

# THE CUENCA DISPATCH

Ecuador's Original English-Language Newspaper

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## Municipio only approves 54 percent of remaining projects in participatory budget

In the portfolio of pending works of the Municipality, 440 projects that have been approved from a list of 810 projects requested by urban parishes. The projects have been prioritized between asphaltting roads, park improvement and security issues.

The director of Governance of the Municipality of Cuenca, Andrés Peñafiel, indicated that the lack of budget makes it impossible to place new works in the participatory budget for the remainder of the year, so the Municipality will try to finish the projects that are pending.

But this plan also has setbacks, since the portfolio has pending projects that do not have studies completed, are outside the municipal planning or have studies that say that the projects are unviable due to lack of a budget.

Peñafiel indicated that within the works that the neighborhoods must prioritize, 80 percent of the projects correspond to the asphaltting of roads and the remaining 20 percent are divided between sewerage works, drinking water, security, parks and culture and social development.

The president of the Federation of Neighborhoods of Cuenca, Juan Quilambaqui, points out that although the union will support the initiative,



there are objections to the methodology used for the process of creating the participatory budget for the remainder of 2019.

According to the Quilambaqui, the request for information was made with very little time to complete the task (four days before the first assembly) and there are doubts about whether there is enough money in the Municipality to cover the pending works.

He said that there are projects that have been cont. page 4.

## Foreign Affairs Ministry clarifies Venezuelan visa options



The Ministry of Foreign Affairs disseminated data of Venezuelan migrants who entered Ecuador between July 26th and August 25th, 2019, before the Executive Decree 826 entered into force. Executive Decree 826 established the requirement of the humanitarian visa for Venezuelans to enter Ecuador.

According to the Foreign Ministry, between July 26th and August 2nd, 13,713 Venezuelans arrived in the country. On average, 1,714 foreigners crossed the borders daily. Between August 3rd and August 25th, on the eve of the visa requirement, an average of 3,704 people entered each day (approximately 81,488 foreigners). This group of Venezuelans will not be able to apply to the process of migratory amnesty and regularization (legalization) that will be carried out by the Government and that will take place in October.

However, the Foreign Ministry says that Venezuelans who entered on those dates may apply for other visas granted by the Ecuadorian State. Currently, Ecuador has about 30 types of temporary and permanent visas that appear on the website of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Those interested can check the requirements and costs of each visa at the following link: <https://www.cancilleria.gob.ec/plataforma-visas/>

According to the immigration registry, from May 2017 to July 2019, 1,673,980 Venezuelans entered Ecuador, of which 341,561 remain in the country. Of that group, more than 115,000 have some type of visa. Their status can be broken down into three categories:

1. Those who await regularization

According to Decree 826, those who entered the country before July 26th on a regular basis, even if their permits had already expired, may qualify for the migratory amnesty, which will begin on October 26, starting with a census.

2. Those who entered between July 27th and Monday, August 26th.

Venezuelan citizens who entered between July 27th and August 26 must process other types of visas, to regularize their status in the country, which includes visas of tourism, of studies of business. This group cannot access the humanitarian visa or amnesty.

3. Those who have not yet entered the country and who will ask for the humanitarian visa

Ecuador offers a humanitarian visa for Venezuelans that lasts two years. Those who wish to apply for it can do so through the website [www.consuladovirtual.gob.ec](http://www.consuladovirtual.gob.ec). There they must upload

cont. page 5.

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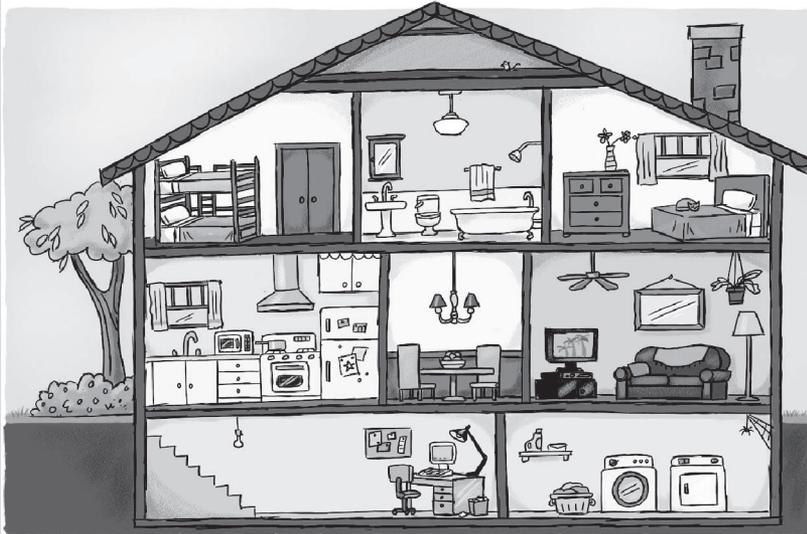
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# I'M JUST SAYIN'

By Michael Soares

## A funny thing happened on the way to the Coliseum

Well, actually, it wasn't the Coliseum. It was a restaurant ("Coveña") in Yunguilla that we like to frequent. We go there about once a week for the fried fish they serve. It's really outstanding.

Anyway, turns out the place has a "Gringo" happy hour every Friday starting at 5pm. Some friends told us about it, so we decided to go check it out. It was nice to finally meet some of the other expats who have chosen to make Yunguilla their primary residence.

The crowd was fairly mixed between long-term and short-term expats, and there were several Gringo-Ecuadorian couples as well. And I THINK there was a good mix of liberals and conservatives. But I'm not sure, because it really wasn't the focus of any of our discussions for most of the night. That is, until just about everyone was leaving.

But just as the night was ending, a couple came up to our table to introduce themselves. We hadn't bumped into each other earlier in the night because we had some out of town guests with us who didn't want to socialize too much. It was nice of this couple to come up to us and greet us and I'm sure they are people we will chat with in the future. That is, now that we had our first debate.

You see when they found out we used to own The Vegetable Bar, my relationship to The Cuenca Dispatch became obvious. As in, "Wait, you're the Michael that writes that column?" "Yes," I cautiously answered. I was then informed that while the woman is a liberal and thinks the way I do; the guy is not. Far from it in fact. And he made it clear that he did not approve of what I write. He did this by telling me, "Everything you write is liberal trash," and "I would only use your column to wipe my ass." He further went on to say that he stopped reading my column because of my "liberal crap."

