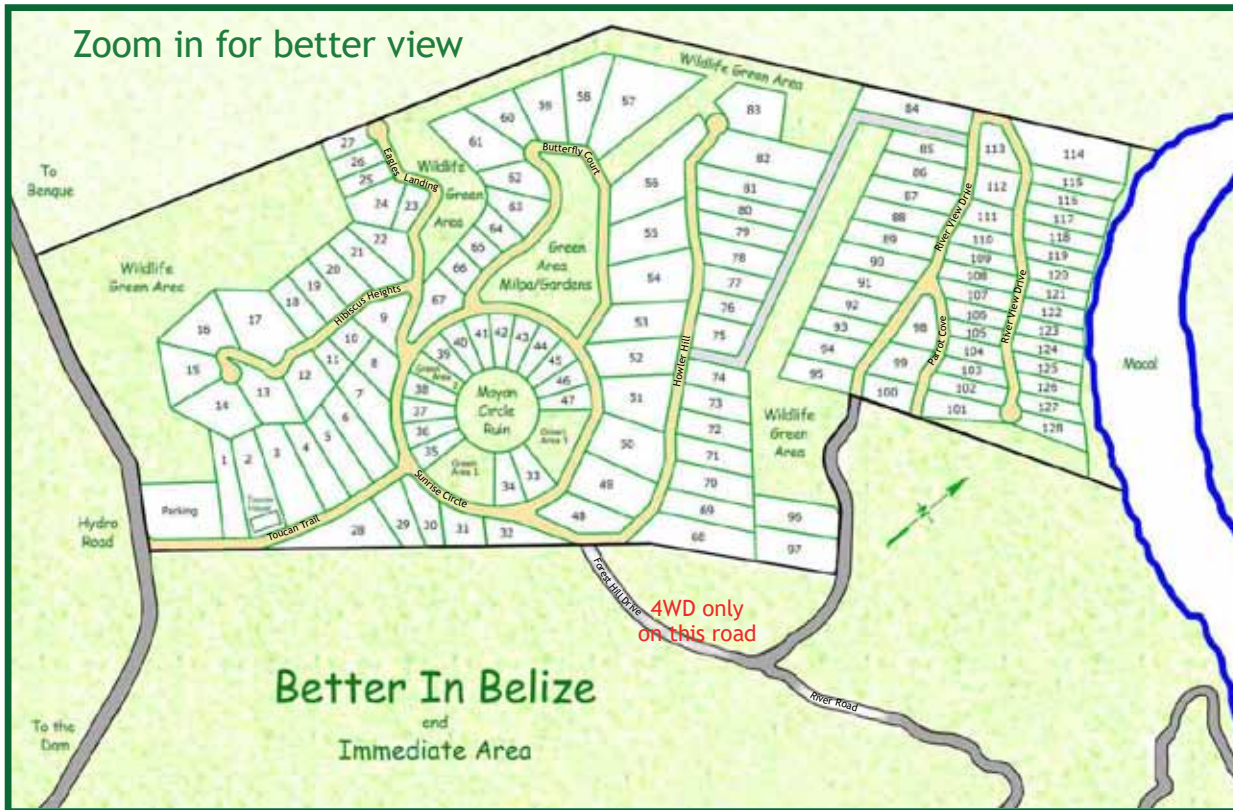


# Your Better in Belize Newsletter

BIB - A Lively Eco-community in the Jungle

FALL 2019



## Participate!

A dynamic eco-community like ours needs a lively newsletter – and I need your help.

If there are subjects you'd like to see covered, contact me at [irene@natureworkspress.com](mailto:irene@natureworkspress.com).

Thanks in advance!

Renie Brady



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## The AED at BIB is Easy to Use, Even in an Emergency



Our AED (Automated External Defibrillator) is now available to everyone in the community.

Wikipedia says: “[An] (AED) is a portable electronic device that automatically diagnoses the life-threatening cardiac arrhythmias of ventricular fibrillation (VF) and pulseless

ventricular tachycardia, and is able to treat them through defibrillation, the application of electricity which stops the arrhythmia, allowing the heart to re-establish an effective rhythm.

With simple audio and visual commands, AEDs are designed to be simple to use for the layperson...”

Just turn it on and it gives you instructions on how to proceed. If you'd rather not be resuscitated, let neighbors know ahead of time – before it's an issue.

