

# Alegría

THE JOURNAL OF EARTH-KIND LIVING

VOLUME ONE ■ ISSUE 1

## *Discovery. Celebration. Legacy.*

Alegría is the Spanish word describing joy and happiness - universal emotions which can inspire and propel us to overcome the obstacles of our hurried and competitive modern world. Making time to attain a peaceful place when the mind reaches harmony and becomes still, unhurried in discovery and reflective of the natural riches that surround us - this is Alegría. Embracing timelessness allows us to breathe deeply and celebrate life fully.

Within these pages, Alegría showcases energy efficient technologies employed by forward thinking developers of "green" communities and resorts. Our mission is to stimulate a heightened sense of responsibility to protect the surrounding beauty we enjoy.

Alegría is about the art of celebrating life in its natural balance. We applaud those who possess compassion, integrity and awareness - compassion for all living things, integrity towards others and a strong awareness of the boundless privileges we enjoy as free spirits.

Creating a meaningful publication requires a team of passionate associates with compatible goals and boundless energy all working together to make a difference. All of us at Alegría invite you to join us as we embark on a remarkable journey of discovery, celebration and legacy, not as consumers, but as caretakers.

- Erik Cutter, Managing Director

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"TIME IS OUR GREATEST GIFT— HOW WE USE IT DETERMINES  
WHO WE ARE AND HOW WE'LL BE REMEMBERED."

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LOS BARRILES



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a Paradise near Los Cabos...**

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GREEN LIVING

An Earth-Kind Revolution Stirs in Baja - by Enrique Vargas

THE TRANSFORMATION OF THE BAJA PENINSULA FROM A MYTHICAL, NEARLY INACCESSIBLE CHAIN of ranches and sleepy Mexican fishing villages to that of a world-class tourist mecca has occurred rapidly and in dramatic fashion. Drawn to the region's rich natural resources, its spectacular scenery and wild-west flavor, the early pioneers of the late 50's took extravagant risks to sculpt the tortured landscape into an inviting oasis that now entices millions of visitors annually. Created in 1974, the State of Baja California Sur grew up around the free port capital of La Paz, a city rich in history and full of traditional Mexican charm. On the southwest tip of the peninsula lies the region of Los Cabos. Fueled by intense speculation, Los Cabos has become Mexico's newest "Riviera" and one of its fastest growing cities, offering anything a modern globetrotting traveler can imagine. To the north, the cities of Todos Santos, La Paz, the East Cape region, Loreto and Mulege are beginning to stir, attracting more and more visitors who seek the magical healing powers of this enchanted land.

Development of these outlying areas is occurring rapidly, altering the traditions and culture of the seaside communities and threatening to destroy the balance that supports the framework of Baja's sensitive eco-systems. In the past, little attention has been paid to building the energy-efficient infrastructure required to support dramatic growth in this region of limited resources, and most development proceeded unchecked being founded solely in short term profits. Now an earth-kind movement is underfoot, one that promises to deliver not only a better way of life for those that adopt new technologies, but one that has the potential to redefine the way we all live and interact within Mother Nature's realm.

NewTek, Quad Lock and the ICF Revolution

Most people feel helpless when it comes to tackling environmental issues including recycling, clean air and global warming. In this regard, Les Zwaryck has proven himself a fearless optimist and a staunch advocate of earth-kind building processes. Les moved to Mexico in 1998 and had no intentions of building; instead he wanted to enjoy a semi-retired lifestyle. After experiencing first-hand the high cost of energy required just to air-condition homes, Les realized there was a huge need for energy-efficient buildings.

Having spent over 25 years in the construction business, Les understands all too well the devastation caused to the environment from his former career in the logging industry in Northern British Columbia. "I witnessed the massacre of mountain sides of forest to supply the construction materials industry," Les explains, "And I knew there had to be another option." From this experience, Les became determined that people should

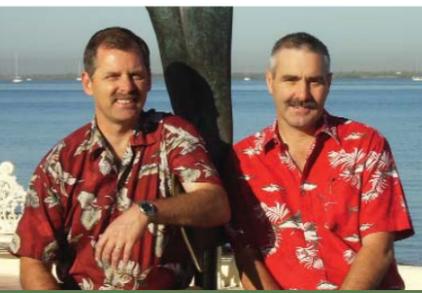
learn about and invest in safer, comfortable, environmentally friendly dwellings. To educate himself, Les began researching construction materials that were environmentally friendly and cost effective. He came upon Insulating Concrete Forms (ICFs), a new material that would prove to be extremely energy efficient, light, super strong and very cost effective.

**"I witnessed the massacre of mountain sides of forest to supply the construction materials industry," Les explains, "and I knew there had to be another option."**

In 1998, NewTek Construction Solutions was founded to provide construction distribution of ICF and project management while promoting green building solutions all the way. "We began using ICFs 13 years ago and about eight years ago, we endorsed Quad Lock ICFs exclusively. Due to the strict

engineering specifications for construction in Mexico because of the threat of earthquakes and hurricanes, we determined Quad Lock to be the best material. In 2004, Les and his son Ben, a partner in NewTek, moved their offices from San Jose del Cabo to La Paz to take advantage of the development boom that was underway up north.

