CAMERA CRACKDOWN ON HARSHAW SPEEDERS

See Story on Page 2
Traffic Camera Crackdown

The town of Patagonia will soon be installing two radar cameras on Harshaw Road, thanks to a gift of surplus equipment from Arizona’s Department of Traffic and Safety (ADTS). Because of increased traffic on the narrow road in the past six months and several near accidents, ADTS is donating this equipment.

“We realize that local law enforcement lacks the man power to patrol this road consistently, and we thought a couple of cameras would help raise awareness that the speed limit is 25 miles an hour,” said Frank Ketchum of ADTS. He explained that the camera photographs the license plate of speeding vehicles and sends the information to a computer in the marshal’s office. The computer actually prints the citation and it only takes one employee a few moments to mail it. Of course, some of these speeders will not live locally, but a nationwide vehicle identification data base can identify cars from all 50 states.

Ketchum points out that this speed enforcement is meant for all vehicles with the exception of police, fire and ambulance. “We do get complaints about Border Patrol vehicles going too fast out there,” said Ketchum. “They’re going to be treated just like ranchers and miners and school buses and ATVs. Cameras don’t know one from another – they don’t care who you are.” Of course, at night the cameras aren’t very effective, but apparently when the moon is full, they can often identify speeders.

The town is responsible for installing the cameras, and there have been questions as to how to pay for this. A suggestion was made to forego the cameras and just change the speed limit to 50, but this idea was tabled because of state regulations.

Revenue from the camera tickets will be used to construct a sidewalk on the east side of McKeown Ave. from Third Ave. to the Ovens of Patagonia. In talking to the PRT, Ketchum mentioned a surplus traffic light that he would like to see installed at the intersection of highways 83 and 82 in Sonoita. “With that Dollar Store going in, I’ll bet there will be a whole lot more traffic in that little town.”

He added that this would take some time to get approved. “Probably by next April Fool’s Day, we’ll know if it’s a go.”

Hello and Goodbye

By Marion Vendituoli

There is a certain irony to the fact that in the same week I applied for Medicare, I accepted a new job as editor of the PRT. Sixty-five really is the new forty, I guess. If only I could convince my metabolism of that. I couldn’t be happier about this turn of events, though, which if nothing else, has taught me so much in the past two months.

I’d like to share a few things I have learned. First, there are heroes in our midst. Just look into the faces of the local kids in our last issue who have opted to serve our country. This issue of the PRT is full of examples of the altruistic spirit of our residents who are monitoring our watershed, helping in the community, and speaking up against injustice.

I’ve also learned that Cassina Farley bought a house, misses her dad, wears second hand shoes, and is a little rigid about her morning cup of coffee; that Martin Levowitz probably didn’t vote for Trump but does watch the Academy Awards; that asking for Laura Wenzel to be my assistant was the smartest move I could have made; and that Donna Reibslager has a lot to teach me about layout.

And I’ve learned that people come into our lives in unexpected ways. Years ago, back in a little coastal town in Rhode Island, I lived a mile down the road from a couple, and rode across the land next to the house they were renting, never guessing that 2600 miles and a couple of decades later, that couple, Ann and Lee Katzenbach, would be living in Patagonia, and that Ann would not only be the connection that led me to this editorship, but that I would so quickly become dependent on her counsel and her willingness to share her wisdom and experience.

Ann took over as co-editor, with Donna Reibslager, after Walter Andrew, who founded the PRT in 2009, passed away. After putting together just two issues of the paper, I am even more in awe of her dedication, devoting countless volunteer hours to writing articles and meticulously editing the paper. Her ‘April Fools’ columns are legendary and, as petite as she is, she’s leaving some pretty big shoes for us all to fill going forward.

Their house on Harshaw Rd. has sold, Ann has resigned, and she and Lee are off to Philadelphia, which is not great news from where I’m sitting, but, with the help of all you citizen journalists out there in Patagonia, Sonoita and Elgin, we aim to keep the PRT relevant, thought provoking, and the community resource we all have come to rely on, and that Ann and Donna and Walter have bestowed upon us.
By Nancy McCoy and Marion Vendituoli

Since 1998, the Patagonia Regional Community Fund (PRCF) has been awarding grants to local organizations to help fund their activities and programs. This past February, PRCF awarded almost $25,000 in grants to the eight local community organizations described below. These grants will have a significant impact for these organizations and the community members they touch.