The AED and a first aid kit are in a grey tote directly inside the door of the garden shed at the top edge of the Milpa (NOT the white earthbag building).



First aid kit and AED are inside the tote

Ask any resident for the combination lock number.

## Mostly Green Garden Share Now

The August/September fare from the Milpa is mostly avocados. It's been a great avocado year and we can't keep up with the supply. We're also getting a few limes and various types of bananas, plus an occasional coconut, but that colorful summer produce we were enjoying is "off the table" now that fall has come.

## Who-dunnit? It's No Mystery!



Kudos to Beth Weary, our steadfast garden person, who has been working on the gardens with the help of her side-kick Bryan Weary and two durable workers, Dawna Bemis and Paul Prescott who volunteer one morning per week.

The first goal has been to get a producing orchard going, so clearing away unwanted vegetation and creating new beds with rich, composted soil is the first task.



Hauling away the debris can be a major undertaking.

With beds prepared, banana tree corms with suckers have been dug up and transplanted into beds to make a fresh start.

Below, Beth and Bryan are digging up and transporting young banana tree suckers to the new beds. Mangos and other fruit trees have been planted in sunny spots, as well.



composite photo by Beth Weary and Renie Brady



The rains didn't come until mid-September this year, and the jungle and crops suffered greatly. Many plants and beds had to be watered with hoses and buckets. This is back-breaking work, but Paul developed sturdy biceps as he cared for the young plants.

Due to popular demand, raised beds have been created for a variety of herbs and for tomatoes. Basil and cilantro are doing very well as the raised community beds foil many insects who simply can't find them that far above the ground.

The raised bed at upper right uses a typical Belizean shade made of a palm leaf.

In another raised bed, tomatoes the size of baseballs are turning red. Gonna be some fine salads this month!



# Millie Milks a Coconut - A Culinary Adventure for the Education of Gringos

Coconut water tastes AWFUL! I tried several different brands of coconut water in the US, and to be frank, I thought it tasted like DRECK.

Millie Martinez, my culinary accomplice, offered to open a “coco” for me so I could drink REAL coconut water. I nearly turned her down. Blechhhh.

Finally, to be polite, I said, “Sure, whatever,” and let her do her thing. What a revelation! Fresh coconut water is not even in the same UNIVERSE as canned coconut water. No WAY!

Okay, Millie’s going to show you how to open one (#1 - #7), but first a little background:

What you find inside will depend on the color of the outside. If it’s green (like the one Millie is opening here), it will contain up to a quart of delicately-flavored coconut water and a sweet jelly coating of coconut meat that you can scoop out of the shell with a spoon (see #6 and #7).

If the coconut is yellow on the outside, it has matured. There will be considerably less coconut water, which will taste sweeter than the water from a green coco. As the coconut has matured, most of the “water” has solidified into the tough, white coconut meat which ends up in macaroons and decorating coconut pie.

Both are good, but they’re two very different items.

The machete is the tool of choice for opening a coconut. But before you attempt your first breaking-and-entering, practice chopping at something else for awhile to develop your aim. You’ll have to make ten to fifteen cuts to get inside.

Millie demonstrates here how to get inside one of the tough little critters. Since this was a green one, we knew to expect lots of juice and jelly.

For the sake of your machete (if you are a novice) don’t do this on a cement surface as you’ll probably nick the blade or crack the cement. Obviously this was no problem for Millie. She can open a coco, from the first strike to the first sip, in two minutes flat.

So study the pictures and go through it from #1 to #7. But for #4, catch the contents in at

least a quart or litre jar. We had a bit of a mess when the glass overflowed.

Here’s a little coconut tongue twister for ya, a conversation between a vendor and a prospective buyer:

**“Quiere coco?” “No quiero coco. Como como poco coco, compro poco coco.”**

Translated:

**“Do you want a coconut?” “No I don’t want a coconut. Since I eat little coconut, I buy little coconut.”**



contributed by Renie Brady & Millie Martinez



## Work Crews and New Tractor at Work

Our hardworking HOA groundsmen, Don Esteven and Don Ciano and Jorge's work crew were hard at work all summer working to restore and fortify BIB's rain-ravaged roads and culverts.

Heavy rains threatened to wash out the corner going down into the lower half of BIB (where the road takes off to the river), and concrete reinforcement was necessary to contain the storm flow.



