



NEWSLETTER

FOR A BEAUTIFUL, CLEAN, AND SAFE PLAYA GRANDE

Asociación Playa Grande Sostenible is a nonprofit organization founded to improve, protect, and unite the Playa Grande community

Our mission is to promote a balance between coastal development, human well-being, and environmental conservation.

The initiatives we coordinate range from environmental education to responsible living within a National Park, as well as strategies that help keep our town safe.

The board of directors, the administrative department, and the committees are made up of volunteer community members who, out of their love for Playa Grande, dedicate themselves to coordinating community efforts and demonstrating their commitment to sustainability.

Meet our Board of directors:

<https://www.playagrande.org/en/quienes-somos>

We invite you to take a moment to learn about the nonprofit organizations that support the social and environmental well-being of our town:
<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1g6Fj8AUQHh3Q2LNYIIZsdmEoiz88P2hesxmzIB-vKQs/edit?usp=drivesdk>



If you are not part of the Playa Grande community WhatsApp chat and you own property or live in PG, please write to info@playagrande.org so you can be added and stay informed.

Below, we share an overview of what has taken place through the Asociación Playa Grande Sostenible since August 2025.

APGS EDUCATION COMMITTEE

The Playa Grande public school serves 52 students and relies heavily on community support. Being far from the capital means limited resources from the Ministry of Education, and the older building requires ongoing maintenance.

The principal and teacher, **Sugey**, goes above and beyond for the students and is deeply grateful for the community's support.

Please watch our video:

<https://www.playagrande.org/en/apoyoalaescuelap%C3%BAblica>



EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Thank you to **Steven Molina** and the BJJ team for teaching jiu-jitsu.

Thank you to **CEPIA** and to a generous neighboring family for funding an additional teacher who provides tutoring to students in need of academic support.

We are grateful for all ongoing programs: surf, English, swimming, and music. The swimming club extends a special thank you to **Melanie and Gordon** for the use of their pool and hands-on support, and to **Hotel Las Tortugas** for hosting the club since its beginning. A sincere thank you to **David Cothran** for his unwavering commitment to teaching swimming and English.

Thank you, **Paola**, for guiding students through a project selected for the Science Fair in San José!

Thank you to the **Reading Club** volunteers for reading to the children. We also thank everyone who donated gifts for **Jodi, Stuart, and Sophie's** annual Christmas giveaway. Thank you to **Matos Surf Shop and Café Mar Azul** for the graduation gifts!



INFRASTRUCTURE AND MAINTENANCE

Thank you to **Reserva Conchal** for the beautiful custom-made playground they recently donated.

Thank you to **Keith Clower (Grande Vacation Rentals) and his team, Don Mario and Emilio**, for keeping the school grounds clean and beautiful.

We are grateful to our anonymous donors, whose contributions support infrastructure repairs, an additional teacher, and clubs including swimming, tutoring, music, and conversational English.

And thank you to the **APGS Education Committee (Jodi Gallant, Bettina del Rio, Paola Ramírez, Stuart Sheldon, and Tania Montenegro)** for their continued dedication to improving the overall well-being of the school.



UPCOMING PROJECTS

We are currently fundraising for key needs: a new refrigerator and microwave for school lunches, 50 new desk-and-chair sets, a television, two large whiteboards, and various building repairs. Our goal is \$20,000. Every contribution helps.

To support your local public school, please use the link below:

<https://linktr.ee/playagrandeorg>

Please select "Public School" from the menu.

For any participation or volunteer inquiries, please contact gallant.jodie@gmail.com.

APGS SECURITY COMMITTEE

Thanks to all of you, we raised the \$67,000 needed to fund the community security program from October 2025 through March 2026. We will begin fundraising for the next round at the end of February. We are pleased to share that thanks to this program, crime rates continue to decline and are much better under control despite the incremental growth of our town.

The committee has supported the entire community through security bulletins, protocols, safety tips, and informational meetings that we continue to organize.

Thanks to the support of these dedicated volunteers and the donations of several neighbors, we have established a close working relationship with the Brasilito police force, resulting in a more frequent and consistent police presence in PG.