Now normally, I would have defended myself rather vigorously right from the start. But I didn't think that was the place to do it. So, I simply said, "Well, it's good that you stopped reading it, and I get that you don't support my ideas." In fact, I said something along those lines several times. But that was not going to end the topic as this guy really wanted to vent to me about what I write. And so, the debate began.

Happily though, it really was a debate. Not an argument, and nothing loud or offensive was said. Instead, he and I debated several issues we clearly had different opinions on. And I think at a certain point we both enjoyed the discussion. But best of all, we found that we actually agreed on a lot of things. Because we took the time to go through things issue by issue; the points in our discussion were not filtered by "liberal" or "conservative," "Democrat" or "Republican." They were simply examined at face value and merit. And that's where common ground could be discovered. Sure, there were topics that were lightning rods for both of us and we did not, nor will we ever, see eye to eye on them. And that's okay.

The real take away from this discussion for me was, that maybe I pick the real polarizing topics to write about too often. And of course, those issues are going to lead some people to stop reading what I write. So, I need to work on that. Because the entire purpose of an Opinion column is to make people really examine what they think and maybe get them to look at a topic more objectively. If I'm running off all the people that disagree with me, well that's kind of counterproductive. Because preaching to the choir isn't going to change anything.

Another point that came out in our conversation is that some readers don't take into account that columns like this have limited

space to make a point. And often times, a lot gets unsaid. I tend to assume that much of what goes unsaid is implied. But maybe not. Maybe I'm letting my passion for a topic blind me to a crucial part of the argument that I've missed. I'm going to work more on that; I don't want those gaps to leave my "debate" lacking strength.

That said, the question that remains is, will this guy and I be friends? Who knows? But I do know that we won't be enemies. We will be two people with different ideas, and we may or may not argue about them some other time. We may hang out together, we may not. But leaving that open for discussion is really the smartest way to live.

In the end, what appeared like it would be a fight to the death, true to the days of the Roman Coliseum, turned out to be a spirited debate on several issues, with surprisingly mutual agreement on some of them. I believe this happened because we didn't use labels to strictly identify the other. We debated issues, not overall political affiliation.

Imagine if everyone started to do that? Rather than exclude people from their circles of friends because of labels, people started to talk about issues to see where they do agree instead. I challenge all of you to start to do that. You might find you agree with some other people more than you thought. And you might make new friends.

I'm just sayin'.

# SUDOKU

### Fun By The Numbers

Like puzzles? Then you'll love Sudoku. This mind-bending puzzle will have you hooked from the moment you square off, so sharpen your pencil and put your Sudoku savvy to the test!

### Here's How It Works:

Sudoku puzzles are formatted as a 9x9 grid, broken down into nine 3x3 boxes. To solve a Sudoku, the numbers 1 through 9 must fill each row, column and box. Each number can appear only once in each row, column and box. You can figure out the order in which the number will appear by using the numeric clues already provided in the boxes. The more numbers you name, the easier it gets to solve the puzzle!

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		9	3	7		2		
9		3						
		5	9	3	4	7		
						5		3
		2		8	5	9		
					3			2
4	5			9	1			7

See answers on page 11

## Municipio only approves 54 percent of remaining projects in participatory budget (Cont.)

pending since 2015 and that about 80 percent of this year's budget was used by the previous administration, in works that are underway. So, he fears that the money in the municipal coffers is not enough to handle the approved works.

The participatory budgets of the neighborhoods will include only works in the urban area, so the Municipality has drawn up an independent plan for rural parishes, Peñafiel explained.

According to the official, the Municipality maintains outstanding payments to parish governments of about \$ 13.5 million, corresponding to the participatory budgets of previous years.

"Parish councils must justify their investments so that the Municipality can provide them with that money, with which important works can be done throughout the rural area," Peñafiel explained.

Extracted from Diario El Tiempo

## ALTISIMO AND THE CHOCOLATE FACTORY -- A gringo business making a difference.

In a time when everyone is scrambling to try to make a go of their businesses in Cuenca with too few resources (or giving little thought) for helping improve conditions in Ecuador in general, one business here in Cuenca is doing its part by helping to reforest Ecuador's once thriving ancestral mother cacao trees; sometimes also known as Certified "Heirloom" cacao trees, the source for what many chocolatiers on the planet consider the best cacao for making world-class chocolate.

Per the Ministerio de Turismo, "Ecuador is the 'Land of the Finest Chocolate.'" Recent studies and explorations by Archaeologist Francisco Valdez have confirmed that Ecuador has been determined to be the origin of the various cacao species found around the world, dating back at least 5,300-years. However, most of the national cacao trees in Ecuador were devastated between the mid-1920's to 1930 in the worst known occurrence of a fungal disease that caused the abandonment of most of the cacao plantations over this period of time. Unfortunately, the remedy chosen to prevent recurrence of this disease has caused an alteration to the original flavor of most of the cacao currently produced.

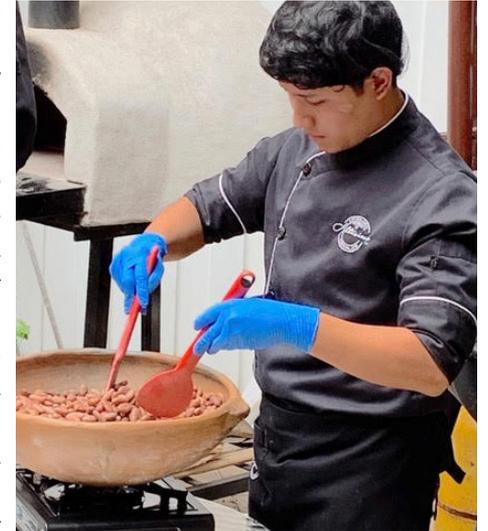


RUTH MAHONEY WITH SANTIAGO WILSON AT ALTISIMO

By the year 2000, only scattered pockets of this ancient, flavorful strain remained in Ecuador. Today, reportedly there may be only as few as 8,000 of the Certified Heirloom Cacao trees (those untouched by the fungal disease in the past) remaining in Ecuador. There are several species of ancestral Heirloom Cacao trees, with many, such as the Contamana cacao tree, on the brink of extinction. However, because Altisimo Chocolate and

The Chocolate Factory use only the best available genetically pure cacao in the production of their chocolate, they wish to ensure genetically pure cacao is replenished and continues to proliferate by contributing to the rescue of these endangered cacao trees via assistance with reforestation.

