

BAJA TIMES

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December 1-15, 2015

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LOCAL NEWS

More Mexicans Leaving the U.S Than Coming... a recent San Diego U-T article found that in the last five years cross border immigration numbers showed that 140,000 more Mexicans returned to Mexico than emigrated north. Primary reasons given were a desire to reunite families, a sluggish U.S.economy, and tougher border enforcement.

Local Hyundai Rosarito Facility Update... The construction project, inaugurated by the State of Baja and its Governor, 'Kiko' Vega, is valued at \$84 million (US dollars). The South Korean company plans to build chassis for semi-trailer trucks in this facility. The Governor said that, as previously reported, the new factory will bring 2000 new jobs to our city and was a direct result of the business missions he has been conducting in Asia.

Rick Bayless Highlights Food Festival... at the recent San Diego Bay Wine & Food Festival, the famed Chicago-based television chef was quoted as saying "...Baja is such a hot culinary scene right now, it's completely unlike any other part of Mexico. It's just exploding." He did a series of shows in our area last year highlighting area favorites including Tacos de Yaqui.

Free Road Circumnavigates Ensenada...a 35 kilometer stretch of scenic highway is under construction right now that allows vehicles, including bicycles, to reach Maneadero, south of the city, without having to deal with the downtown traffic. No date is set for its completion.

SeaWorld To End Orca Shows.... The San Diego aquatic park announced that its iconic killer whale shows will be phased out by 2017 and replaced by a "new experience" focused on the natural environment of whales. 2016 will be the last year guests will be able to see its iconic attraction featuring the performing mammals.

Can The Tijuana River Produce Electricity?...two UCSD Urban Studies professors have articulated a project that uses the channel to produce enough solar energy to power 30,000 homes. The energy project would not eliminate its flood control function, simply enhance its uses.

Cross-Border Airport Bridge Opens...a privately owned 390 foot pedestrian bridge linking TJ's Abelardo Rodriguez International Airport directly to Otay Mesa (CA) is set to open on December 9th, This is the only U.S. port of entry that connects directly to an airport in Mexico and also the first on the California-Baja border to charge a toll.

A Unique and Unforgettable Experience



Saturday evening, December 12th, we'll all get a rare chance to see... and hear... greatness in action. When Mariachi Vargas de Tecalitlan, (El Mejor del Mundo) returns to Rosarito, they will be accompanied for the very first time by sixty-four of the finest musicians in the world: the famed Bi-National Symphony. These maestros were selected from among the very best that the United States and Mexico has to offer by famed Conductor Jose Guadalupe Flores of the critically acclaimed Sinfonia de Queretaro, MX.

The venue itself is worth a special mention, too. The Baja California Center, located ten minutes north of downtown Rosarito just off the Cuota, is the largest indoor facility in the region with a state-of-the-art sound system specifically installed just for this singular event:

See page 02

Imperial Beach Donates Bus to Our Boys & Girls Club

This past September Mayor Serge Dedina signed a friendship agreement with the City of Rosarito and as part of that agreement, the Imperial Beach Boys and Girls Club donated one of its buses to the Boys and Girls Club of Rosarito Beach, Mexico.

Lilian Mendoza de Abarca, first lady of Rosarito attended the ceremony on behalf of her husband Mayor Silvano Abarca. She is also the Chair of Social Services programs for the City of Rosarito.

See page 03



Ken Blinsman, President of the Boys and Girls Club of South County; Aaron Ruiz, Director of the Imperial Beach Boys and Girls Club; Rosy Torres, President of the Rosarito Beach Boys and Girls Club; First Lady Lilian Mendoza de Abarca of Rosarito; and Mayor Serge Dedina of Imperial Beach.



Pasta & Basta Km. 28.5 Blvd. Artesanal Popotla 1 mile South of Rosarito Beach Hotel Phone:(661)117-9825

Northern Baja Welcomes Northern Italy: A Love Story

Once upon a time there was a little girl living in America in a big city called San Diego with over three million people. There was also a little boy living in Northern Italy, in the county of Bergamo, in a small village

called Rota di Imagna with no more than nine hundred people. Now how this boy met this girl, and how this has been of great benefit to all of us here in Rosarito, is what this story is all about:

Let's begin with the boy whose name is Christian.