PLEASE NOTE:

- The way we prevent crime as a community through fundraising is by having patrol units present, making it uncomfortable for criminals who may be lurking and ensuring faster assistance in the event of an incident.
- 911 operators can assist calls in both Spanish and English.
- Please file reports, as they can help bring additional government resources for Playa Grande's security. The Brasilito Police Force can pick you up and take you to their office to file a report if needed. Phone number: 2600-2086.
- For anonymous reports related to drugs, please dial 1176.
- The APGS Security Committee is continuously working to establish coordination with the OIJ to enable online reporting in PG. Since it is very likely that offenders are not jailed for theft, we encourage prevention by following the safety tips shared below.

WE NEED YOUR COLLABORATION WITH:

- **PROPERTY CLEANUP:** We kindly ask owners of vacant lots to keep their properties clean. Please keep the areas around homes as free of weeds as possible to allow better visibility for patrol units and to reduce potential hiding places for criminals.
- **PROPERTY LIGHTING:** Whenever possible, install motion-sensor lights around properties to improve visibility of exterior areas. (Please use downward-facing lights to avoid light pollution.)
- **SPECIFIC INFORMATION:** When reporting an incident (theft, assault, disturbances, loss of belongings), please inform the community clearly, specifying the exact location where the incident occurred as well as the characteristics of the person or persons involved. This is extremely important, for example: clothing color, shoes, physical features, tattoos, and vehicle type and color.



- **ALARM SYSTEMS:** We encourage all property owners to install an alarm system.
- **CAMERAS:** If you plan to purchase security cameras, please do so through The Sovereign Tech (cantes@gmail.com) or Paraclete (info@paracletesecurity.com), and copy info@playagrande.org so we can include them as part of the community camera network.
- **PREVENTION:** Please make sure that doors, windows, and gates are properly secured at all times.
- **KNOW YOUR NEIGHBOR:** Invite your neighbors to join the community chats and contribute to the cost of the community patrol service.
- **STAY CONNECTED:** Each neighborhood in PG has a representative and a WhatsApp group chat. If you do not know your neighborhood representative or the WhatsApp group, please email info@playagrande.org.



Please share what is posted in the community chat with other PG neighbors and invite them to join by sending their contact information to info@playagrande.org.

Please instruct all caretakers of homes, businesses, and commercial spaces to report any suspicious person or vehicle as soon as possible through SoSafe, neighborhood chats, or the **GRCOE** patrol emergency number: **+506 8821-5775**.

Download the SoSafe app <https://links.sosafeapp.com/eBY8>

Then join our community group:

<https://links.sosafeapp.com/Fs19EV8bRR11Xt4s8>

And please email info@playagrande.org to obtain a code. We need to make greater use of the SoSafe app.

Thank you to those of you who already do! Please use it for lost items (including pets), road issues, environmental situations, or anything the community needs to be alerted about.

Word around town is that Playa Grande is one of the most organized coastal communities in the Santa Cruz canton! Let's keep that momentum going by working together toward the same goals. We do this by staying informed, contributing when needed, communicating, and above all, **KNOW YOUR NEIGHBORS** and invite them to this collaborative platform. 

A heartfelt thank you to our incredible Security Committee for the countless hours of meetings and volunteer work dedicated to keeping our town as safe as possible.

THIS REQUIRES A UNITED EFFORT. PLEASE BE AN ADVOCATE FOR OUR COMMUNITY'S SAFETY.

THANK YOU!

APGS PARK COMMITTEE

The committee **Mathew Laskowski, Felipe Volio, Alex Bidorini, and Federico de Mezerville** is in the final stages of developing the new construction plans.

The project has grown, and we will be creating an incredible space. You will hear more from us in the coming months as we finalize the plans and secure the budget. From there, we will begin our fundraising efforts. Funds will be raised in collaboration with the APGS Road Safety Committee (Sidewalk Project).

Thank you for your patience, which will be rewarded with a beautiful playground.

If you have any questions, please contact:
matthewlaskowski@gmail.com



APGS ROAD SAFETY COMMITTEE

We are excited to share an update on the sidewalk project, which has been years of planning, building partnerships, and navigating multiple systems to make this happen. For the first stage we aim to build a sidewalk from the main beach access towards the PG school. The goal is to continue with stage 2 which extends to the PG ASADA and stage 3 reaching the CoMarket.