According to Ruth Mahoney, the proprietor and one of the chocolate experts for Altisimo and The Chocolate Factory, "we're looking to make a difference, and regarding those Michelin Stars, it's not about the money for us. The cacao we use is different from that of other chocolate producers in Ecuador and far different from the cacao that is exported to the world outside of Ecuador. We have exclusive sourcing agreements and purchase our cacao directly from these growers. We, along with our sourcing partner, help the growers become more sustainable and reforest these types of rare trees. We feel that helping to reforest Ecuador with these certified cacao trees and assisting the farmers to become certified is also part of our responsibility."



A portion of the money that Ruth earns from her restaurant, Altisimo, helps to fund their conservation and reforestation efforts. Ruth added, "We have made a recommendation to the Ecuadorian government that it should declare these ancestral mother trees 'Ecuador's National Living Treasure Cacao Arriba'. The term is slowly catching on, but the sustainability of these Living Treasure trees is not on the top on the Ecuadorian government's list of priorities, but we keep focused on the goal." The good news is that the Ministry of Tourism for Ecuador and Cuenca's tourism board would like to make Cuenca the Center of the Chocolate World and to take the title away from Belgium. Ruth said, "When you think fine chocolate, we want the world to think 'Cuenca.'"

Ruth did not begin her chocolate business and restaurant in Cuenca on a whim. Quick to remark, "I was born in Germany, was raised in Canada, I married a Norwegian/American, and I'm now living in Ecuador," she and her husband, Santiago, both had successful careers as entrepreneurs and chefs in California. The couple had visited Cuenca in previous years as volunteer missionaries and fell in love with the city. Ruth then spent seven years developing a feasibility study to ensure her desire to produce and offer world-class chocolate products to the tourists and the populace of Cuenca would not be a futile effort.

After moving to Cuenca in 2014, and with her husband's support, Ruth's plan to open a retail store and a chocolate factory took the form of a small chocolate factory located in a secure building in Cuenca and small retail outlet located on Benigno Malo for the sale of her chocolate and confections, but she soon realized that she needed to expand her offerings and provide more seating for her clientele if she wanted the business to survive.

When Altisimo's and The Chocolate Factory's current location (Gran Colombia 8-86 y Benigno Malo) became available a little over a year ago, Ruth quickly took advantage of that opportunity, knowing that the move would not only help Altisimo grow its retail take-out offerings, but also give her business the much-needed larger space for a dine-in restaurant and also allow for the co-location of The Chocolate Factory at that new location.

With the firm belief that "Chocolate is fun!", Ruth has, as one of her goals, to "not only make chocolate that is enjoyable, but also to give back to our new country." She has the desire to provide work for Cuencanos and add value to her new community. She wants to ensure she meets her customers' needs and manage to incorporate recipes from all over the world in her menu offerings.

One of the means to that end was hiring their new chef, Sandeep "Sandy" Singh, a relatively new addition to Altisimo staff. Sandy, originally from India, has been with Altisimo for about five months at this writing. Sandy trained as a chef for three years in New Zealand before heading to

Zurich, Switzerland, for an additional five years of gastronomy studies and to work with his father, who is a two Michelin Star chef. Sandy has been in Ecuador now for nearly 3 years.

Impressively, Altísimo is now on the Ministerio de Turismo de Cuenca's radar as a tourist destination. Ruth remarked that "the tourist approach of Altísimo is quite clear. There is no better way to learn more information about a destination than by sharing a conversation with the inhabitants of the city while having good chocolate and food. Everyone has that chance at Altísimo."

For those of you who have not yet visited Altísimo and The Chocolate Factory, Altísimo not only offers indoor and outdoor seating for small to large groups, but also some cozy areas for people to work (with free Wi-Fi), read, or just share intimate conversations. It doesn't hurt that Altísimo has a delightful aroma that is a mixture of chocolate, fresh-baked breads, and savory and sweet offerings from a wide array of new entrees on their menu.

Some of Altísimo new menu items include Lox & Bagels, Smoked Salmon, NY Strip Steak with Mashed Potatoes and Carmelized Onions, Pork Loin Chop and Rack of Lamb. They also have some new "postres" ("desserts" for you Gringos who don't know Spanish), including a "Chocolate Beet Root Cake".

Additionally, The Chocolate Factory offers tours of the factory that include wine and chocolate pairings. Based on this writer's own personal experience, The Chocolate Factory Tour, is one of the best tours given in



Cuenca! Even if you do not like chocolate (there may be one or two of you out there), learning the process of harvesting cacao, to processing the beans, to ensuring the most stringent guidelines imaginable are followed in the creation of world-class chocolate products, is well worth your time.

For more information about Altísimo and The Chocolate Factory (and your Spanish is good), read the Ministerio's article dated 25 June 2019 about The Chocolate Factory at the following link:

<https://www.turismo.gob.ec/en-cuenca-se-disfruta-el-chocolate-mas-fino-del-mundo/#>.

Or go to Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/biendespiertosenlared/videos/440394339885658?s=100022416410593&v=e&sfns=mo>



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## Tarqui to get 911 service



On Tuesday morning, August 27, 2019, the governor of Azuay, Xavier Martínez, announced that the Tarqui parish will be connected to the Integrated Security Service ECU 9-1-1 to reinforce emergency safety and attention directly in this sector.

By signing a commitment to act, the Tarqui parish will have access to the communications networks used for the coordination and provision of emergency services; that is, access to 8 video surveillance cameras controlled by Zonal Coordination 6 of ECU 9-1-1 will be enabled. "It is the first time that a rural parish in Cuenca has access to this service," Martínez said.

According to Martínez, these actions will allow immediate management of emergency situations reported by citizens through the number 911, and those generated by video surveillance, alarm monitoring and other alert mechanisms. These alerts will trigger the dispatch of specialized response resources belonging to organizations linked to the Service such as the Armed Forces, National Police, Firefighters, National Health System, National Irrigation Secretariat, among others.

Currently, the Integrated Emergency Service ECU 9-1-1 has 4,600 cameras nationwide, ensuring the security of the country 365 days a year. In zone 6, there are 381 cameras installed, 307 in the province of Azuay and 248 cameras placed in the Cuenca Canton.

Extracted from Diario EL Tiempo

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E	S	S	A	Y		Y	U	A	N		S	E	T	S

Answers to puzzle on page 10

## Foreign Affairs Ministry clarifies Venezuelan visa options (Cont.)

copies of the documents (passport and judicial record) and wait for a personal interview that can be done at any of the consulates of Ecuador in Bogotá, Lima or Caracas.