Looking uphill (↑) and downhill (↓)



By late summer, through the efforts of our board and Bryan, who headed the Road Maintenance Committee, BIB had acquired a much-needed tractor with bucket and scraper to make the work go faster and also to save us a great deal of money. The HOA crew collaborated with Jorge's construction crew to build a tractor garage, where the tractor is housed between jobs.



The summer's final job was to pave portions and tracks on the road up to Eagle's landing before it

Don Esteven and Don Ciano (Chano)



could erode to a point where it would be prohibitively expensive to repair. Grass was planted between the tracks, and it's now possible to get to

Eagle's Landing without biting off all your fingernails (it still requires 4WD, but the road is stable now). Kudos to Bryan, our tireless HOA crew, and Jorge's guys!



## Belizean Holidays ~ Mark Your Calendar!

Tue.	Jan 1	New Year's Day
Mon.	Mar. 11	National Heroes and Benefactors Day
Fri.	Apr. 19	Good Friday
Sat.	Apr. 20	Holy Saturday
Mon.	Apr. 22	Easter Monday
Wed	May 1	Labour Day
Mon.	May 27	Sovereign's Day/Commonwealth Day
Tue.	Sept. 10	St. George's Caye Day
Mon.	Sept. 23	Independence Day
Mon.	Oct, 14	Pan American Day
Tue.	Nov. 19	Garifuna Settlement Day
Wed.	Dec. 25	Christmas Day
Thur.	Dec. 26	Boxing Day

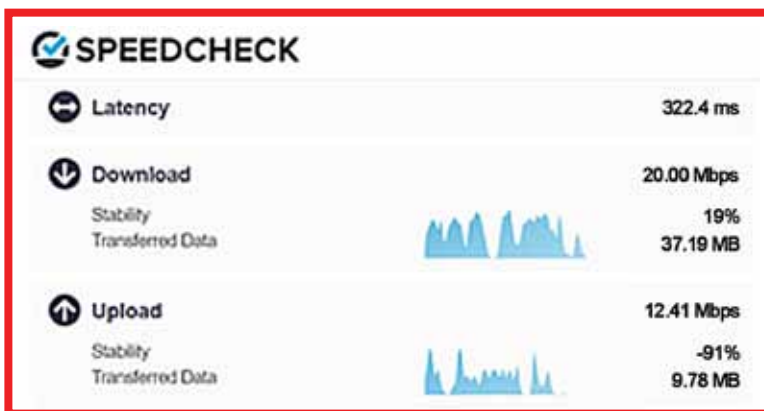
## Speed Check on BIB WiFi Signal

On 8/13/2019 Paul Prescott reported the following to the community, and this is apparently up-to-date still:

"I just spoke with Jorge. He has completed anchoring the internet pole guide wires into the bedrock (they had been just attached trees), and this has considerably improved the rigidity of the pole. He is also planning to add a more rigid pipe to the existing pipe that extends from the top of the pole and holds the receiver and transmitters. Additionally, he spoke with Infinite (our ISP), and they said that the signal-to-noise ratios are currently the best they've ever seen for us.

Infinite does advise that if anyone is not seeing fast enough service throughput, then they might want to consider upgrading to a faster internet level package."

BIB's signal is still good - here's the speed at my house now:



As Paul Prescott says: "... the test showed 20 Mbps download and 12 Mbps upload speeds (Mbps = megabytes per second). However, those speeds are the average for the few seconds that the test was running. Speeds can vary widely over time. But, in general, those numbers are quite good."

You can always check your own internet speed by going to <https://www.speedcheck.org>.

## Open a Plugged Drain Naturally

Got a plugged drain? If there's room in the drain pipe to add an additional cup of liquid, use this one. Pour  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup baking soda down the drain, then pour in  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup vinegar. Plug the drain and let it do its thing for an hour or so. Then, pour a pot of boiling water down the drain.

If your drain is so stopped up the pipe is still full of water, use this one: Mix together  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup table salt and  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup baking soda, and pour it down the drain. Let it sit for half an hour (or overnight if necessary), then pour in a pot of boiling water. No Drano needed.

Both these techniques may be repeated if necessary with minimal damage to the ecosystem.