See page 03

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From Front Page

A Unique and Unforgettable Experience

the appropriately named El Gran Concierto de Gala del Mariachi. This celebration of Mexico's internationally honored art form, winner of UNESCO's Patrimony in 2011, will definitely solidify the genre's position as the country's preeminent musical contribution to the world.



Special arrangements...including five new ones created expressly for this unique event by the legendary Ruben Fuentes & the group's current Musical Director Carlos Martinez...will amaze the fortunate 5,200 ticket holders who will be in attendance. These will include young music students (under the age of 12) from both sides of the border who are receiving free admission as a time-honored and proven motivational method to continue their studies.

have composed some of the most famous mariachi classics including 'La Negra,' 'La Bikina,' and 'Violin Huapango' to name a few. They have also written and performed the world's first & second mariachi operas, routinely selling out their performances in venues as diverse as San Diego (CA), Houston (TX), Chicago (IL), and Paris, France. El Gran Concierto is being filmed & recorded LIVE for DVD/CD distribution to be released in June, 2016. The evening will be enhanced by the superb choreography of the famed Compania

Vargas' 14 performing artists will be celebrating the group's 118th Anniversary this year as they enter their 6th continuous generation of performing excellence. Over the decades, their past Musical Directors

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From Front Page

Imperial Beach Donates Bus To Our Boys & Girls Club

Dedina spoke during the ceremony, "I started coming to our local Boys & Girls Club when I was just 7 years old in 1971 and continued as a member until I was 17...it's an important institution in the social development of young people," he said.

Aaron Ruiz, director of the Imperial Beach Boys & Girls Club also spoke, "It is special to say that our mayor was a member of our club. We are proud that one of our very own is making such a positive presence in our community. We are excited (with this donation) because we are able to 'pay it forward.' We receive such generous donations here in IB and it's an amazing feeling to give to another club in need. We recently visited the Boys and Girls Club in Rosarito and were thrilled to see that it was filled with children eager to learn," he said.

Ruiz also pointed out that the Rosarito club is building a new facility which will accommodate even more children. "Buses bring 80 percent of our children to the club. Our philosophy is if you can't make it to the club we'll have the



Mayor Serge Dedina & Rosarito's gift to Imperial Beach

club come to you," he said.

"You are an example to follow. You'll help over 600 kids daily with this bus," said Rosy Torres of the Boys and Girls Club of Rosarito.

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Mendoza de Abarca spoke a few words through an interpreter. "This donation will be put to good use. We want to continue our communication between the two cities and develop other projects and programs together... Thank you Mayor Dedina for being our number one supporter on this side of the border," she said.

Hugo Torres, two-term Mayor of Rosarito, owner of the Rosarito

Beach Hotel and father of Rosy Torres, donated a painting to the city of Imperial Beach as a thank you gift. The painting which has been on display at the hotel since the 1970s depicts a 'woodie' by the beach, which happens to be the logo of Imperial Beach. The painting will be on display at City Hall. A bi-national event is currently being planned for April 30 called Fiesta del Mar.

From Front Page

Northern Baja Welcomes Northern Italy... Part 1

It all began when his great-grandfather's family owned a hotel and restaurant in Rota di Imagna. The hotel has actually been in the family since 1896. Across the street his great-grandmother's family owned a restaurant. Now in America these folks would be called competitors, however in Italy they began referring to each other as 'rivals' quickly escalating to 'enemies'. The culmination of this feud climaxed with these two families coming together via the marriage ceremony of what was to become Christian's grandparents. Perhaps only in Italy could there have been such a 'Romeo and Juliet' finale.

Now keep in mind that Christian comes from a long line of culinary relatives. At the age of six his father had to make a little stool in order for Christian to climb up on and make the coffee for the espresso machine. Soon after the age of ten, in his father's pizza store, Christian was creating one hundred pizzas...AN HOUR!