This content has been originally published by Diario EL COMERCIO

## Fire destroys Pucará forest area



While the world focuses on the tragic fires burning in the Brazilian Amazon rainforest, a vast band of fire is consuming vegetation in the rugged area known as Pucaraloma, in the Las Nieves sector of the Pucará canton, in Azuay.

The fire was first reported on Friday, August 23rd, and over the course of the last week it has spread over a wide mountainous area, consuming vegetation typical of the area. Rows of fire are destroying the flora and fauna in an area of steep hills that is extremely difficult to reach.

According to data from the National Service of Risk and Emergency Management (SNGRE), fire brigades from different cantons such as Pucará, Santa Isabel and Cuenca have been deployed to the site.

While the precise number of hectares affected by the fires has not yet been quantified, the burned area does seem to be significant. Unfortunately, this is not the first time that a fire of this size has happened here; summer-season fires are a constant problem here.

SNGRE records reveal that so far this year in Azuay, at least 210 hectares have been consumed by fire. Among the affected cantons are Girón, Cuenca and Nabón.

The Organic Integral Criminal Code (COIP) in its article 246 establishes that a person who causes a forest fire will be sanctioned with imprisonment of 1 to 3 years. If a death occurs as a result on a set fire, the penalty increases to 13 to 16 years in jail.

## Imbabura deals with its own fire



A forest fire affected the Imbabura province last week, on August 22nd. It burned well over 24 hours without being controlled and affected around 100 hectares.

The fire is suspected to have started because of a common farming practice of burning final remains of each crop. Right now, the region is in its dry and windy season, which provided strength to the fires.

Multiple contingency departments had to be called to deal with the situation, as it had already consumed 25 hectares on the first day. The Imbabura Provincial Government used their police helicopter to run reconnaissance flights and also to drop water on the fire. Corresponding authorities were also deployed to deal with the fire; Park Rangers and the fire department of Otavalo, Ibarra and Cayambe, and the National Police. "Our priority was to secure the country's natural patrimony," Stated Raul Ledesma Huerta, Minister of Environment.

## Claro to invest additional \$500 million in Ecuador to develop more services

Mexico's "América Móvil" will invest close to \$500 million over the next three years in Ecuador to develop broader services. The company is also interested in acquiring new frequencies that it will tender in November, company director Daniel Hajj said Tuesday.

The investment will point to greater coverage of the service and an update of the technology.

América Móvil, which operates in Ecuador under the name of Claro, expects to conclude this year with 85% coverage with 4G technology, and will begin testing 5G coverage in the two main cities of the country.

"We are interested as a company to buy those frequencies and above all we announce an investment commitment of about \$500 million for the next three years," Hajj added, after a private meeting with President Lenin Moreno in Quito.

Ecuador plans to tender three new bands of its radio spectrum in November this year and in August 2020, to expand the coverage of the mobile phone service and

internet access. The investment expected by the new bands would amount to about \$700 million, according to the Minister of Telecommunications, Andres Michelena.

The government presented a program last month with which it seeks to achieve 98% connectivity, improve access and lower service rates.

América Móvil signed a concession with Ecuador in 2008 to operate in its mobile phone market until 2023, with new economic guidelines and improvements for users in addition to investment plans of \$200 million annually in the first years.



Extracted from EL Universo

## Drug and Alcohol rehabilitation institute receives sports gear as donation

The Intensive Ambulatory Treatment (TAI, for its initials in Spanish) department, in the Pumapungo health center, received a donation of 71 sporting good items of various kinds. A group of 16 young patients participating in this program have been give the first batch of equipment for them to take home.

"Our main goal for this program is to aid with the reinsertion of these young guys into society. We have developed multiple play activities and work training programs

that have both benefited the patients, as well as their close relatives," said Natasha Peralta, speaker from the Zonal 6 Health Coordination.

This year, 96 new users have enrolled in the TAI program. If you need more information on how to access these services, the 171 hotline can provide you an appointment with a general physician for more information.



Extracted from DiarioEL Tiempo

## Cuenca is next venue for FIFA match between Ecuador and Bolivia

On September 23rd, the official FIFA soccer match between Ecuador and Bolivia will be held in the Alejandro Serrano Aguilar stadium. The game will start at 7:00 PM. This will be a friendly preparation match, as the next season of qualifying rounds for the next FIFA World Cup draws near.

"We wanted to take the national team to a place it hasn't seen for 12 or 13 years, as far as I know. I hope we can continue doing this same thing throughout the national territory," said Francisco Egas, president of the Ecuadorian Football (soccer) Federation, or Ecuafutbol.

Another game will be held in New Jersey against the Peruvian national team.

Extracted from Diario El Tiempo

## Chamber of Transportation of Cuenca (CTC) is installing security cams in all urban buses

A project has begun to reduce crime within bus units and to provide a safer environment to the 300,000 daily users of the bus system. In total, 475 public transportation buses will have this new security cams.



As of now, this new security cam system has been installed in only 12 buses. The National Transit Agency (ANT) proceeded to qualify the shops that would be authorized to mount or dismount these systems, by request of the CTC. The SIR Consortium of Cuenca, a part of CTC, has a monitoring center where they can watch all the footage in real time.

These recordings should also provide good evidence material for investigations on robbery, sexual harassment, damages to the units, and attacks to drivers, both physical and verbal. Sadly, this would also put an end to the street vendor activities that some people bring onto the buses, thus eliminating this source of income for a number of people. This last point has been a controversial topic; but the undisputable fact is that there is a municipal ordinance against this activity.

"We also make a call onto the citizenry for them to step up and file complaints when they see crimes being committed. Robberies occur every day in the units, but too many people grow fearful of denouncing," said Leonardo Albarracin, President of the CTC. "We encourage people to be brave and aware, to help create that safe environment we all want," he finished.

As part of the "Safety in Going Back to Classes" security plan by the National Police, there will be officers randomly patrolling buses in the city.

Extracted from Diario El Mercurio

## Cuencano athlete sells homemade pasta in his spare time

The Pan-American champion in 50 KM race walk, Claudio Villanueva, has been working alongside his mother distributing homemade pasta around various Cuenca shops. "Once I finish my training, I'm already receiving calls from my clients for new orders," said Claudio, at the moment of leaving his training in Parque de la Madre.

