, the “Swallow” captained by Challoner Ogle caught up with Roberts near Cape Lopez in Gadon. Some say Roberts mistook the “Swallow” as a Portuguese trader and closed to fight her. Others say Ogle found the “Royal Fortune” at anchor with most of Roberts’ crew drunk or hung over after celebrating the taking of a prize the night before. Roberts took the Royal Fortune toward the swallow hoping to escape with the help of the wind. Once in range, Ogle sent a bombardment of cannon fire to the pirates and immediately Roberts’ men responded in kind. When the smoke cleared, the crew saw that Bartholomew Roberts was slumped over a cannon and had been killed in the first and only barrage. The crew showing loyalty towards Roberts, threw his body overboard rather than letting it fall into the hands of the Brit-

ish. With the devastated moral, the pirates attempted to flee, but they were overtaken easily, because their mizzen topmast had been damaged. Roberts’ crew soon surrendered and were taken prisoner. Later they were tried at the Cape Coast in Ghana. Of these, 74 were acquitted, 70 black pirates were returned to slavery, 54 pirates were hanged and 37 received lesser sentences.

Shortly after this, piracy almost completely died. The names of men like Roberts reached immortality even if their lives were short and although piracy would flare up every now and then, it never again reached the intensity of this golden age of piracy.

Roberts was 3rd mate to Captain Davis, who was killed during an ambush; he was named Davis’ successor.

Roberts had a brief career, less than four years, yet he captured a mind-staggering total of more than 400 ships and over 5 million pounds of loot.

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


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

Serving breakfast, lunch and dinner...
“Hey, Norm. How’s it going?”

“Oh, pretty good,” Norman Evanko said. “Are we still on for going to Chetumal this week?”

“If the weather lets us,” I said. “It looks like we might end up with another hurricane. If it’s not out of the picture I’m going to stay right here until it’s done.”

“I’m meeting Pam here in a few minutes,” he said. “I need to let her know what’s going on with the trip.”

When Pam came in Norm and I were discussing the war in Iraq as ex-soldiers will always discuss war.

“Here’s your usual, Miss Pam,” Ernie said, as he handed her a drink.

“It’s a long story,” Norm said.

“I noticed Pam turn pale when Norm said this,” I thought.

“My God,” she said. “That is horrible! This is the reason I hate war so much. Even Hitler and Idi Amin together didn’t kill that many people.”

*In seventeenth-century Japan, no citizen was allowed to leave the country on penalty of death. Anyone caught coming or going without permission was executed on the spot.

*In seventeenth-century Japan, no citizen was allowed to leave the country on penalty of death. Anyone caught coming or going without permission was executed on the spot.

*An ostrich may weigh as much as 300 pounds. Its intestinal tract is 45 feet long.

*Believe it or not, 175 people are needed to assemble the approximate 500 tons of equipment for the Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Circus – the “Biggest Show on Earth.”

*The human heart creates enough pressure when it pumps out to the body to squirt blood 30 feet.

*The average person takes from twelve to eighteen breaths per minute.

*There are 56 signatures on the Declaration of Independence.

*The woman who has appeared most on the covers of “Time” magazine is the Virgin Mary – ten times.

*There are 56 signatures on the Declaration of Independence.

*The woman who has appeared most on the covers of “Time” magazine is the Virgin Mary – ten times.
October 20, 2005