This committee (**Oscar Venegas, Fernando Ortuño, Anne Roberts, Sebastian Artiñano, Steven Molina and Leandro Fernandez**) has spent a lot of time in meetings with politicians and public officials to establish allies who support this initiative. We are working hand in hand with MOPT providing the permits and CONAVI to provide the maintenance. To date we have not been able to secure funding support from the Santa Cruz Municipality. To transcend this block and to keep our efforts moving forward, we will be taking on this fundraising as a community. The Sidewalk Committee and the Children's Park Committee will be collaborating on this fundraising campaign. We will begin our efforts in the beginning of 2026, reaching out to both businesses and individuals as well and exploring grants to supplement our fundraising. This will be our largest fundraising effort yet and it is truly for the good of the entire community, including but not limited to - local community members, surfers, workers who commute here, Playa Grande school children and all of our our children, our businesses, and visitors.

If you have time, talent or treasure to contribute to this effort please contact **Anne or Brooks**.



PG GREEN CURTAIN PROTECTION COLLABORATION

The green curtain is one of the phenotypes responsible for the scenic beauty of Playa Grande, characterizing its wide desolate and green coastline. It is of great ecological importance due to:

- **It protects the dune as a nesting site for sea turtles.**
- **It is a biological corridor of coastal species such as birds, iguanas, crabs, among others.**
- **It reduces sonic and light pollution directed towards the beach.**
- **It mitigates erosion and the effects of climate change (high tides, strong winds).**

This system of coastal vegetation is part of the Las Baulas Marine National Park, but it requires the control of everyone to protect it from potential deforestation due to forest fires and future development in seek of personalized beach access trails.

In support of the coastal reforestation and restoration plan of the ADE Ambiente de Playa Grande, SINAC, Mi Bosque and Costas Verdes we protect the "green curtain" with a firebreak that runs parallel to the beach along the 50-75 meter line between The Taco Star to Casa Verde, Palm Beach Estates (2.4km).

APGS along with SINAC, ADE Ambiente de Playa Grande, Sostenibilidad en Grande and you we raise the necessary awareness to maintain the firebreak marking the boundary between private property and the National Park / protected area. The objective is to have this fire break be used as a pedestrian and bike shaded trail for its maintenance and provide signage to inform locals & visitors about the protected area and where the nearest beach access is located.

As of now we concluded five stages of the Green Curtain Project firebreak! Please enjoy it using this guided map:

https://www.komoot.com/tour/2696769726ref=itd&share_token=a01h4xjxnWiQ9wgGz8tY26VmgkhK2RFO3XSbVKMkfMMLrkuBZ

THANK YOU:

Vecinos voluntarios

Voluntarios de pasantía

Grande Vacation Rentals (Keith Clower, don Mario y don Emilio)