The Santa Cruz County Fair and Rodeo Association is using the PRCF grant to help fund an extension of the ramada and the building of a new stage. This renovation will help the fairgrounds attract new business, increase attendance at events, better serve community organizations’ needs, and create a safer facility.

The Patagonia Youth Enrichment Center (PYEC) will use the PRCF grant to create a ‘Bicycle Academy’ to teach bicycle assembly, maintenance, and healthy choices of outdoor activities. The Center purchased a STEM (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics) BMX Kit with the grant funding, which includes five high-quality BMX bikes (unassembled), parts and cables, tools, bike stand, and helmets.

The East Santa Cruz County Community Food Bank distributes monthly food bags to approximately 60 to 70 families, and weekly fresh produce distributions are available to all. The Food Bank purchases canned and dry goods to assemble food bags, at an average cost of $1,056 per month. The PRCF Grant makes it possible for the Food Bank to continue to purchase this needed food.

Senior Citizens of Patagonia serves and supports seniors, age 60+, and the disabled of any age, in the area with nutritious lunches and van transportation, designated primarily for medical appointments in neighboring communities. The PRCF grant helps to fund the meal program, which is now serving an average of 35 people each day, providing quality meals to at-risk members of the community.

Family Health Care Amigos provides service and support for those in need of health care assistance. The organization sponsors The Lending Shed, which provides durable medical equipment and adult incontinence supplies, free of charge, to anyone in the Mountain Empire region.

The PRCF grant helps pay the rent on the shed, advertise in the PRT and enables outreach in the community to educate residents about available resources. The Lending Shed also provides free incontinence supplies and medical equipment.

The Patagonia Creative Arts Association provides low or no-cost arts education in the form of classes, workshops, theater productions and summer camps, to everyone in the region. The PRCF grant provides the money necessary to pay the teaching artists and instructors at after-school programs and summer camp. The grant benefits the community by providing jobs for local artists, and by creating a safe, educational place for kids to go after school and during summer.

The Sonoita Elgin Fire District is utilizing the PRCF grant to fund the Community Paramedicine Program which serves Patagonia, Sonoita, and Elgin. A team of one EMT and two paramedics make home visits to patients with chronic illnesses, act as a liaison between patient and primary care physician, and perform home safety scans, check medications, etc. with the mission of keeping the patient safe and healthy at home, and remaining independent.

The Patagonia Regional Times (PRT) is a free monthly newspaper serving the communities of Elgin, Patagonia and Sonoita. The grant received from the PRCF provides funding to do a community survey to gather information from both readers and non-readers. The results of the survey will guide organizational development by the board of directors and editor to strengthen the long-term sustainability of this regional newspaper.

The next Patagonia Regional Community Fund grant cycle opens in January, 2018, but PRCF is open for donations all year. If you’d like to help make a difference in our community, google Patagonia Regional Community Fund and donate online.
Woman’s Club Celebrates 100 Years of Service

By Ann Katzenbach

In 1917, Elfie Mead invited 12 friends to join her in forming a sewing circle. They met at the Patagonia Hotel, the historic building that is now Cady Hall. The First World War was raging in Europe, and one assumes, knowing the character of this group, that they were sewing to help the war effort.

In no time, these enterprising women looked for ways to help the community. One of their first acts was to gather 100 signatures from townspeople to convince the investment company who managed the Sonoita land grant holdings to donate 50 acres of land south of town where the “burying ground” was in a sad state of disrepair. They raised money to fence five acres to protect the graves from cattle, and succeeded in acquiring the land for the town. From this first community upgrade, the women went on to take on a long list of projects.

In 1947, the club purchased Cady Hall and two additional lots for $2,500. This iconic building has been their headquarters ever since. However, the old hotel always seemed to need something painted or replaced or shored up, so in 1989 the Woman’s Club donated the hall to the Town of Patagonia on condition that it could continue to be their headquarters.

Always concerned with education, the club made sure the state library brought its bookmobile to town, and then, when the town council agreed to sponsor a library, they provided space at Cady Hall.