## Projects at the Student Center



While computers play a major nightly role at the Student Center, other major endeavors involve felt-tip markers, rulers, poster paper, Fomecore shapes, and various other supplies and equipment.

One evening this week, six kids came to do homework, and three projects were completed: two posters and a model of the earth's core.

All of the projects involved first researching the details online, then printing out images and information to paste or rewrite onto the projects, and to make labels in the case of the model.



Using teamwork to first carve out the earth's layers with an X-acto blade, then to paint continents and the layers of the earth's core, two students created a convincing model of the earth's core over the course of the evening. Since the model was still wet and too fragile for the boys to carry



home riding double on their motorcycle, Renie did her part by driving one of the students and the model home while the other student took the motorcycle

Special thanks to all of you generous people who make computer research and projects like this possible by donating and helping fund supplies and equipment for the students to use for their homework at the Student Center! You are making a

huge difference in their lives!



## Natural Mosquito Repellent - DIY

Mosquitoes are not our friends. Besides making us itch, they can spread Zika, Lyme disease, and other assorted nasties, so finding a good repellent is worth some effort.

Repellents with DEET in them are pretty effective, but if you prefer a repellent made with a natural formula, you can easily make a repellent which will last 3-4 hours. A general formula is 3 to 5 drops of essential oil per 1 ounce of carrier oil. The CDC (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention) approved eucalyptus oil as an effective ingredient for mosquito repellents.

Here's one recipe:

- 10 parts witch hazel
- 1 part lemon eucalyptus oil
- shake gently (also before each use)
- spray or rub on exposed skin

*NOTE: Lemon eucalyptus is a type of eucalyptus tree, You won't get the same results from lemon + eucalyptus oil.*

If you can't find witch hazel here in Belize, mix the lemon eucalyptus oil with coconut, sunflower, almond or just about any other pleasant-smelling oil. The carrier oil helps spread the repellent over a wider area, and prevents burning or allergic actions which can be caused by undiluted essential oils. If you use coconut oil, you can keep the repellent in a lidded jar and scoop out what you need to rub on.

The following recipe makes a great spray:

- 30 drops of lemon eucalyptus oil
- one teaspoon of vanilla extract
- 4 oz witch hazel, rubbing alcohol, vodka, or cooking oil

Shake it up in a spray bottle, and apply.

Try these out on a small patch of skin first in case you have an allergic reaction to the essential oil.

Even with DEET, you occasionally get a mosquito bite. Dab apple cider vinegar on a bite to get instant relief.

## Stop! Don't SCRATCH!

Here in the tropics we must be especially careful to not scratch a bite or rash raw and open it to infection.

A soft baby hairbrush is perfect for easing an itch. It feels a lot more satisfying than scratching, and it won't break the skin unless you really TRY.

## A Shoe-drop Visit to the High School

During the second week of September, Renie Brady and Kathie Miller went to Mt. Carmel High School to leave off a big dufflebag of gently-used and brand new sport shoes donated by generous people to help the Benque high school boys and girls complete their PE requirements.



photos by Kathie Miller

Street shoes aren't allowed in the gym because they damage the floor, so some kids have trouble completing their



course requirements.

This time, some new ones were also donated by a generous homeowner, much to Miss Anselma's delight.

Could you check your closets next time you plan to come?

Sneakers are needed for both boys and girls, sizes, 7½ to 9½.



## Renting a Car to Come to BIB?

The roads approaching and within Better in Belize aren't of the highest quality (that's a gross understatement, amigos!). You can't travel some of BIB's roads without 4WD — well, you can get *down* some roads, but you may require a tow and a lot of bother to yourself and other people to get back *up*. Please don't come in a 2-wheel drive vehicle!

People who visit regularly have learned from hard experience that Crystal Auto Rental is the only rental outfit that 1. makes SURE people coming to Better in Belize are rented 4WD vehicles and 2. takes proper care of you if you have car trouble. You can rent your car right there at the Belize Airport. And no, this isn't a paid advertisement — just a word of advice from some of us who found out the hard way.

## Living With Drought

Most of us here at BIB come from a cultural setting in which you turn the faucet knob and water comes out. Always.

It's a real shock here in the jungle the first time you twist the faucet and only a gasp of air trickles out.

That's when you wonder why you stood there with the hose yesterday lavishly watering the palm tree and the lobster-claw plants.