Back at home with his wife, children and mother, he goes up to the kitchen where the pasta is made. They have a regular and an industrial stove, many pots and strainers, and the machine to cut the pasta dough, as well as the sealer for the plastic packaging. All machines are the manual kind, "we can't afford to buy electrical machines, we have to adjust to what



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we have," said Claudio.

The business was initiated by Claudio's grandmother. Later, it was continued by Claudio's mother, and he has been helping her since he was very young. He is mainly a salesman and deliveryman for the products, but he also helps make the pasta. Clients are both regular individuals and shop owners; in the 10 de Agosto market and 9 de Octubre market, among others. Many employees of the High Performance Training Center, where he trains, as well as athletes, have become preferred customers. In a typical week, he sells about 80 bags of pasta, for \$1 a bag.

He has become a great example to other athletes, showing the willingness to carry out a family business while also becoming a top performing athlete. "I will have this business until I die. It's a family business and a family legacy. It's my grandmother's recipe and I will keep it alive. Pasta from a champion's hand to your pot," Claudio finished.

Extracted from Diario El Tiempo



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## Fire Department in Cuenca acquires new equipment for its specialized unit



The Cuenca Fire Department achieved its qualification to develop an Urban Search and Rescue Specialized Firemen Team in 2017. This year, they have acquired 37 new pieces of equipment, a new tow truck and 495 protection suits. The total investment was \$718,500.

This unit will be available to be deployed anywhere in the canton, and even at a national level when dealing with national disasters.

Among the different devices the fire department acquired were a portable reverse osmosis water purifier, personal cameras with thermal vision, portable decontamination showers, inflatable tents, a portable water pool, a gas detector for toxic or flammable gases, and many others.

Extracted from Diario El Mercurio

## European Union provides funding to help post-earthquake communities



Citizenry: rethinking the post-earthquake territory," is a new initiative brought to Ecuador by the European Union through its Association for Peace and Development Foundation, which is part of the META program (Manabi and Esmeraldas Active Territories). This program is promoting civilian participation in the reconstruction and planning processes of the different cantons affected by the 2016 earthquake.

There are at least 7 Cantons in the Manabi and Esmeraldas regions still recovering from the earthquake aftermath. The EU has provided about \$240 million in aid to rebuild these areas. "These funds are non-refundable and are being injected as humanitarian aid through the European Investment Bank (BEI). Also, the Latin American Investment Fund is providing support, among other entities," stated Andrea Ferrari-Bravo, Chief of the Cooperation of the European Union in Ecuador.

The META program will provide training, awareness programs, research and other assistance to two citizen observatories, which will study the public policies and generate changes in accordance to various concepts of inclusion and fairness.

Extracted from El Telegrafo

## Toquilla-hat knitting course becoming popular in Cuenca

The Economuseo in Cuenca has been providing toquilla-hat knitting courses for the last few years. Since then, over one thousand individuals from the urban area and countryside have taken classes to learn this craft.

One of the main goals in offering this course is to drive these new knitters to open up the market and create strategies so that consumers can acquire these products locally. In addition to learning how to make

these traditional hats, students also learn how to make purses, bags and other less traditional types of hats, with various knitting patterns.

The courses are offered every 2 months and run for 3 days, with 3 hours of coursework per day. The courses are free to attend, but you must go to one of the two offices of Economuseo to enroll. These classes are for all ages, including children from the age of 6.

The course teachers are all knitters that have been in the craft for years and even decades. One of them, like Luis Mario Tacuri, belongs to a family that has passed down the knowledge for generations.

Economuseo is best known for its location on Calle Larga in the "Casa del Sombrero" museum. The other office is on Rafael Maria Arizaga and Luis Cordero, where there is also a historic exhibition hall called "Sala Real".

## Revitalization program in the cocoa industry comes with United States assistance



A new program for the strengthening of the cocoa producing sector will be carried out with the cooperation of the United States who will invest \$1.5 million. The main goal of this program is to help cocoa farmers achieve a fairer price for commercialization worldwide in order to cover the production costs and generate a profit.

Jorge Ortiz, president of the Union of Cocoa Farmers Organization of Ecuador (Unocace), is pushing all producers to associate under one commercial block, in order to strengthen the sector. "Only through an association, quality and certification can we reach fair prices when trading with the rest of the world," he said.

Right now, Unocace is comprised of 1,200 farmers. The organization was the one to facilitate the cooperation among Ecuador and the United States. The new agreement was signed by the ministers of agriculture and cattle farming; production, foreign commerce and investments; and the U.S. Ambassador for Ecuador, Michael J. Fitzpatrick.

"We are providing this \$1.5 million in order to strengthen our commercial relations, since Ecuador is the third largest cocoa provider to the US market," stated Mr. Fitzpatrick.

This investment will be used for training for farmers, creating business-to-business connections, research and advertising, access to credits, improvement to services and other types of assistance programs.

The Minister of Agriculture, Xavier Lazo, thinks this is a great opportunity to revitalize over 200,000 hectares of cocoa crops and increase productivity in the sector by 35%.

Extracted from El Telegrafo

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## CRIME REPORT AND ACCIDENT REPORT

### Cuenca Area Traffic Accidents

\* Sometime after 10:00PM on Monday, August 26th, a traffic accident at the intersection of Vega Muñoz and Miguel Vélez streets left 5 people (3 adults and 2 children) injured. Authorities are still trying to piece together the cause of the accident between two vehicles.

One of the injured people was taken to Vicente Corral Moscoso Hospital; the other injured people were taken to José Carrasco Arteaga Hospital.

\* Two accidents that left 4 vehicles damaged, occurred at the same intersection at different times on Monday, August 26th. At the intersection of La República and Octavio Díaz streets, the two accidents happened because of the failure of two vehicles to respect the stop sign that gives preference to vehicles travelling on La República.

The first accident between a taxi and an SUV occurred at 9:00AM; the second occurred at 1:00PM. In the morning accident, the two vehicles involved were a taxi and a Hyundai Tucson. In the afternoon accident, the two vehicles involved were a van and an SUV.

No injuries were reported for either accident.

\* A serious accident in Canar last Monday left two people dead and five others injured when a van overturned after the driver lost control and ran through a ravine.

ECU 911 Austro dispatched two ambulances from the Ministry of Health. At the scene of the accident, paramedics confirmed the deaths of a 67-year-old woman and a nine-year-old boy, whose identities were not disclosed.

Also, three other minors were among the injured ages 6, 7 and 16. Two women aged 34 and 46 were also injured and taken to the Luis Fernando Martínez hospital.