Butterfly Pool & Garden

Condominio Ventanas de Playa Grande

Ventajas Mundiales

M y M

Inversiones Mobaz

Pots & Bowls

Rip Jack Inn

Familia Fichtner

Onda

Hotel Las Tortugas

Victoria Manes

Playa Grande Surf Camp

Padoka

Erin Civello

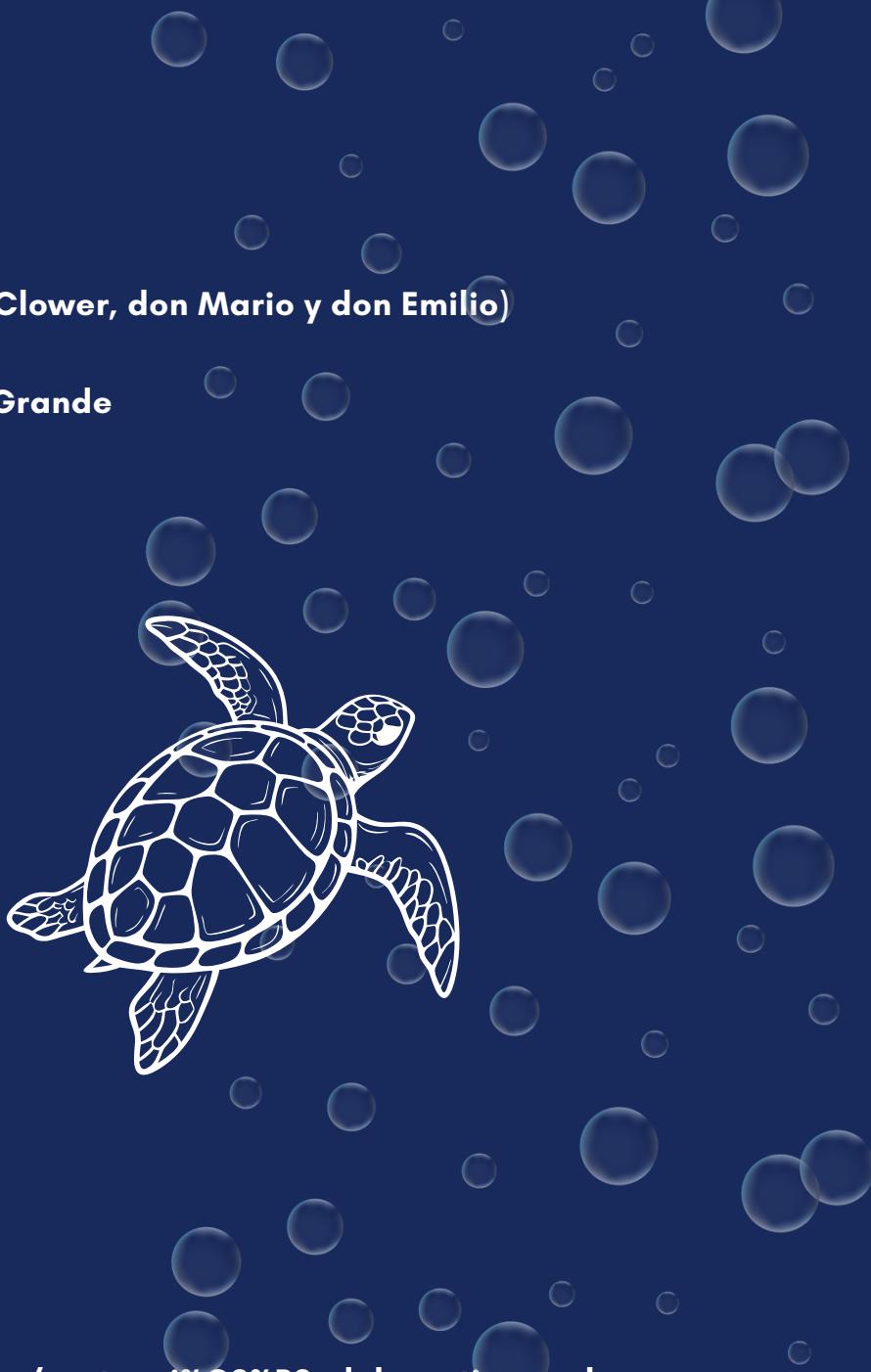
Patrick Majer

Cantarana

Señorita Casitas

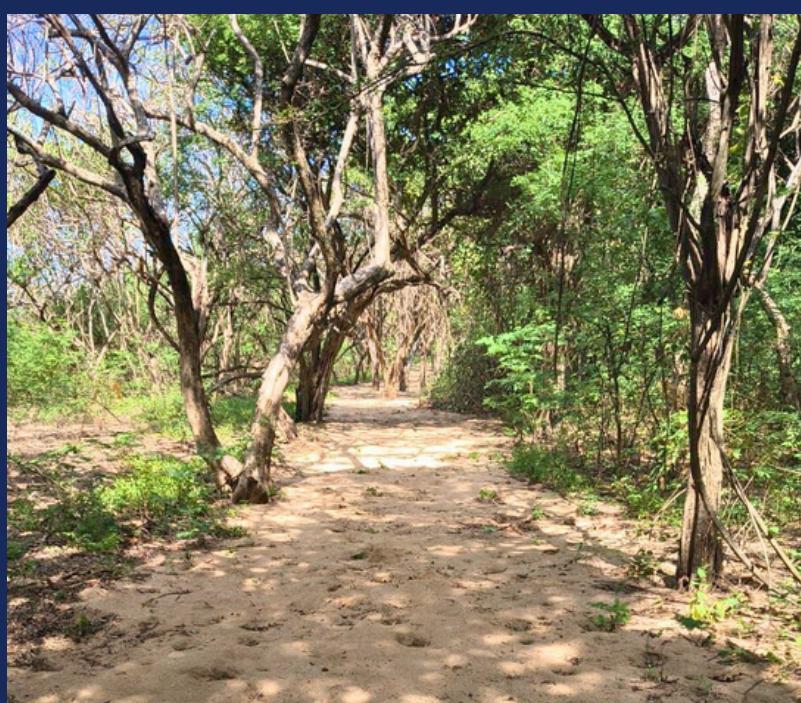
Nadia Borysenko

Deb & Dawn Pinkham



For more information visit:

<https://www.playagrande.org/en/protecci%C3%B3nadelacortinaverde>



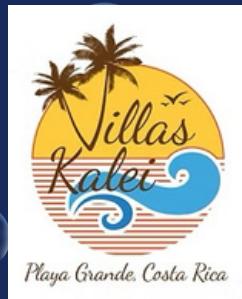
1% COMMUNITY FUND



The main idea behind 1% is to minimize local donor fatigue by giving clients and visitors the opportunity to contribute through their purchase of goods and services. This fund is open to businesses abroad and can serve as a source of responsible marketing as well. It consists of adding a 1% "tax" to the market price of your product or service and transferring that amount to APGS for community initiatives.