As Christian grew older he traveled throughout Italy learning many different cuisines. Christian graduated (in the 90th percentile) from one of Italy's most long-standing culinary schools located in San Pellegrino. He soon developed a reputation as a great chef. Keep in mind that Christian had not yet reached his twentieth birthday. He was now a culinary trained professional chef, and had become the fifth generation member of his family making the art of cooking his life's work.

It just so happens that a friend of Christian's from his home town owns a restaurant named Buona Forchetta,

located in the South Park/Golden Hills area of San Diego. The friend sent for Christian to come to San Diego to visit. While this was Christian's first time in America, with virtually no real grasp of our language, he loved San Diego.

Let us now segue to the 'little girl' whose name is Bonnie, now a young woman and a native of San Diego. Bonnie at this point in the story had spent fifteen years as a successful sales rep.

Bonnie had just undergone hip surgery and had progressed, after three months from the surgery, to the point where she no longer needed crutches. On her first day, sans crutches, Bonnie and a girlfriend decided to walk just a few short blocks to an Italian restaurant that she had heard good things about (Buona Forchetta). After a great dinner they went across the street to a reputable bar for an after dinner drink.

Soon after, the new chef from the restaurant crossed the street, entered the bar and recognized that these two young ladies had just consumed his culinary artistry. This was his opening. He came over to their table asking how they enjoyed their dinners. NOTE- Later Christian confessed that it was Bonnie's bright lipstick that had him notice her.

Bonnie was entranced by Christian's lyrical Italian accent, combined with her always wanting to know more about people from different parts of the world. Thus a lengthy and quite enjoyable conversation ensued.

Now, out of the blue, Christian asked Bonnie if she knew how to dance the 'Bachata'!

This is a Latin dance originating from

the Dominican Republic. Where does a guy from Italy get to ask a girl from California if she knows a Latin dance from the Dominican Republic? Well, lo and behold, it just so happens that Bonnie is a dancer and knew how to dance the Bachata! Go figure! Oh yes, just days after being relieved of her crutches, Bonnie is dancing the Bachata with Christian.

Lest we forget that at this juncture Christian knew poquito English with Bonnie knowing less than poquito Italian. However they went on to date in San Diego for three months. Alas Christian's visa was about to expire resulting in our 'Romeo' having to return to Italy, leaving behind his sweet 'Juliet'.

Written by Len Merson
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Cruz Roja Voluntarios Americanos de Rosarito Form a New Primo Tapia Chapter



We are proud to announce that a Primo Tapia Chapter has been formed thanks to the efforts of the incredible volunteers headed by the President of CRUZ ROJA VOLUNTARIOS AMERICANOS DE ROSARITO, Rosie Pena, our very own 'Energizer Bunny of Baja'. Lana Jordan Juvinal has been appointed the Chairperson of the Primo Tapia Chapter.

It was 'Standing Room Only' at Splash for the CRUZ ROJA VOLUNTARIOS AMERICANOS DE ROSARITO PRIMO TAPIA CHAPTER event. A wonderful group of 103 folks from the South of Rosarito and from Rosarito were in attendance. Forty-eight new members signed up and \$956.00 was received in donations. A big thank you to Jackie Alameda representing Baja Blues Fest Organization for their donation of \$500.00.

NOTE- Primo Tapia membership fees are \$20.00 (U.S.) per year. Rosarito will also be increasing their membership fees for the first time since 1970 to \$20.00 (U.S.) as well.

This new chapter will report to Rosie as they are under her umbrella. Also, very important that the Primo Tapia community will know that all monies raised regarding membership and donations will be separate for all accounting purposes

PRIMO TAPIA AMBULANCE SERVICE: For the month of December the ambulance service in Primo Tapia will extend to 24 hours per day/7 days per week. However, beyond December, this is with the condition that the members of the Primo Tapia Chapter are willing to assist able to raise the funds to pay the \$2,500 (U.S.) monthly expense for this service. Without this financial assist, come January the ambulance service will revert to 12 hours per day which will be from 11 a.m. to 7 p.m. as is the case now. The importance for this service is the '44 MINUTE' Factor. This is the additional time it will take an ambulance from Rosarito to reach a person in this area and then transport them back to Rosarito. NOTE- The community of Bajamar will be part of the Primo Tapia chapter ONLY if they are members due to the

expense of the ambulance going so far. Special recognition was paid to the following wonderful ambulance service personnel in attendance- Carlos Mendoza, Grecia Navarrete and Edgar Ortiz (see photo).