\* Around 8:00AM on Saturday, August 24, 2019, a traffic light located at the intersection of the Primero de Mayo and Doce de Octubre was struck and knocked down by a driver in an SUV. No injuries were reported.

\* Two multiple car crashes occurred Friday morning, August 23, on Avenida de las Américas, on the Fabián Alarcón bridge, in the northeast of Cuenca.

The first impact was caused by an intercantonal bus that collided into the back of a truck, then swerved into another car that then also hit a third car. The driver of the bus fled and left the wrecked bus on the roadway.

After the initial accident, several drivers slowed down to look at the scene, which then caused another multiple car accident involving 3 other vehicles.

No injuries were reported for either accident.

\* On Saturday the 24th of August, the driver of pickup truck lost control of his vehicle at the intersection of Ordóñez Lasso Avenue and Los Cerezos Street, and crashed into the wall of a house. The accident left on person injured and considerable material damage to the house.

One of the Civil Traffic Agents (ACT), of the EMOV EP Mobility Company, said that the accident likely occurred due to speeding. However, a witness said the driver was under the influence of alcohol and fled the scene of the accident.

### Cuenca Area Criminal Activity

(Cuenca) Two people were arrested on Sunday for the alleged crime of assault and armed robbery. The subjects, 35 and 37 years old, were identified by a citizen who said that his cell phone, a mining flashlight and cash were stolen. When police went to one of the accused's house

to search for the stolen items, they found a 16-caliber shotgun under the mattress. A bulletproof vest, two flashlights, a balaclava, a glove, a plastic gun and a cell phone were also found.

The other alleged suspect, aka 'Beto', was found drinking in front of the San Alfonso church. When searched, police found the stolen cell phone in his possession.

The victim who identified the thieves said they physically assaulted him and pointed a gun at him during the robbery.

(Cuenca) A 43-year-old male was arrested last weekend for the alleged crime of selling drugs in the Barrial Blanco sector (near avenue Verdeloma Heroes). According to police, the suspect known as 'Callejón,' was caught "packing bags of cocaine paste."

When police searched the house, they found 130.57 grams of cocaine paste equivalent to about 1,306 "doses" of the drug.

The suspect has been arrested 61 times for a variety of offenses.

(Cuenca) A man is in custody for the alleged crime of impersonating a police officer.

Cuenca police reported that on Wednesday morning, an "informal taxi driver" reported that an individual who was posing as an intelligence agent hired by EMOV, demanded the driver pay him \$80 or he would be arrested.

After a search, the imposter was found in the Rancho Grande sector of the Ricaurte parish. Police officer David Altamirano said that the suspect was engaged in asking for money from informal carriers for at least the last two weeks. He is asking people who have been victims of extortion to report the crimes, so the suspect can be charged for each offense.

The Prosecutor's Office has charged the suspect based on article 287 of the Comprehensive Organic Criminal Code, which sanctions the person who impersonates an office or public function, with one to three years in prison.

(Cuenca) On Monday, August 26th, police arrested a father and son suspected of stealing a spare tire from the rear of a vehicle parked between Juan León and Viracochabamba streets, in Cuenca. Neighbors had witnessed the suspects taking the tire and reported details of their vehicle to police, who intercepted the suspects on Viracochabamba street and Huayna Cápac avenue. Police found the stolen tire and several tools that could be used for breaking into vehicles to steal accessories in the suspect's car.

According to police data, one of the suspects has previously been arrested six times.

(San Joaquin) On Friday, August 24th, police raided a home in the "Y" of the Cebollar, just north of Avenida de las Américas and arrested a man and a woman who allegedly belong to a criminal group dedicated to home thefts.

The criminals were charged with breaking into an unoccupied home in San Joaquin and stealing appliances and other household goods on two occasions.

According to the complainants, about 2 weeks earlier, someone had broken into the home and stolen a few objects. The criminals realized the house was unoccupied and returned with a truck on Wednesday the 21st and took away other household goods.

Fabián Astudillo, chief of operations of the North Cuenca Police District, reported that after an investigation, on Thursday night they managed to locate the alleged criminals location and in coordination with the Prosecutor's Office, raided the building they were staying in, where they found a television and other objects that were reported stolen.

# EMOV says photo radar systems reduce accidents after 34,108 drivers are fined for speeding

Speeding was the third most frequent cause of traffic accidents in Cuenca last year. This motivated the Mobility Company (EMOV), to place seven photo radar systems in four sectors of the city back in April. Since that time, traffic accidents have been reduced by 36 percent in those places, according to EMOV data.



To raise public awareness, EMOV placed several preventive signals prior to the radar zones. The first is one that alerts drivers about the allowed speed limit, the second warns about the speed control zone, the third is the speed information panel and the fourth informs where the radar system is located.

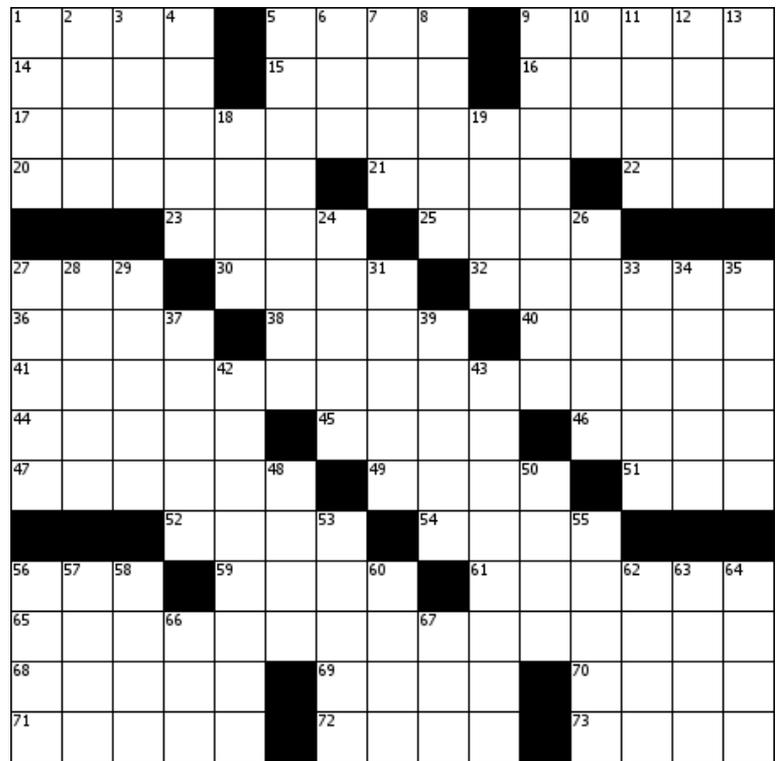
Prior to the placement of the photo radar systems, the points of greatest concern were identified with the collaboration of residents and pedestrians.