Raising money for its expanding projects, the club held its first big fund-raiser in 1963. They offered “A Tour of Ranch Homes” and raised $1,219.72, a sizeable sum in those days.

Over the years, members came up with many creative ways to raise money. In 1995, they published the first local phone book, “Country Connection,” a lot of work, but a great fund-raiser that has been taken over by others in the past years. Many people will remember that Green Valley pecans used to be sold outside the post office, a Patagonia Woman’s Club fundraiser for college scholarships.

The Magic of Christmas has become a holiday tradition in the region. All through November, club members gather in Cady Hall to decorate splendid Christmas trees and create other seasonal projects. Individuals and organizations sponsor these efforts which are then sold through bidding, raffles and drawings. Santa shows up every year. Fran Russell, a current member of the club, says Santa would be “whoever we could drag off the street and stuff in a suit.” This was often Lars Marshall, but other volunteers have taken the job over the years. Sadly, there will be no Magic of Christmas this year as membership in the club has dwindled and the current members are aging.

Along with the scholarships they give each year, the Patagonia Woman’s Club has supported a long list of community efforts and organizations. The many scrapbooks they keep in Cady Hall testify to hundreds of teas, lectures and parties that promoted culture and provided a sense of community. They sewed curtains for the Tin Shed, helped start the Butterfly Garden, planted trees, sponsored a Christmas light contest, kept the swimming pool open, contributed to youth groups, the fire department, the library, the hospital, schools, this newspaper and more.

From its beginning as a circle of friends who sewed together, the Patagonia Woman’s Club has contributed enormously to the richness of Patagonia.

Membership has declined in recent years, however, as modern life rushes along with new priorities and values. Connie Alford, the club’s current president, invites young mothers to come to meetings and bring their children. She hopes this might open a door for new members.

To celebrate and reach out to the community, the club is holding an anniversary celebration potluck on May 6, from 4:30-7 p.m. at Cady Hall. People are urged to bring, not just a dish, but also a memory to share.
Arizona’s Controversial Empowerment Scholarship Accounts

By Cynthia Matus Morriss

State legislators are seeking to dramatically expand the Empowerment Scholarship Accounts (ESA) program to provide state funds for private schools and other personal education needs. Public school advocates are pushing back on a host of policy issues related to the ESA program, including its lack of state level academic accountability.

The Arizona Department of Education (ADE), which administers the program, has no authority to request or require information about the academic progress of ESA students from private or homeschooled children. ADE has no records of the number of students who drop out of the program and return to public school or how many graduate from high school.

The ESA program is quite controversial. ESA backers consider the program a parental choice option, such as charter schools or district open enrollment. Public school advocates see ESA’s as a means to remove students from public district and charter schools while siphoning much needed dollars for education from the state general fund.

The ESA program is a voucher-type program initially designed in 2011 for children with special needs. Lawmakers expanded the program to include children of an active duty military parent or guardian, children who were medically diagnosed with autism or Down Syndrome, and children who have been adopted, children who attend a public school with a state grade of D or F, siblings of students who are participating or have participated in ESA’s, and children who reside on Native American lands.

The ESA program is quite controversial. ESA backers consider the program a parental choice option, such as charter schools or district open enrollment. Public school advocates see ESA’s as a means to remove students from public district and charter schools while siphoning much needed dollars for education from the state general fund.

Public school districts receive funding through state funding and local property taxes. ESA’s are funded 100% through the general fund. This school year, $37 million is being paid from the state’s general fund to families who have chosen to opt out of public schools. A total of $99.7 million has been paid out over the past seven years, according to the Arizona Department of Education and Arizona Senate research staff. If every student attending a district public school was funded at an ESA level, it would cost the state an additional $1 billion from the general fund.

More information can be found at the Arizona School Board Association’s voucher webpage, http://azsba.org/esa-voucher/ (Morriss is a member of the Patagonia Elementary School Board.)

Rotary to Sponsor Career Fair at PUHS

The Mountain Empire Rotary Club is looking for area businesses, entrepreneurs and anyone representing professions interested in participating in a Career Fair at Patagonia Union High School (PUHS) for local middle and high school students on May 5, 2017 from 9:00 a.m. — noon.