Thanks to our valued members of 1% Community Fund for their support and belief in it: **Onda, Villas Kalei, Eduardo Pedraza Photography, Ojos del Mar, Señorita Casitas, La Caracola Experience, Festoon Salon and Eco Art.**

Join the fund or for more information email info@playagrande.org or visit: <https://www.playagrande.org/en/negocios>



SOMOS PLAYA GRANDE FEST FLYER

SOMOS Playa Grande FEST

Come celebrate the multicultural spirit of our community! Let's get to know our neighbors.
Let's connect with friends.
Let's share a delicious dinner and enjoy live local music.

This is a community potluck dinner again this year. You're welcome to bring your favorite dish to share!

SAVE the DATE

SATURDAY
JANUARY 24
5 - 8 PM



A NOTE FROM THE PRESIDENT

I want to start simply: **Thank you.**

Thank you for being the very best of us. Every time you drop off a meal, watch a neighbor's house, or simply offer a kind word, you aren't just doing a favor—you are building the fabric of our community. That true, generous spirit is the heart that makes this place feel like home.

Thanks to our highly skilled supporters who are behind the scenes available when we need their legal guidance and help for graphic design: **Anne Roberts, Sonia Aragón, Don Oscar Venegas, Paola Retana, Fabrizio Venegas, Lisa Simpson and Catalina Figueres.**

We know that life isn't always easy. But when we stand shoulder-to-shoulder, we are truly unstoppable. Our wonderful mix of cultures, histories, and perspectives isn't just a list of differences; it's our superpower. Let's commit to wrapping an extra layer of care around our most cherished members: our wise seniors, our busy families, and the hardworking small businesses that give our town its unique character.

This past year, we didn't just talk about change; we dug in and made it happen. We saw the beautiful beginning of our Green Curtain Trail, a living, breathing promise of shade and natural beauty for generations. And every child who walked into Playa Grande School knew they had the full backing of their community, thanks to your continued, invaluable support.

Now, we look ahead. Our shared focus for the coming year is to ignite a new chapter of opportunity and connection right where we all gather: downtown.



A NOTE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Imagine a vibrant main road where safe, beautiful sidewalks finally connect us, allowing families to stroll, neighbors to chat, and our businesses to thrive.

Imagine the laughter ringing out from the brand new Children's Park, a dedicated space where our youngest residents can grow, explore, and simply be kids.

We know the path to a better future is often paved with red tape. Yes, the bureaucracy for the sidewalks and the park has been a challenge, but we refuse to let paperwork stand in the way of our children's future and our town's potential. We will transcend these obstacles by working together. This is the time for us to pool our resources, share our talents, and show the passion of our community's fundraising efforts. This future isn't something that happens to us; it's something we build together, every single day.

I urge you to move from thinking to DOING. Will you lend your skilled hands to a project? Can you help organize a fundraiser that will make history? Can you simply share this vital news with three neighbors who might not be in our neighborhood group chats yet? Every action, big or small, writes the next chapter of our story.

I am here to listen, to lead with integrity, and to advocate for our community's wellbeing. Please feel free to reach out info@playagrande.org.

With the deepest respect for all you do, and gratitude for the road we share,

Brooks



RELEVANT LINKS

APGS - Our story: who we are, what we do, and why we do it.

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/123p-Bqw0mamTqVoSusqAwiQHjjcBz4ecNAyPX1r7-7g/edit>

CONTACTOS IMPORTANTES:

<https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1-D4Xk3jMd8qzj7kdHozq48uLvgtNcTdJbIT3n2ZZZyw/edit?usp=drivesdk>

GRUPOS DE CHATS DE PG:

https://docs.google.com/document/d/10aE_sa1cZgh39sZnGYyw9ZmQ78Chgrupwu7URLxpRFQ/edit?usp=drivesdk

 **HAPPY
HOLIDAYS**