One of those locations is on Ordóñez Lasso Avenue, near Oro Verde Hotel. This area had the largest number of drivers fined for speeding after the photo radar system was installed. From April 1st to August 1st, there were 9,749 drivers who were caught speeding here.

EMOV, says that since installing it photo radar systems, there have been 34,108 violations, mainly for speeding. The penalty that is being applied is not for speeding, but rather for "disrespect for traffic signals." This is because EMOV did not get new permissions to use the system to monitor speeding. So, it is using a category that it previously had approved. The fine under this category is \$118, equivalent to a penalty of 30 percent of the basic salary. Drivers who receive a violation notice—via email to the owners of the vehicles—have 72 business hours to challenge the penalty.

Lawyer Roberto Guzmán said that because the fines are for "disrespect for traffic signals," it is very likely that if they are challenged, they will be eliminated. However, "they must be challenged within the established deadline (72 hours), otherwise the driver assumes responsibility. The fine cannot be eliminated after the established time."Guzmán points out that some drivers are unaware of this and don't take the effort to challenge the notice.

Drivers can make file complaints and make inquiries in the TSA service office on Fernando de Rojas and Avenida Primero de Mayo. They can also call: 1800MULTAS (1800 685827).



See answers on page 5

**Across**

- 1. Circle parts
- 5. Rib order
- 9. Accumulation of fluids
- 14. High time?
- 15. Club in a bag
- 16. What happens here stays here
- 17. Request for a tailor?
- 20. Apotheoses
- 21. Light gas
- 22. Look or must adjunct
- 23. Heal, as a radius
- 25. Red figure
- 27. Director Howard
- 30. Wee workers
- 32. One usually found on the couch?
- 36. Crest
- 38. Praise highly
- 40. One who exhorts
- 41. Section for investors
- 44. Sports complex
- 45. Neither nuts nor crackers
- 46. Hit the road
- 47. \_\_\_ to go
- 49. Monk's garb
- 51. Where beauty is, to the beholder
- 52. Beginning on
- 54. Type of male bird that hatches eggs
- 56. Inventor's cry
- 59. Dinghy or dory
- 61. Buck feature
- 65. Cry to a DJ, perhaps
- 68. Villain's expression
- 69. Ran like the wind
- 70. Droughtlike
- 71. Test type
- 72. Chinese coin
- 73. Solidifies

**Down**

- 1. Prefix with knock
- 2. Abbey or Tobacco
- 3. Refined coal
- 4. Pussyfoot
- 5. Lambastes
- 6. Works on a wall?
- 7. McCarthy aide
- 8. Prepare to use a prie-dieu
- 9. Levels
- 10. Place for thieves
- 11. Baker's dozen?
- 12. Check chaser
- 13. 1975 Wimbledon champ
- 18. Human bone
- 19. Complete circuit
- 24. Some car roofs
- 26. Backbreaker, in a proverb
- 27. Clerk of the 4077th
- 28. Juilliard major
- 29. "When pigs fly!"
- 31. Poison \_\_\_
- 33. Concur
- 34. Diminutive
- 35. Pontificate
- 37. City near Dayton
- 39. Enrico Caruso, for one
- 42. Angela of TV and films
- 43. City at the mouth of the Quin-nipiac
- 48. Sticky stuff
- 50. Noted monologist
- 53. Comic Arbuckle
- 55. Topmost cervical vertebra
- 56. Semicircular room
- 57. Attila's army
- 58. Iowa State's home
- 60. Commandment word
- 62. Draw in
- 63. Give off
- 64. Cincinnati nine
- 66. Princess's annoyance
- 67. Notable time

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---

<p><b>When:</b> September 21, 2019. Doors open 6:30pm</p>	<p><b>Tickets:</b> \$25 includes buffet dinner. Buffet starts 7:15 pm ... dancing, beer, wine...</p>
<p><b>Where:</b> <b>Villa San Carlos</b> Remigio Tamariz 1-85 &amp; Av. Solano</p>	<p>Tickets available at: Inca Bar, Common Grounds, Hostel Santa Canela, Cafe San Sebas and <a href="http://www.streetlightproductions.net">www.streetlightproductions.net</a></p>

*Net proceeds are for the benefit of the musicians*

## WHAT'S HAPPENING AROUND TOWN AND BEYOND....

"What's Happening..." is updated weekly with a large variety of events that both ex-pats and Ecuadorians will enjoy. If you have an interesting event you would like to publicize, email [info@thecuencadispatch](mailto:info@thecuencadispatch.com) for consideration.

### Classifieds and Events

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Visa Angels of Ecuador is located in Cuenca and is here to make your visa process a breeze  
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 Contact Email Address: [jodie47@gmail.com](mailto:jodie47@gmail.com)  
 Contact Phone Number: 0995362612

#### Conversation in English Wanted

Conversation  
 I am looking for a woman for conversation in English. I am an older male gringo in pretty good condition. While I would prefer an Ecuadorian woman I am open to any race, nationality, or color. We could meet in any coffee shop of your choice. I live near Supermaxi in El Vergel. Only conversation. Nothing else.  
 Contact: Theodoro Swenson phone: 098-759-0678  
 e-mail: [theodora645@gmail.com](mailto:theodora645@gmail.com)

#### Vegetarian and vegan food

Delicious falafel, made with the traditional recipe based on chickpea and crispy vegan nuggets, ready to fry or bake.  
 Ask also for our gluten milanesas. 100% vegan and nutritious at the best price.  
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C&C cares about your hair. Take advantage of this huge DISCOUNT!!! 2X1 Hair Treatment \$25 . Men's Package includes manicure pedicure haircut shaving facial scrub exfoliating by steamer \$20 . Cut , Color , Style \$30 and up . Eyebrows upper lip by threading or waxing \$6 . Highlights \$50 and up . 1 hour body massage \$30 get free express manicure and more.  
 All Services include a glass of wine , coffee, hot tea .  
 Book up today or follow us in Facebook as C&C unisex hair design Instagram as c.c.\_unisexhairdesign .  
 Contact: Clemencia Vizhñay phone: 0988148902