Working hard to promote the benefits of the Quad-Lock system, especially when designing multi-story buildings, they soon attracted La Concha Pearl developer Dan Shore of Shore & Associates out of San Jose, California. Shore first saw one of Les's custom estate homes in Palmilla, and being committed to "green" building himself, Shore realized the great potential to utilize Quad Lock on his new 7-story, 33 unit beachfront condo project in La Paz. Now nearing completion, the building is expected to qualify for Baja's first Gold or Platinum LEED certification award based upon the numerous energy efficient processes that

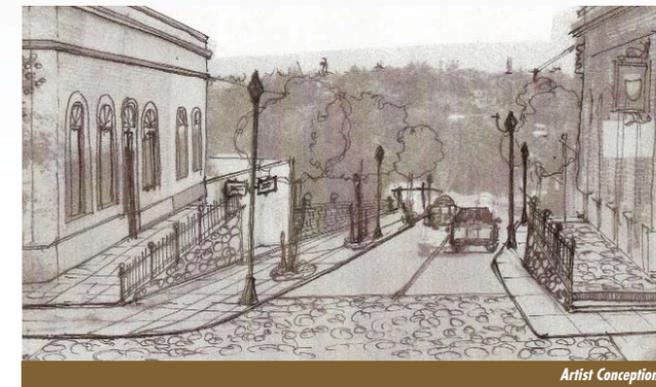


have been designed into the hi-tech structure. NewTek has targeted new projects in Todos Santos including the resort community of Real de Santa Ana, a new 160-home sub-division, to showcase the energy-efficient Quad Lock construction system and provide passive solar power in all residences.

Les foresees a steady increase in Quad Lock construction due to the high cost of energy, its limited supply and in a lesser way, the threat of hurricanes in southern Baja. "In general, we as humans are becoming more

aware of the negative effects we are having on the environment and as a result, are becoming green building conscious. The initial investment of building green costs slightly more than traditional building but benefits, long term energy savings, structural integrity and quality of life are astounding. Pay a little more now and enjoy the savings for the rest of your life," emphasizes Les. People are always looking for better options and Les promises that at NewTek, they will find you the best solution.

Proposed Coastal Development Plan for Todos Santos, Pescadero and Las Playitas is Moving Forward



The Mexican Federal Government has taken a unique step in protecting the rural flavor of Todos Santos, Pescadero and Las Playitas. In essence, the Feds are working with State and local members to develop a plan that protects the coastal environment and preserves the rural lifestyle found within Mexico's newest "Pueblo Mágico." At a town meeting on September 20, 2007, a final draft of the master-plan was presented by Architect Marco Antonio Dominguez Valles where comments and suggestions from the community members were noted. The Plan Committee responded to the suggestions and now the plan in its final form is moving toward adoption by the La Paz municipal government. Once ratified, it will move on to the State for inclusion into law.

Architect Juan Manuel Velásquez and his team, recognized for their understanding of colonial Mexican architecture, are

representing the State of BCS and working with the Federal Government and elected officials to introduce a refined "beautification plan" for Todos Santos. Architect Velasquez's concept is designed to preserve the oasis quality of the town while maintaining the cultural and historical character that it possesses. Stay tuned for more updates as they become available.



Real de Santa Ana - Todos Santos' Newest Residential Resort Community

August 27, 2007 marked the official ground breaking and Phase 1 of the construction of 160 homes in the Real de Santa Ana resort community, an exciting start to the visionary Santa Ana family master-plan. The first phase, known simply as "Todos Santos," will soon become an extension of the history and culture of the town itself. Years of careful planning by the Santa Ana family has culminated in a unique development plan, one that blends with the town's identity and does so with the environment in mind. Plans include a passive solar power system for each home, water and waste recycling, energy-efficient Quad Lock construction and a golf cart in every garage to reduce the dependence on internal combustion powered vehicles.

Within the gated community, each lot provides a minimum of 5,300 square feet, offering plenty of space to call home. Lush landscaping comprised of indigenous vegetation of bougainvillea, flowering vines and fruit trees and a variety of palms will enhance the feeling of living in a tropical oasis. The first homes should be ready for occupancy in March of 2008.

When asked what this project means to his family, patriarch Dr. Jose Santa Ana explains, "Our ancestors were farmers who worked the land and raised farm animals here and although we are using the land in a completely different manner, we hope that this use brings honor to them. By being sensitive to the needs of the community and the environment, we hope on behalf of the Santa Ana family not only to contribute to the economy of the region but leave a legacy as earth-kind stewards."