Mountain Empire Rotarian Randy Heiss states, “The purpose of the event is to introduce students to area businesses and professionals and to allow them to learn about different careers and opportunities that lay beyond high school. We want students to think about what they will need in the future in terms of post secondary education and training in order to prepare for those careers. The event will take place in the Patagonia Union High School Gymnasium and consist of individual booths for the participating organizations and professionals and a series of short presentations made to the students.

PUHS Counselor, Rosann Clark, states, “We want the students to visit the booths where they can have a conversation and gain information on the various career opportunities. We believe that there are education and employment options for students locally and we want to make sure the students are aware of them. At the same time, we want the students to know what job skills and training are going to be expected of them.”

Businesses, organizations, entrepreneurs and persons representing professions who are interested in participating should contact Randy Heiss at rheiss@seago.org.
William (Bill) Piper
February 27, 1927—March 15, 2017

William (Bill) Piper passed away on March 15 in Tucson, Arizona. He was born February 27, 1927 in Izora, Texas, to Joe and Oveta Piper. He graduated from Lampasas High School and soon after went into the U.S. Army Signal Corps. He was sent to Japan where he entered Hiroshima after the atomic bomb had been dropped there. His exposure to radiation caused him to have health issues the last 30 years of his life.

After his discharge, he enrolled at Texas Technological College in Lubbock, Texas. He married Posy Hickok on June 6, 1948. She finished college in two years and worked to help him finance his degree, which he obtained in 1952.

Their son Tom was born December 10, 1951, in Lubbock. Immediately upon graduation, Bill became cattle foreman on the Thurber Ranch near Sonoita, Arizona. Son Ted was born there in 1953, and daughter Terry in 1955.

The family moved to Elgin Hereford Ranch in 1959 where Bill was manager for the ranch owned by Frank Appleton. Bill became well known throughout the state for the ranch cattle herd and show cattle. He was active in cattle growing and range management organizations and activities.

In 1968, Bill began his career Bill for the United States Forest Service. He was a range technician and later road crew foreman for five districts on the Coronado National Forest. He retired from the Forest Service in 1992, having received numerous awards for his hard work and dedication. He traveled all over the United States as a Forest Service firefighter and later as a contracting officer technician for food and laundry services on fire, even after his retirement.

Bill was involved with the 4-H organization for most of his life, as a member and leader. He helped countless youngsters with animals and animal judging and directed the 4-H barbecue for many years. He was named a Clover Award winner during the 4-H Centennial year. He and his wife were also honored as 4-H Pioneers by the State 4-H Organization.

He and his wife were given the Pioneer Cattleman Award by the Arizona National Livestock Show Pioneer Association and the Distinguished Service to Agriculture Award by the Pima County Farm Bureau.

For many years, Bill was a pillar of the Patagonia-Sonoita-Elgin Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 10432 and Nogales Masonic Lodge #11. He participated in myriad activities at the Fair and Rodeo Association, including serving as Chairman of the Santa Cruz County Fair and as a member of the SCCFRA Board. He and his wife Posy were given the first Bob Bowman Pioneer Award from the Fair and Rodeo Association for their years of service there.

There are many organizations that Bill has worked with and he has been a ready contributor to many worthwhile community activities. He has taught several high school boys how to do yard work and helped to instill a work ethic in their lives. It is impossible to estimate how many persons Bill has touched and affected in his 90 years.

Bill is survived by his wife of 68 years, Posy, and his children Tom (Jane), Ted (Rosie) and Terry Jane. There are eight grandchildren: Kari (Jared), Cory (Laura), Gabrielle (Nick), Andrea (Tony), Michelle (Andrew), Merisa (Jesse), Monica, and Jack. He also has nine great grandchildren: Isaiah, Kalee, Mason, Anthony, Jaden, Chloe, Peyton, Simon, and Vivienne.

In lieu of flowers, the family has asked for donations to the Patagonia Fire Department/EMTs or the Santa Cruz County 4-H Council.

Saying Goodbye to an Icon

By Dean Fish

It’s hard for a community to lose a good cowman. Santa Cruz County has lost several in the recent past, but the passing of Mr. William T. Piper will be felt for a long time by many people. His impact on the industry had nationwide reach. He was also the kindest, most knowledgeable, and dedicated man I have ever met.