With climate change a visible glow on the horizon, it would serve us all well to start planning ahead because the situation is not likely to get better - but not just here, anywhere in the world.

Whether you have already built and live here, are in the process of building right now, or you are just dreaming of building sometime in the future, you need to proactively plan ways to deal with growing water shortages. Here are some thinking points and alternative routes to consider:

**Install a second water tank**, even if it's just a Roto-plas, so the water that pours off your roof can all be stored away instead of spilling off during rainstorms when your current cistern is full.

**Landscape and garden with plants that are naturally drought resistant.** If they need occasional water, look to your gray-water retrieval system — or, if you don't have one, research how you can re-plumb to retrieve gray water from your current plumbing. Plants seem to thrive on soapy water, particularly when it has little bits of dinner scrapings in it.

**Examine your water collection/retention system**, your household equipment and your daily habits to find ways you can conserve water when water is scarce:

### WATER SAVING TIPS for DRY PERIODS

- Don't run the faucet when you aren't actively using water — brushing teeth, washing veggies, etc. Scrub veggies in a pan of water, not under running water.
- If you don't have a gray water system in place to collect sink, shower and bath water, insert a dishpan or other container between your faucet and the sink drain to manually save what you've already used once for reuse on plants.
- Make sure your gutters are in good repair for collecting rainwater. They should have screen coverings to keep out leaves and debris which will eventually clog and pollute your tank.

- If you need hot water, run the faucet into a container until the hot water comes, and use that water for watering plants; or pour it into your water filter canister to purify for drinking. Shower and bath warm-up water can add up to several gallons if the bathroom is far from the water heater (if you don't have an on-demand water heater).
- Make sure none of your faucets or hoses leak — leaks can waste incredible amounts of water. Double check that faucets are tightly turned off after each use. Remind any workers using your hoses to make sure they are turned off tightly.
- If you are worried about someone wasting your water, you can buy faucets that have a hasp you can lock with a padlock. They cost about \$20usd.
- If you have a flush toilet (and your house is not a B&B) consider refitting with a composting toilet or a Humanure system. There may be times when flushing even a single gallon of water down the toilet will seem insanely ill-advised.
- If your house has a flush toilet, remember the old hippie mantra: *"If it's yellow, let it mellow. If it's brown, flush it down."* If you are visiting a neighbor during deep drought conditions, check with your host before flushing their toilet.



• • • • •

**You may mistakenly believe** that you can always just order a tank of water from our Belizean neighbors, but that might not be possible. In times of drought there is fierce competition for clean water sucked from the creek (and how clean is that, anyway?), so it may not be available — or it may be hugely expensive.

If you pay one neighbor for community water, other neighbors may get angry (it's their water, too) and you may spark a feud. If you have wasted or not avidly collected your water during the rainy season, you may regret it deeply later.

By following the above suggestions, you may get through dry times relatively unscathed. If you don't, you may find yourself buying 5-gallon bottles of water in town and bathing with a washcloth at the sink. Ooopsy!

**Be proactive. Be smart. Conserve.**

*contributed by Renie Brady*

## A Message to Lot and Homeowners

Better in Belize has been experiencing some growing pains recently. There are opinions that vary widely, solutions that have varying degrees of usefulness, and it appears that there may not be much resolution until late in the year when the annual elections for board members are held.

As a lot owner or homeowner, you have an important stake in this situation, and it is vital that you examine carefully the opinions being put forth and vote to select a new board that you feel will best further the goals and interests of our community.

This is not the time to sit back and let nature take its course. Please vote in the up-coming elections.

## How to Identify and Eat a Guava

The guava is also known as the guayaba (gwie-AH-ba). It is about the size of a golf or tennis ball, is yellowish green when ripe, and has a slightly rough surface. The insides may be any color from creamy white to bright red or coral.

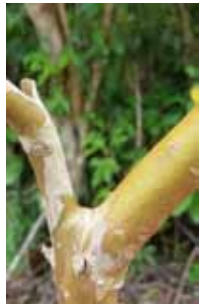


You can eat these out of hand, skin and all, or you could scoop the delicious pulp out with a spoon and eat it that way. Guavas tend to have hard little seeds, but fortunately they are

small enough to just swallow, no need to spit them out. Guavas also makes super jam and juice. I'd like to see guava trees in the Milpa Gardens.