**Visitor Guide**

**THE SAN PEDRO SUN VISITOR’S GUIDE**

**Dining Out...**

- **MATA CHICA** - Mambo Cuisine - for food lovers. Homemade pasta, shrimp paté, bruschetta, charbroiled seafood and much more! Call 220-5010/5011.
- **ROJO LOUNGE** - Enjoy tropical lounge cuisine in one of the most beautiful beachfront settings in all of Belize - Azul Resort. 226-4012.
- **ELVI’S KITCHEN** - serving the finest food since 1977. Located in the heart of San Pedro Town on Pescador Drive. Daily Lunch and Dinner Specials. Terrific Key Lime Pie. Caribbean Night on Thursday with Wil & Dale. Mayan Fiesta every Friday - come try our Maya Buffet while listening to Mayan music. Open Monday – Saturday. Lunch: 11:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m. Dinner: 5:30 p.m. - 10:00 p.m. Call us for group reservations. Ph 226-2404/2176
- **CELI’S RESTAURANT ON THE BEACH** - at the San Pedro Holiday Hotel, serves Great Fajitas, salads and local dishes for LUNCH. DELECTABLE SEAFOOD SPECIALTIES for dinner. OUTDOOR & INDOOR DINING 11:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m. 5:30 p.m. - 9:00 p.m. Beach barbecue every Wednesday night with live music. CLOSED until October 30th.
- **LILY’S TREASURE CHEST RESTAURANT** - On the beach behind Lily’s Hotel. Join us for a cool breeze and the best seafood or USDA beef on our veranda by the sea. 226-2650.
- **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.
- **RICO’S SURFSIDE RESTAURANT** - A truly unique dining experience on the beach at Banyan Bay. Serving breakfast, lunch and dinner daily. Phone 226-3759 ext. 135.
- **PAPI’S DINER** - The place for fine food at diner prices. Taste the Caribbean. Call 226-2047.
- **Mickey’s Place** - Open daily 6:30 a.m. - 10 a.m. for breakfast, 11:30 a.m. - 2:00 p.m. for lunch and 6 - 10 p.m. for dinner. Burritos on Wednesdays. Pescador Drive. Call 226-2223.
- **Blue Water Grill** - Island cuisine with a twist! Wood-fired Oven Pizzas, Sushi & more! Open daily. Happy Hour 4 to 6 p.m. 226-3347.
- **El Divino Restaurant at Banana Beach** - Serving breakfast, lunch and dinner from 6 a.m. - 10 p.m. Book your party or banquet today! Phone 226-2444.
- **Portofino’s** - One of the newest & most talked about restaurants on the island. Meet our boat at 6:30 p.m. at Fido’s Dock for a complimentary ride to one of the best culinary experiences you will have while in paradise. For reservations, call 220-5096.
- **Rendezvous Restaurant and Bar** - The most romantic spot in town featuring award winning chefs. Thai and French cuisine blended to make paradise taste like heaven, or so our customers say. Free Rendezvous Wine tasting from 11:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Fermented, blended and bottled here on the property. Open for lunch and dinner. Call 226 3426 for reservations and transport options.
- **Casa Picasso Tapas + Martinis** - Small plates, big pastas and fantastic desserts! “Hippest martini spot” - Frommer’s Nightly 5:30pm, closed Sundays. reservations 226-4507.
- **The Tackle Box Bar & Grill** - whether it’s a little break from the beach or a whole night out the Tackle Box is just the place. The kitchen serves a wide array of affordable fresh comfort foods ranging from our big Tackle Box Burgers, special fried chicken, to some of our more local fare and seafoods. And what a better place to enjoy our dishes, than our back porch out over the water.

**Unique Offerings...**

- **ISLAND MINI GOLF & ICE CREAM** - Sea Grape Drive (1 block W of Barefoot Iguana). Open Mon.-Thurs. 12 – 9 p.m.; Fri. - Sun. 12 – 10 p.m.
- **SAN PEDRO FAMILY FITNESS CLUB** - Offering air conditioned gym, tennis courts, lap and family pool, aqua, toning and pilates classes. Open daily 6:00 am – 8:00 pm. Daily and contract rates. 226-2683
- **CAYE COFFEE** - Take a taste of our locally roasted fresh coffee back home. A wonderful cup of coffee makes such a great difference in your day. Try it and ask for more. 226-3568.
- **OSCAR’S GYM** - Free-weights, Pilates, basic Yoga, Balance Ball, Tai Bo and more. Affordable daily, weekly and monthly fees. Located in Boca del Rio 6 a.m. to 8 p.m. daily 226-2239.
- **BIG TREE PRODUCE** - Fresh Local & Imported Fruits & Vegetables. Seafood, meats, juices & milk shakes. Pescador Dr. 226-2232.
- **JUBLAND GIFTS & PARTY SHOP** - Party Favors, Invitations, Piñatas, Holiday Decorations & More! Barrier Reef Drive – Phone 226-3400.
- **THE GREENHOUSE** - Fresh Produce & Seafood. Belizean and imported specialty. Fresh herbs, cold cuts, chilled goods plus an exciting selection of groceries. A/C local on Barrier Reef Dr. 226-2084.
- **CAYE INTERNATIONAL BANK** - Offering Demand Deposit Accounts, Loans, Savings Accounts, etc. cbil@bk.net or phone 226-2388.
- **PROVIDENT BANK & TRUST** - Offering a full range of International Banking Services. phone 223-5698 services@providentbank.bz
- **GRANELI’S DREAMLAND** - Locally made furniture & accessories from all Belizean exotic hardwoods & Mahogany. On Pescador Drive, opposite Rock’s, Call 226-2632, ext. 18 or 226-2938. Open Mon-Sat 8:30-12:00 noon & 1:00 to 5:00 p.m. & Sun 10-12 noon.
- **BAREFOOT BOOKS** - Features a huge selection of gift items. Located at the southern end of Middle Street (Pescador Drive) across the courtyard from Mickey’s. 206-2577.

**Contact the San Pedro Sun for more information.**

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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!**

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