Jorge Santa Ana, a nephew and project manager adds, "Architecturally, we wish to build homes of great quality that match the town's original character found during the days of the sugar cane



www.newtek.com.mx  
www.quadlock.com  
www.laconchapearl.com

www.todosantos.com

www.realdesantaana.com  
www.puntalobos.com



Casa Oasis - Real de Santa Ana

**"Our ancestors were farmers who worked the land and raised farm animals here and although we are using the land in a completely different manner, we hope that this use brings honor to them."**

**—Dr. José Santa Ana**

industry, an identity that reflects our families' Todos Santos roots. All of us on the team from Inmobiliaria Punta Lobos are enthusiastic about moving forward to achieve our goals not just as company but also at a personal level in order to leave a legacy for future generations of the family and the community."

Envisioned by Dr. Santa Ana and designed by Juan Manuel Velásquez of Velásquez Asociados, Real de Santa Ana will soon become a part of the Todos Santos community – a place where you can savor the flavors of rich Mexican traditions, immerse yourself in a warm Baja oasis and slow down long enough to experience what truly matters in life.~

### Colina del Sol – Developer Carlos Estrada Brings Green Living to the East Cape

Desarrollo Corporativo Peninsular, S.A. de C.V. (DECOPE), founded by Developer Carlos Estrada Talamantes, is a full-service design, engineering, construction and management company dedicated to maintaining high quality standards utilizing modern technology. The company employs a permanent staff of 120 plus 450 construction workers. The company is currently developing Colina del Sol, an environmentally-friendly master-planned residence resort community in Los Barriles in the East Cape. With sun at a premium and water a precious commodity in this area, the company is studying a passive solar power system for the community and has already installed an underground recycled waste-water treatment plant for irrigation. To keep it low-density with plenty of open space, 60% of each lot is set aside for native vegetation. Other green attributes include low intensity lighting and a compost bin where all cuttings are mulched and used for compost and a nursery to transplant any protected vegetation that needs to be removed when building.~

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Dwell in the sol of Baja, a Paradise near Los Cabos...

### Non Profits Assist Local Communities to Fund Conservation

The International Community Foundation (ICF) has worked in Baja California and the Sea of Cortez for over a decade as a key public charity fostering sustainable development, environmental health, encouraging volunteerism across borders, and building the capacity of local nonprofits throughout the region in the area of sustainable communities and environmental conservation. Many threats menace the delicate terrestrial and marine environments of this unique region, and limit opportunities for the local population. These include unplanned coastal development and sprawl, loss of critical habitats, overexploitation of fresh water resources, over-fishing and overgrazing, lack of enforcement of regulations, and lack of capacity

responsible tourism, green building and climate change adaptations. Through its philanthropic leadership, ICF is encouraging and engaging private donors and foundations to provide critical funding and support for conservation along the Baja California peninsula and Gulf of California region. For more information on ICF's philanthropic programs, please call Dolores Wesson at (858) 677-2916.~

[www.icfdn.org](http://www.icfdn.org)

#### ECO-ALIANZA DE LORETO, A.C.



In Loreto, Eco-Alianza de Loreto, A.C., a newly formed non-profit membership organization of environmental organizations and individuals, is working collaboratively to protect and preserve the coastal, marine and terrestrial eco-systems of the Municipality of Loreto while promoting smart growth strategies and viable communities in the region.~

[www.ecoalianzaloreto.org](http://www.ecoalianzaloreto.org)

### King y Asociados – Investing in "Green" is Smart and Profitable

With over 18 years selling everything from time shares to multi-million dollar homes, Rory King has seen it all. As owner of King y Asociados, a full-service real estate sales and consulting firm with offices in Todos Santos and La Paz, one thing stands out to him - selling "green" IS the future. According to Rory, "Never has it become more important to embrace the "green" revolution. It's not only the right thing to do to mitigate further damage to our environment; it's also smart and profitable. Over the years, I have come to realize that in order to continue to enjoy the richness and natural wonders we have here in southern Baja, we must influence the future of building. It makes no sense at all to continue the block and rebar homes when new technologies such as ICF's are available; materials that are many

times stronger, longer lasting and far more energy efficient." Rory has been working with a local team of professionals to educate, implement and promote the green building ethic throughout the development community and has been successful at persuading several developers to adopt this ethic and in turn, integrate "green" building technologies and renewable energy processes into their developments. The best part of it all according to Rory is, "I feel proud to offer hi-tech energy-efficient homes to my clients and they are happy to pay a little more up-front to own a superior house and enjoy the huge energy savings and a better quality of life for years to come."~



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# *Magic*

Possessing extraordinary or mystical influence and charm.



**Todos Santos — Artist Colony, Surfing Paradise, Tropical Oasis... ¡Pueblo Mágico!**

A unique, desert oasis on the Tropic of Cancer, Todos Santos is nestled amongst ancient orchards of mango and palm, with spectacular views overlooking its white sand beaches and the Pacific Ocean. It is here that rich history, centuries' old traditions and warm hospitality blend with modern conveniences to make this a magical community. Experience the healthy, laid-back lifestyle of Todos Santos, Baja's one and only "Pueblo Mágico".

*[www.TodosSantosLiving.com](http://www.TodosSantosLiving.com)*