There's a guava tree along the road just outside the entrance to BIB. It has distinctive leaves, and the bark makes identification easy, as it is greenish-gold and peels.

Soak the seeds in water for two weeks if you want to save some to plant.



## Gartered Trogon

*Trogon caligatus*

this used to be the  
Violaceous Trogon.  
It has iridescent blue  
on its chest, and its  
entire back is iridescent  
green when the sun  
catches it - otherwise  
it looks black ☹️

## Violaceous No More!

If you enjoy watching and recording the birds you see at BIB, the Gartered Trogon is one you are likely to see and hear.

If you hear a bird "clucking" a high "cuh-cuh-cuh...." call, look on a horizontal branch 10-50' up for an upright robin-sized bird.

It eats insects and small fruits and is relatively fearless.

This iridescent beauty until very recently was named the Violaceous Trogon, but it has been renamed the

Gartered Trogon, which may make better sense since it has no purple (violaceous) markings ... but where the heck are the "garters?"

Illustration and article by Renie Brady

## Recent Wildlife Sightings

Due to the drought, people have been putting out water for the wildlife. But putting out water makes one responsible for emptying the container regularly to keep mosquitoes from completing their life cycle from egg to wiggler to mosquito. Insect control authorities recommend changing standing water once a week since the hatching cycle can be as short as 10 days.

This coati mundi stopped by on a sizzling hot day for a drink from the red container on my veranda. Then feeling safe, he snoozed off.

But don't let that cute face fool you. Coatis can be dangerous if approached and have very sharp teeth. These pictures were taken through the window to be safe.





## A Casual Listing of Grocery and Fresh Vegetable Prices, Summer 2019

If you haven't moved here yet and wonder how food costs compare, here's a random selection of foods easily available in the various Chinese food stores around the Cayo District, which includes Benque, San Ignacio (also called Cayo) and Spanish Lookout. There are variations between stores, off course, but if you're working on your proposed Living In Belize Budget you might print this out to compare with prices from your own area just to see how prices stack up. Imported brands such as Ocean Spray cranberries are naturally more expensive, but if your taste buds crave cranberries, there's no locally produced choice. Some things, like canned oysters, you may just have to bring in your suitcase on occasional trips from your home country. They simply aren't available (as least, I haven't found any!).

As for eating out, prices range from ridiculously cheap, like \$2.50usd for a delicious chicken thigh and leg barbecued on a grill beside the street, splashed with BBQ sauce, and wrapped in a huge flour tortilla – to restaurant prices you'd expect in upscale establishments anywhere. U.S. imported foods below are marked with an \*.

Item	Amount	BZ\$	US\$
chicken cuts (misc pieces, leg, thigh, wing mostly)	1.5 lb pkg	4.25	2.12
whole chicken	per/lb	2.00	1.00
digestive biscuits (wheatmeal cookies)	8.5 oz pkg	2.65	1.32
lunchmeat, sliced ham	8 oz pkg	5.25	2.63
ramen noodles (same brands as in US)	1 pkg	.60	.30
mayonnaise, a local brand, very good	32 oz jar	5.35	2.68
local dried plantain (platano) chips	2-3 oz bag	2.00	1.00
Vienna sausages	4.6 oz can	1.60	.80
chocolate chip cookies	7oz pkg	2.65	1.33
Lala cream, medium (storable unrefrigerated)	8.5 oz box	1.60	.80
white rice	2lb bag	2.10	1.05
raisins, locally packaged	about 1 c.	2.50	1.25
Belikin beer (the local beer, decent)	9.6 oz bottle	3.00	1.50
flaked tuna	5 oz can	1.75	.88
mushroom pieces	3 oz can	2.75	1.38
bananas, local	6 med.	1.00	.50
Caribbean White Rum	1 litre	38.00	19.00
ice cream (varies widely, depending on brand)	1 quart	\$10-20	\$5-10
*Oats & More cereal	13 oz	8.25	4.13
*Cheetos, crunchy	8 oz bag	9.75	4.88
*Ocean Spray whole cranberry sauce	14 oz can	1.95	.98
*Del Monte Whole Kernel corn	15 oz can	2.40	1.20
*Del Monte apricot halves	8.5 oz can	3.50	1.75
*Campbell's Soup, cream of chicken	10.5 oz can	4.15	2.08
*Del Monte pineapple chunks	8oz can	2.50	1.25



Vegetables are seasonal in price, but the following give an indication of seasonal prices

lettuce	head	2.00	1.00
carrots	1lb bag	1.75	.88
zucchini	1lb	1.00	.50
tomatoes	1lb	1.50	.75
Salad makings:			
1 cabbage, 8-9 tomatoes, 1 zucchini, 1 cucumber, head of broccoli		14.00	7.00

Linda DeGirolama says, "I've found that produce bought from the Chinese stores is much more expensive [than at the Saturday Market in Cayo]. Also, the produce stand at Benque square is more expensive. Probably because they have rent to pay for their space.