We have to give thanks to the Cruz Roja Voluntarios Americanos de Rosarito Chapter for having advanced the \$2,500.00 to cover the 24/7 expense starting December 1st, 2015. Also, to Richard Nicolas for opening his lovely home for our "Eat, Drink and Save Lives" hosting event. The monies raised from Richard's event will be advanced towards the preparing of the opening of the Primo Tapia Thrift Store in memory of his close friend Jo Ann Chase who passed away a few months ago.

PRIMO TAPIA THRIFT STORE: It is with great excitement that we announce the opening of the Primo Tapia Thrift Store. We thank Len Merson for having researched and found this venue for us. Val Valle is the Chairperson for this location. The 'Ribbon Cutting' celebration for the store will be on December 1st, from 2:00 - 4:00 P.M., with the Grand Opening on December 2nd. Store hours will be from 10:00 A.M. to 3:00 P.M., Tuesday through Saturday. The location is in the center of Primo Tapia, in the middle of the block south of El Jefe and across from El Pollo Asil. NOTE- Donations for stocking the store will be greatly appreciated. Please contact Lana Jordan,

lanabaja@gmail.com, to bring your thrift store donations to Mision Viejo north gate, where volunteers will be sorting and pricing until November 24th, after which donations may be delivered directly to the Thrift Shop.

The following are the devoted people who sit on the Board of The Primo Tapia Chapter:

Primo Tapia Chapter Chairperson- Lana Jordan Juvinal, Treasurer- Kathy Schy, Membership Chair- Pam Saltzman, Membership Co-Chairs- Jim and Annie Hausmann, Thrift Shop Chairperson- Val Valle, Newsletter Chairperson- Lynn Dorion.

Written by Len Merson
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Baja Blues Fest Announces Awards

At a recent luncheon hosted by The Rosarito Beach Hotel, the event's founders... Marty & Jackie Alameda and the BBFO's Board of Directors... presented four deserving local charities with \$2500 checks to help them



continue their amazing work on behalf of our area's young people. It was a clear demonstration of the success of the organization's mission statement, enunciated prior to its inaugural event just four short years ago, of 'Helping Kids with the Blues'. Representatives from the four sponsored charities: BECA, Los Angelitos Orphanage, La Mision Children's Fund and Friends of the Library, were on hand to receive the donations as well as personnel from key sponsors (amongst others, the Rosarito Beach Hotel & Bobby's by the Sea) as well as from FRAO and members of the press (including Rosarito TV, Channel 69). The affair was also attended by the Baja Blues Fest's Board of Directors, their families, the BBF Music Director and Talent Coordinator, as well as beneficiaries from the

aforementioned charities.

It was announced at the luncheon that next year's 5th Annual Baja Blues Fest event will take place on August 19th, 20th, and 21st at the Rosarito Beach Hotel.

In addition, Marty and Jackie announced the formation of a new program called 'Clave al Futuro' (Key to the Future) which will be the subject of a future in-depth article in The Baja Times. It is centered around a fund being created to help the 5000 U.S. born children with Mexican parents who live in our local community who do not have the proper documentation to show that they are Mexican citizens entitled to basic educational and social services. It's another truly worthy cause being furthered by the altruistic expatriates who have chosen to make the beautiful Rosarito area their home.