#### Ahhfordable massage, facials and more at home. Specials!

Massages, facials and much more by an experienced, licensed cosmetologist with her own treatment/massage table – in the comfort of your own home.  
 August, 2019 specials – in-home only.\*  
 Services summary: Massage – Facial hydration – Anti-aging and lifting – Facial renovation – Body and facial depigmentation – Acne control – Relaxing massages – Lymphatic drainage before and after surgery – Waxing with facial and body wax – Permanent Eyelash curling.  
 \*for first time clients.  
 Contact: Alejandra phone: Whatsapp message/voice and cel 099 101 5477

#### Pilates Strong to the core classes at SkyFit

In this Pilates based class you will utilize your body, exercise balls, exercise bands, weights for a total body workout. You will improve your posture, core strength, overall strength, balance and flexibility.  
 Professional Pilates Instructor, Sky will guide you to a strong, toned physique.  
 Next session Begins September 2 on Mon/Wed/Fri at 10 am  
 Address: SkyFit on Sucre 7 – 70 y Luis Cordero above Cafe Alicia  
 Contact: Sky Rajewski phone: 0998660379

#### Guitar tabs, Notations, Sheet Music, Lyrics, Chords, Songbooks free downloads

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#### 400 Years of Astronomer Kepler's "The Harmony of the World" Save the Date for a lecture:

Celebrating 400 Years since the Publication of "The Harmony of the World" by the Revolutionary Astronomer Johannes Kepler in the Light of Modern Astronomy.  
 Sunday, September 8 from 3:00 – 4:30 pm, Uriel Center for the Arts and Education.  
 Please email or WhatsApp for the exact directions, 2 1/2 blocks behind Escuela Panama Bus Stop on Remigio Crespo and Lorenzo Piedra. GPS leads one astray.  
 Contact: Sandra phone: 0982799503

### Worship Services

#### Calvary Chapel Cuenca this Sunday - English and Spanish Services

What: Calvary Chapel has been formed as a fellowship of believers in the Lord Jesus Christ.  
 When: Sunday's service in English at 9:30 a.m., in Spanish at 8 a.m. and also at 11 a.m.  
 Where: Our location is at the western end of bus line #22, Juan Pio Montufar and Primera Convención  
 Cost: Free  
**Contact: Roger Quilty** 098 032 6390

#### The International Christian Community

What: We are open to Christians of all backgrounds and our main goal is to love one another in the Lord. Come and enjoy "God With Us".  
 When: Every Sunday at 11:00 a.m. (in English). Coffee fellowship after the service.  
 Where: Nicanor Aguilar and Solano (one block north of Monte Sinai Hospital).  
 Cost: Free  
**Contact info:** Email [info@internationalchristiancommunity.org](mailto:info@internationalchristiancommunity.org)

#### English Worship Services - LDS

What: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints  
 When: Every Sunday at 10:30  
 Where: Av. Fray Vicente Solano and Remigio Tamariz. Bus stop (just outside the meetinghouse) is on the west side of Solano between Remigio Tamariz and Remigio Crespo. Buses 5, 12, 15, 16, 22, 24, 26

Solution to Sudoku puzzle on page 3

8	3	7	1	5	2	4	6	9
5	2	1	6	4	9	3	7	8
6	4	9	3	7	8	2	1	5
9	8	3	5	1	7	6	2	4
2	6	5	9	3	4	7	8	1
1	7	4	8	2	6	5	9	3
3	1	2	7	8	5	9	4	6
7	9	8	4	6	3	1	5	2
4	5	6	2	9	1	8	3	7

# Real Estate & Rentals



## Incredible house for sale in San Joaquín

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monileonera@yahoo.com



Looking to rent or sell your apartment, house, or land?

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## BRAND NEW 3 BR, 3.5 BA CONDO IN PUERTAS DEL SOL

This elegantly furnished condo, located only steps away from the path along the Tomebamba River in one of the best and most quiet neighborhoods of Cuenca, is a MUST SEE!

**Contact:**  
Kathy Gonzalez  
099 450 0325  
Kathy@CuencaRealEstate.com



## Fully furnished apartment with a covered terrace 180° VIEWS

This amazing unit just came out of the oven. YES, it comes with a Terrace and has a great view to the Yanuncay-river. The apartment has 2 bedrooms and 2 bathrooms, EVERYTHING IS INCLUDED!

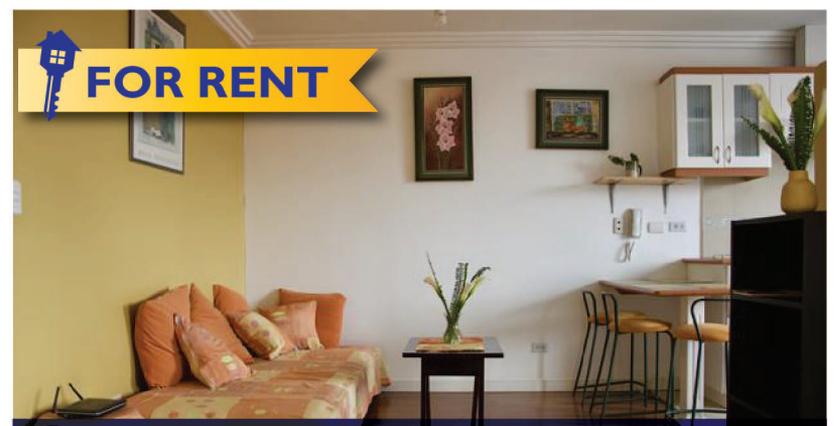
**Contact:**  
Roberto Cruz  
0995 821 318  
mediosoles@gmail.com



## COZY GROUND FLOOR APARTMENT \$450 - 1 YEAR LEASE MIN.

Fully furnished, 2-BR, 2.5 bathrooms, big sun laundry covered with glass roof. Quiet/safe neighborhood, close to San Sebastian Church, bus lines and new tram. Included DirectTV, high-speed internet, water. No building fee. Not included: electricity

**Contact:**  
Marna Feican  
099 8409 884  
feicangm@gmail.com



## Fully furnished One bedroom apartment for Rent near the Solano av.

It is completely furnished. With a nice view towards El Cajas, very bright and full of sunlight. It is located in the Virgen de bronce area. One year lease minimum. For only \$400 per month, utilities are included.

**Contact:**  
Roberto Cruz  
0995 821 318  
mediosoles@gmail.com