In today’s hashtag and selfie world, words like legend, superstar, prodigy and icon are often used without reverence for their definition. Merriam-Webster defines icon as a person who is very successful or admired. In Mr. Piper’s case, icon is a gross understatement. In addition to being involved in the cattle industry his entire life, he made significant contributions to the science of range management. Mr. Piper was a proud United States Veteran, member of many service organizations, and ardent supporter of anything he was passionate about. He was a supermodel before the term became popular.

The most popular Piperism will always remain “on to it”.

One of the few contradictions in Mr. Piper’s life was his special way of speaking while being married to an English teacher. Many people will remember his special way of saying “mesquite” and “plum over there” among others. Never mind “chewed up beans”. The most popular Piperism will always remain “on to it”.

As a former Extension Agent, I would get calls from Mr. Piper after a workshop, who would ask follow up questions about the topic. One call followed a presentation on mineral supplementation where he asked me how to get more “seligman” in them cows. After a bit, I figured out that he didn’t want to relocate cows to northern Arizona, but was, in fact, curious about selenium deficiency.

Mr. Piper always knew what was going on in the community. It’s a mystery to me how he found out so much and always had a handle on the fresh gossip. I, among many others, am going to greatly miss stopping by and getting the skinny on who was selling cows where or who was going to “ruint” the fairgrounds. Everything about Mr. Piper was big; his personality, intellect, curiosity, devotion to Posy and family, service and love for community. I will contend that the biggest thing about him was his heart. It will only be rivaled by the size of the void he will leave in my life.
COUNCIL NOTES

By Bob Brandt

March 8:
In addition to routine business, the town council acted upon one item that created a lot of discussion at the meeting, an attempt by Arizona Mining to include an amendment to Senate Bill 2371 prohibiting Patagonia [and all Arizona towns and cities] from limiting the number of trips commercial vehicles could make within their municipalities.

After much debate, the council directed Town Manager Dave Teel to draft a letter to send to state legislators, before a vote was held on the bill, to express the council’s serious concern with the proposed amendment, as it “impairs the right of the citizens of the town to govern themselves in matters pertaining to their town streets.”

March 22:
The council announced that SB2371 was passed without the amendment regarding vehicle trips.

At the budget session that preceded the meeting, Ray Klein spoke on behalf of the Patagonia Regional Business Coalition, which has offered to remove and replace the badly decomposed mulch that is currently in the playground area of Richardson Park. The coalition wants to replace the mulch with pea gravel at no cost to the town. The council thanked Klein for the coalition’s generous offer, which will save the town $6000.

The council discussed a letter written by the town manager to legislators in opposition to the proposed termination of the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), a federal grant program that Patagonia has come to rely on to help fund major expenses such as infrastructure repairs and construction of public facilities.

Proposed changes to regulations governing vehicle traffic in town were considered, with lengthy comment from the council and audience. The council agreed upon the following: 1) large trucks will be prohibited from using Smelter Alley between Third and Fourth Avenues, 2) the speed limit on McKeown Avenue from Taylor Avenue to Fourth Avenue will be reduced from 25 to 15 mph, 3) Marshal Patterson will install temporary signage at the intersection of Third and North Avenues. A stop sign will be erected on a trial basis where the private road comes in at that intersection and a yield sign will be installed for vehicles entering the intersection from Third Avenue.

Other business: The county plans to improve First Avenue this summer.

Council approved the transfer of ownership of the town’s centennial exhibit panels to the Patagonia Museum.

Town Manager Teel was asked to investigate several options for reducing the safety hazard posed by the poles that keep vehicles from encroaching on the sidewalk along McKeown Avenue.

The council declared April as Fair Housing Month, a step necessary to keeping the town’s Tree City designation.

Marshall Patterson reported that his officers will soon be equipped with Naloxone, an antidote for opiate overdose, and he and his staff will be trained to administer it in its nasal spray form.

PUHS Grad Earns National Recognition

Leah Oliver, the daughter of John and Patty Oliver, of Elgin, has been selected to receive the 2017 Athletic Trainer Service Award by the National Athletic Trainers’ Association (NATA).

Oliver, who graduated from Patagonia Union High School in 1978, is the sports medicine teacher and athletic trainer at Mountain View High School in Marana.

