



## *2008 Blissed-Out in Belize*

**By: Penny Peters**



Come all ye Grovers far and wide, it's time to reminisce  
To take time to remember our amazing days of bliss  
To savor just for one more time, the joys of our retreat  
And smile anew with every thought . . . until next time we meet

We took three planes and then a boat, our journey took all day  
We traveled from across the globe, we could not stay away  
Belize was calling Grovers back, San Pedro lured us home  
And what transpired stays with the Grove [and those who read this poem]

Belize '08 was just the best, relaxed, and filled with fun  
We spent our days in bathing suits, had meetings in the sun  
We strolled along the beaches, went to dinner via boat  
[The pelicans took cover . . . seeing the whole Grove afloat]

Our "opening night" was magical, pink boas set the tone  
Making new Grovers all feel welcomed, knowing they were not alone  
We swore a pledge to our new Grove flag, learned to punta with Mr. Bill And Edie, Nancy  
and Barbara's "moves" gave Journey's End quite a thrill

But all of San Pedro turned upside down when Madonna strutted in Backed-up by black  
clad Grovers . . . had she Mary Pearl 's wry grin?  
From Wild Life Trust, to Wild Beach Lust, we'd our own "material girl" Seems a blonde wig  
is all that it takes to unleash the pop star inside Dr. Pearl!

But while it was fun to dance all night, we'd a serious purpose and plan  
Our mission was probing great issues, seeking truth [while absorbing a tan]  
This year's theme was called "Equilibrium" . . . which is Grove-speak, I'm certain, for fun  
While our brains pondered our carbon imprints, our bodies were soaking up sun

Each panel took place on the beachfront, in the style of the Isle Bonita  
The "Sabbatical Sisters" led off the day [our own Cathy, Jaye, Nancy and Rita]  
They implored us to take time reboot our lives [for six months at minimum, please]  
Then showed us the way to insure our success . . . all you need are a few F's and P's

And they shared their great insights on writing a book . . . and making it feel like play  
[By shopping between every chapter, and journaling most every day]  
And when the damned microphone kept cutting out, our Toddi showed no drop of fear  
She just climbed up upon Barbara Robert's lap . . . and shouted remarks in her ear!

Our panels explored the economy, ARM's and unfair interest rates  
Why the huge sub-prime crisis keeps growing . . . impacting the whole fifty states  
And how the environment's ailing . . . it's as damaged as damaged can be  
[Did you know that Yellow River can no longer reach out into the sea?]

And we thought about major world issues . . . from Quito to Mumbai to Berlin  
How changing one woman can change the whole world . . . helping even one young gal is a  
win From Burundi to issues in Bogota , Maggie summed up each topic with ease  
Making her global panel a talk show . . . "Hey there Grovers -- It's Good Morning Belize!"

Then we stepped way beyond global borders, to explore Cindy's orbs [unseen light]  
And Patrician explained that our faces contain diagnosis of what's wrong and right  
Does your face say you're metal? Or are you all wood? Or maybe you're water . . . or fire?  
[We spent the whole night second guessing our chins . . . and wishing our noses were  
higher.]

And we spoke of design, and of hand craft, and the yearning for granny made chic  
And of stretch "dorsal cleavage" erasers . . . that make all flabby bodies look chic  
And of healing with sound, and walking for health, and of spa treats that make us stay trim  
And Dr. Eileen swore that Vitamin D matters more than two years at the gym

And Elaine talked of risk . . . it was coming, she said . . .but like many, she just didn't see it  
And Barbara said turnover's part of the plan. . . reinvent . . . see the next life and be it  
When you're out of the "grove" and the "doldrums" set in find a place to "cocoon" and recharge  
Then "get ready" again and get back to new Things . . . and like Barbara, start living life LARGE

But whatever you do, don't make three-legged stools . . . Edie told us that they were passe  
If you can't turn yours into a six-legged chaise, you'd better get out of the way  
For the future she said, isn't in a flat world, but in one that has extra-dimension  
Where "smart" is outmoded and "intelligence" rules . . . intuition's the next new invention