One other thing I realized - if you go to Cayo market for produce, the prices do tend to go down a little once they realize you're a regular. There's one stand there where I buy whenever I'm in SI [San Ignacio], and they give me the best prices. I like to joke that if you act like a gringo, you pay gringo prices. When Roberto Melendez [across the road from BIB] has produce, he's MUCH cheaper than any of the markets."

## School Supplies and Angels Needed for the Student Center



Above, high school students use Student Center computers for homework assignments. The Center is open five nights per week, giving students a clean, quiet, well-lit place to spread books and papers out, search the web, and do homework. We have expenses which require dependable cash funding, but this is being hard to locate.

If you can help with any of the items on this page, please contact Renie at [irene@natureworkspress.com](mailto:irene@natureworkspress.com).

**ALL of EVERY DONATION goes to these expenses.**

## ANGELS NEEDED!

The Student Center needs Angels who can commit to supporting our basic needs on a monthly basis. Can you be our:



### TUTOR ANGEL

\$80us/month wages for the sixty hours spent by the student monitor to open the Center, tutor and supervise the kids in the Student Center.

### INK ANGEL

\$50us/month for HP 664 printer ink cartridges.



### SUPPLY ANGEL

\$10us/month slush fund for copy paper, glue, display board, markers and other supplies used by the kids at the Center.



### SNACK ANGEL

\$15-20us/mo for a snack stash (energy bars and fruit juice), for kids who come right after school to do homework. The kids are often hungry and Renie can't afford to feed them.

## SCHOOL SUPPLIES

Could you slip any of these items into your suitcase for the kids next time you come to Better in Belize?

- reading glasses, from 1.00 to 3.5 power
- minimal, light-weight but sturdy cases for the reading glasses
- light-weight backpacks, with one or two main compartments and a zippered outer compartment
- phone charger cables and converters so kids can charge phones to go online for assignments
- ear buds so kids can work on video presentations without disturbing other students
- solar or USB-chargeable flashlights kids can borrow to get home after dark (sun sets by 6:30) on busy nights



## Fast & Easy Hammock Chair Make-Over



You've probably seen hammock chairs swaying in the open booths by the Xunantunich Ferry, and maybe you've actually tried sitting in one.

If you did, you probably immediately noticed that they're not very comfortable to sit in because the strings behind your head force you to lean forward (see #1 at right). I can almost hear your reaction: "Nope. No way. I'd never buy one of these!"

But twenty minutes play with some cord can transform that pretty hammock chair into one of the most comfortable seats you'll ever experience.



### HERE'S HOW TO DO IT

First, untie the strings that hold up the back of the chair (see the red arrow in #1). Don't worry, nothing will fall apart (#2).

Tie the end of a 3' piece of cord (parachute cord or other light-weight cord) to the end of one of the parallel bars and lace it through the top of the back edge of the hammock (#3). Pull it tight enough to draw up the back of the chair, then tie it off at the end of the other parallel bar (#4). No need to be fussy – it will look fine.

Next, put a pillow against the back. A regular bed pillow fits perfectly (#5). It will stay in place pretty well, but to anchor it better, tie coins into the top corners of the pillowcase to make "knobs" then tie the knobs to the ends of the parallel bar next to your parachute cord to stabilize it.

Hang it from a rafter, preferably a 2"x 6," with a 2" screw-eye. A brass swivel hook will make it easy to unhook the hammock chair and bring it in out of the weather or store it away when it's not needed.

You'll find your revamped hammock chair is an amazingly relaxing seat in which to push off with one foot, fold in your legs and curl up – completely enfolded but still airily cool and swinging gently back and forth, browsing a good book, your Kindle, cellphone or laptop. Enjoy!