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Calendar of Events

December 1st
Early Bird Deadline
Guided Tour to the Heartland of Tequila: Jalisco, \$550 USD Prepaid: 3 nights luxury accommodations, April 28-May 1, 2016. Includes private tour of Tequila Fortaleza's Distillery, Walking Tour of Guadalajara, ground transportation, some meals, gallons of good tequila and lots of fun. (Airfare not included) (619) 300-9102 or BajaWineToursAndMore@gmail.com

The North Tour will cover Real del Mar to Jolla Real (KM 25) The South Tour will cover Vintage Furniture (KM 29) to Plaza del Mar Tickets at PayPal, International Mail Center, Extreme Beauty Salon \$18 & \$30 for members; \$20 & \$35 for non-members. Phone (661) 612-3659 www.friendsofthelibrary.com.mx friendsofthelibraryrb@gmail.com

December 3 & 4, 2015,
Christmas Bazaar, Rosarito
9:00 AM trough 8:00 pm, at Salon Las Americas, Rosarito Beach Hotel, Mexican Red Cross invites you to participate Contact us for more details: (661) 612 0414 ext 116

December 5th, At Rosarito
USBC Holiday Ball
\$30 per person, (tables for 8-10 available) no host bar 6:00 pm, dinner 7:00 p.m. dancing 8:00 p.m. Music by Pachuco Blues Tickets available from: Rosie Dillon (661)120-4491 Annie Saravera: Anastasia.mx@gmail.com e-mail: 2015holidayball@gmail.com

December 3rd, At Rosarito
Meet And Greet: Award-Winning Author Viola Canales ("The Tequila Worm") Newest author in the Friends of the Library's Rosarito Lee (Rosarito Reads) City-Wide Reading Program. Free Tickets: Appetizers; Book Signing; No Host Bar; Valet Parking Location: John Hall Furnishings, Blvd Popotla KM 29 (east side of the Free Road, just north of the Don Pisto Store TIME: 6-8 PM RSVP: friendsofthelibrarybr@gmail.com

December 10th, At Popotla (Rosarito)
"People Helping People" Posada at Popotla Restaurant 6pm to Midnight \$20 USD includes Sabor de Mexico buffet and Live entertainment featuring Maryam Malak (661) 614-9625 or e-mail: comite@chprosarito.org

December 4th, Rosarito
Mi Casa Supper Club Presents: Monte Carlo Soirée to Benefit the Cruz Roja Voluntarios Americanos Rosarito and Primo Tapia Chapters. Friday, Dec. 4, 2015, 4:30 pm. \$50 dills per person (prepaid only). Includes welcome cocktail, appetizers and \$200 dills gambling chips. Maryam Malak will perform to support our cause. Contact Rose Peña 619/621-0292 wosiepena@yahoo.com Location: 55 Calle Estero, San Antonio del Mar (to the left before you turn to the guard shack).

December 11th, At Rosarito
Pasta y Basta Hosts Its 1st Winemaker's Dinner
Chef Christian Gritti of Pasta y Basta teams up with Winemaker Paolo Paoloni of the famed Villa Montefiori Winery. They will be serving a specially created 4 course wine pairing dinner. All the details can be found on the Ristorante's Facebook page First Seating: 5-7 PM Second Seating: 7:30-9:30 PM Reservations Necessary e-mail: chefchristiangritti@gmail.com phone: (661) 117-9825 KM 28.5, Boulevard Artesanal, Popotla, Rosarito

December 5th At Rosarito
7th Annual Friends of The Library
Holiday Home Tour: 10:00 AM-4:00 PM

December 11th, At Rosarito
Gala Posada 'Yo Amo Rosarito Black & White Christmas Ball'
Traditional Black & White Attire Corona Plaza Hotel Benefit for Catherine's Kids Orphanage 8:00 PM-2:00 AM. \$350 pesos or \$22 USD Live Music provided by Sonora Dinamita International Orchestra (664) 408-5893 or (661) 116-2636

Why Not Celebrate The Holidays with a Stay at The Rosarito Beach Hotel & Resort?

New Year's Dinner/Dance and Christmas Packages Available

Just 30 miles south of San Diego, the Rosarito Beach Hotel & Resort is a great destination for people seeking to transform this magical holiday time into a two-nation celebration or mini-vacation. Baja's largest and best known beachfront resort is offering lodging and dinner packages to make that a tempting option on a range of budgets. Those wanting to spend Christmas at the resort have the choice of one- or two-night packages on Dec. 24 and 25. The \$159 one-night package includes an oceanfront room. Christmas dinner for two adults and two children 12 and under, plus two welcome margaritas. Two children 12 and under can stay free in their parents' room. The two-night \$259 special adds American breakfasts for two to the package. Those who want to extend their stay until the resort's legendary New Year's Eve gala dinner/dance on Dec. 31, can book additional nights for \$119, including two daily getaway dinners. For many, the resort's New Year's dinner/dance has become as much of a tradition as trying to catch a glimpse of the gray whales that migrate to birthing grounds in southern Baja