It's the era of spirits, of shamans and seers, a world where ET might be king  
Where having a law or a finance degree won't beat auras or learning to sing  
So as cutting edge Grovers, we got a jump start, and unleashed our non-rational spirit  
Doing water aerobics to loud Shirelles tunes . . . luckily only we Grovers could hear it

We dug deep down inside, and found spiritual selves that we nurtured and fed with great glee  
Like Jennifer who ordered five lunches each day . . . [hungry Grovers need more than iced tea]  
And we auctioned away our material goods, raising money for San Pedro's kids  
Led by Melanie's quick course in auctioneer chic [she out-glamoured us all to high bids]

We were so deep in spirit that we barely shopped, a first for a Grove get-away  
Although 10% off at Belizean Arts Shop, had a few Grovers carried away  
And while some danced at Fidos . . . most headed home, to sit 'neath the stars and "commune"  
Drinking rum and tequila and sharing deep thoughts, and enjoying the Belizean moon

But our spiritual selves really leapt to the fore on our Grove Mayan Carnival night  
Journey's End won't recover for many a year [some staff still can't get over the sight]  
Cleopatra arrived [looking like Linda Watt] then a Madden/North "recycling" group  
And Madonna recycled was also in view . . . and a wild Mayan hora-girl troupe

I Dream of Genie looked ever so cute, as she MC'd our costume parade  
There were peacocks and butterflies . . . with wings of palm [because Deborah Wince-Smith  
was delayed] Wild feathered masks and carnival beads were clearly the fashion de jour  
Except for our Susan, who came dressed as a cop [methinks 'twas the whistle's allure]

And some most brazen Grovers, showed up in their bras . . . can you please tell me what they  
were thinking? They were wearing their underwear over their Clothes . . .  
and wore pins shaped like boobs . . . that were blinking

These "Mardi Bras" babes arrived as a Float . . . singing songs about D cups and C's  
And their lively refrain [each one in her own key] . . . "Brava Bosom Buddies of Belize!"

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But our funniest moment was when, once again, we were honored by guests from Bhutan  
With their trademark swim caps, made of plastic waste bags and Michelle Jordan's comedic deadpan  
Our "US Ambassador" honored them all . . . with a hundred page speech, never ending  
Was he really as boring and dull as he seemed [or just Ms. Alexander pretending?]

Was the silliness that we all seemed to display, a sign of this retreats' great success?  
Was it "Grovehood" that moved a conservative Doc . . . to "get down" [with her bra top her dress]?  
Did blue ribbons abound for the "husbands past" crew, and those who'd just found Mr. Right  
Because Grovers care so that we cheer EVERYTHING [one's joy is all other's delight]

We gave ribbons for punta, and ribbons for wigs, and ribbons water sport zeal  
[Like to snorkelers who managed to be quiet long enough to see a nurse shark and an eel]  
And we gave a blue ribbon, and a hip hip hooray, to a sister home battling Cancer  
We will party with her when we're all in Peru [she's our very best "get down girl" dancer]

We can't wait for Peru, thanks Peruvian guests, for giving us such a great preview  
We'll take altitude pills, and come ready to Shop . . . we look forward to when we next see you  
But for now we've the Zen of our Belize retreat, there's reason that our Grove was born here  
Belize is our home, it is where we belong, and the place that we all hold most dear

We love not boarding busses, and not traveling each day . . . we love not wearing make-up or shoes  
We love when the only transportation in sight is a 10 minute open boat cruise  
We love Journey's End, Las Terrazas as well, we love time spent together at ease  
We love punta and rum punch and Mr Bill's Style . . . we all LOVE spending time in Belize

We thank you, dear Susan, for welcoming us, to your Isle Bonita sublime  
Each time we return, we respire and grow, it's a most UBLEZIBLE time  
Each year we say thanks, but words never Suffice . . . so we join in this poetic toast  
"Here's to Susan, our leader, our founder, our friend" Thank-you, Susan . . . we love you THE MOST