NOTE: This is a heavenly chair from which to greet the dawn and listen to howler monkeys, toucans and awakening birds as you sip that first morning cuppa.

contributed by Renie Brady

## Scholarships 2019-20 - Mission Accomplished

It is with great pleasure that the Waterhole Neighborhood Scholarships committee reports that we were able to totally fund the 2019-20 school tuition for twenty-one neighborhood children, and pay 39% of their supplies fees due to the amazing generosity of many Better In Belize

homeowners, lot owners, and their friends and colleagues. Thirty-one parents and children gathered at the Student Center in September to review and discuss scholarship requirements and conditions for the students.

To learn more about our program and to donate, visit <https://waterholescholarships.com>.



Families gathered to celebrate the September reopening of the Student Center and arrange for supply reimbursements.



Students attend a workshop at Study Center

## Rentals Currently Available at Better in Belize

If you want to spend some time at BIB but don't have a house here, there are several B&Bs and many variations of service right here in the community, from totally hands-off – you cook and do for yourself – to all-meals-provided and activities arranged. Prices and availability vary widely.

Additional lodging is available at [Martz Farm Treehouses](#) two miles back toward Benque from BIB. If you don't mind the daily drive, there is also lodging in Benque and San Ignacio. For more information, visit: <http://bibowners.com/category/rental-information/>



### Casa Gala - Lot 68

\$150usd per night, 2 bedrooms  
\$300usd per night  
\$15 per adult meal.

<https://www.junglesplashtours.com>



### Casa Tropical Howler Hill - Lot 77

\$105usd per night based on double occupancy  
Dinner upon request at \$25usd per adult

Contact: millerkathiem@hotmail.com



### Casa Santa Maria

\$129usd per night, double occupancy  
Includes breakfast - optional meals also available

[www.CSMbelize.com](http://www.CSMbelize.com)  
<https://www.airbnb.ca/rooms/6775096>



### Jungle Escape Belize - Lot 97

\$85usd (winter) \$65usd (summer)  
double occupancy,  
Minimum 2 night stay,  
enquire for weekly or longer  
meals available on request

Contact: ritamartin@sasktel.net



### Tree Tops Vacation Rental - Lot 40

\$124usd (winter)  
\$99usd (summer)  
for entire home/night

<http://www.betterinbelize.com/belize-vacation-rental-treetops.html>  
Contact: april123@sympatico.ca



### Toucan House EcoLodge - Lot 2

\$85usd (winter) \$49usd (summer)  
room/night.  
Meal option \$50usd daily for 3 home-cooked meals. 9% Hotel Tax charged.

<http://www.betterinbelize.com/the-toucan-house.html>  
Contact: april123@sympatico.ca

*A Newspaper is Only as Interesting as the People Who Contribute To It*



*A Message  
from the Editor*

This newsletter needs volunteers to contribute items about the outings, home building, gardening, and activities we engage in here at

BIB – kayaking, hiking, potlucks, bonfires, pontooning, music nights, cave explorations, trips to Xunantunich or Caracol, excursions to Melchor, tips and advice, experiences at the market – everything!

If others don't contribute, it's all just going to be stuff I happen across or am interested in, written with my viewpoint and opinions. Obviously I am deeply involved in the Waterhole Neighborhood Scholarships, the Student Center in the spare room of my house, and the amazing natural history of our beautiful rainforest at Better In Belize. I can only speak easily from my own particular point of view.

I could use some help.

You don't have to be a great writer to contribute. Polished pieces would be welcome, but so are simple notes and observations. And questions or comments from people who don't live here (yet!) would also be welcome!

Let us know what's happening in your neck of the woods. Suggest topics. Share what you know. This newsletter goes out to people here at BIB but also to owners who may not hear about BIB any other way, and we'd like to encourage everyone to join us in the adventure.

Thanks to all of you who contributed advice, tidbits, photos, information, and were interviewed for this quarterly newsletter issue. Send future events, tips, information, interesting facts, photos, stories, B&B listings and anything else you want to see in newsletters to: Renie, at [irene@natureworkspress.com](mailto:irene@natureworkspress.com).

This BIB Newsletter was assembled by

Renie Brady, #7-Casa de la Tierra, 10½ Hydro Road, Benque Viejo, Cayo, Belize, C.A.