waters this time of year. One-night stays in an oceanfront room are \$299 and two-night stays \$399. For a deluxe condo in the 17-story Pacifico Tower, packages are \$359 and \$489. Each includes two tickets for the dinner/dance, plus a Fast Pass for faster border crossing on return to the U.S. Additional nights on Jan. 1 and 2 in a standard room can be added for \$149 and in a deluxe condo for \$179, each with a daily getaway dinner for two if reserved prior to Dec. 23. (These packages are only available by phone reservation. Rates plus tax.. No other discounts apply. Subject to availability. To reserve, from the U.S. 1-866-ROSARITO, and from Mexico 01-800-265-2322.) More information and other seasonal packages, are at www.rosaritobeachhotel.com

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Baja's Best Restaurants

DINING GUIDE

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BAJA TIMES

Dining Guide section

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The True "Tail" of How TJ's Zonkey Got Its Stripes

The "zonkey" is so synonymous with Tijuana that the city's entry in the Professional Basketball League of Baja California proudly bears that sobriquet.

Caroline Miranda's fascinating article in the San Diego Union Tribune tells us everything we needed to know. "It is Tijuana's most prominent touristic icon: the "zonkey" -- a donkey painted with zebra stripes and made available for souvenir pictures



Eduardo Perez waits for tourists with his burro named Barney, painted like a zebra, on Avenida Revolución in Tijuana. The burro cart photo-op tradition dates back to the 1930s. (Charlie Neuman / San Diego Union-Tribune / Zuma Press)

along the party strip of Avenida Revolución. But who came up with the idea? And why zebra stripes? In doing research for my recent series on the expanding Tijuana arts scene, I stumbled on the answer in the Los Angeles Times archives. A 1978 story by the late Times journalist Laurie Becklund explained it all. The burro cart as tourist spectacle, she

reported, started in the 1930s: "The burro cart owners say the idea for the tourist attractions came shortly after 1935, when gambling was declared illegal in Mexico and the famous Agua Caliente Casino in the valley southeast of downtown was closed. "The casino had two plain burro carts at the entrance that had appealed to

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Sergio Carmelo ENGLISH SPOKEN

tourists. As Americans began visiting Revolución in the aftermath of the casinos, a few enterprising young men brought wooden carts to the shopping area as backdrops for souvenirs. The photographers soon learned to transform the plain carts into what tourists considered to be Mexico's typical form of transportation. "Mexican scenery was painted into a background. Prickly pear cactus blossomed on either side of the painting to frame the picture (thereby improving the artistic quality of the photograph, they said). Serapes were spread over the cart seats." The carts became so popular that, by World War II, a union of burro cart owners was formed, and members were each assigned a specific street corner to work. It was sometime during or in the wake of this period that the zebra stripes also emerged. Like most things to do with the burro cart, it turns out they had everything to do with the aesthetics of photography -- which would have then been black-and-white or sepia. As Becklund reported in '78:

"There are, among the 22 burro cart owners of this avenue, those who say it was 'el viejito' Vega (the little old man Vega) who first put the burro before the cart here and painted her Peacock-brand black. But Vega died years ago, they say, and is not around to defend his claim. "Alberto Sanchez Ibarra, 66, who has had his cart at the corner of Revolución and 2nd Ave for 36 or 37 years, says it was his brother Prudencio, now long retired, who first painted the burro. "We took pictures of the burrito but because she was white, she didn't show up in the pictures," he explained. So Prudencio decided she needed some paint and he bought the dye. I helped him paint her." "Even those who say it was Vega who deserved credit for the innovation agree that the technical quality of the photography -- and certainly not any desire to exoticize the burro with stripes -- is the only reason for the repeated dye jobs." The donkeys of Revolución therefore bear stripes so that they might better render in the pictures. Instagram should be grateful for that."

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