In 2013, she was inducted into the Arizona Athletic Trainers Association Hall of Fame. Previously, she had received the Arizona Athletic Trainer of the Year Service Award. Her sports medicine class and student athletic trainers are the most award-winning in the state of Arizona. Under her tutelage, 20 of her students have won the Lanny Williams Student Athletic Trainers of the year award.

Oliver is one of only 34 trainers to be recognized at the national level this year. She will receive her award at the 2017 NATA convention in Houston, TX.

High Schoolers Headline Library Open Mic Night

By Laura Wenzel

Several PUHS students attended an open mic night at the Patagonia Library on March 25. Their poetry, while at times a bit angst filled, but mostly extremely heartfelt and genuine, seemed to strike a chord with the audience, some of whom performed their own poetry. Much of the students’ poetry dealt with the theme of living in a small, rural town and the sometimes-negative-sometimes-positive outcomes of that, as well as the people who help shape those outcomes. Junior Duke Norton says, “desert kids live from what they scrounge.” These desert kids, with all their scrappiness and tenacity, certainly have a bright future ahead of them.
Wildlife Corridor to Offer Watchable Wildlife Opportunities

By Bob Brandt

Thanks to the visionary leadership of Ron Pulliam, managing partner of Wildlife Corridors, LLC, and the hard work of the Dirtbags, an all-volunteer group of dedicated seniors, a new loop trail traversing the two ridges that form Smith Canyon is now complete and will soon provide access to several planned viewing stations.

What was once envisioned as a 1200-acre housing project that included nearly 200 home sites is instead being largely set aside to provide for the free movement of animals, the preservation of diverse native plants, and the enjoyment of all who wish to responsibly access this landscape of exceptional beauty and diversity.

Under the leadership of Chris Strohm, the Dirtbag men and women toiled every Thursday morning since early January to complete phase two of the two-mile trail which connects the northern leg of the loop with the southern leg, which the Dirtbags built last winter. Built to current standards used by the U.S. Forest Service and other federal agencies, the new trail offers varied topography and vegetation and commanding views of the Santa Rita and Patagonia Mountains.

It will soon also feature wildlife viewing stations where trail users can take short connecting trails to secluded areas to sit and enjoy the solitude and beauty of the landscape and the wildlife habitat it provides. Designed and installed under the guidance of Dave Ellis, strategically-placed dripping stations within sight of the viewing stations will enhance the opportunities for visitors to observe deer, bobcat, javalina and many other critters as they come to drink.

The wildlife viewing project is being developed with the assistance of Bob Hernbrode, a wildlife biologist whose long career with Colorado Parks and Wildlife included responsibility for that state’s watchable wildlife program. Currently Vice President of Tucson Audubon Society, Hernbrode has also contributed muscle to this effort as an active member of the Dirtbags. Students from the Patagonia Youth Enrichment Center are also helping with the project, building the trails connecting the viewing stations to the main trail.

Access to the trail and viewing stations is currently via a 2.5 mile stretch of roads that wind through Wildlife Haven, the renamed and much smaller remnant of the original Three Canyons development in which relatively few houses will be permitted. Wildlife Corridors has applied for a permit from ADOT to install a new entrance off Route 82 to provide much easier access to the trailhead. Maps of the trail and directions to the trailhead are now available in the Sky Islands Tourism Association’s visitor center. All trail users are requested to sign in at the trailhead. Dogs are not allowed on the trail.

As Ron Pulliam sees it, the new trail and wildlife viewing stations are important new components of a growing restorative economy in the Borderlands.

Annual Patagonia Spring Cleanup

By Bob Brandt

Earth Day falls on Saturday April 22 this year. You might have some fun activities lined up to celebrate the beauty of this spinning planet and to renew your pledge to protect it, but before you set out on your celebratory sojourn, be sure to take advantage of the annual hazardous materials recycling event happening in town that same day.

Gather up your old cans of liquid paint, gasoline, antifreeze, cleaning chemicals and other toxic materials and take them to Doc Mock Park across from the public rest rooms from 8a.m. until noon, where volunteers from the Patagonia Regional Business Coalition (PRBC) will happily take them off your hands. Pharmaceuticals, syringes, and household batteries will not be accepted, but automotive batteries will be. Household batteries can be disposed of in the regular trash, as well as old cans of dried paint. Rechargeable batteries can be recycled at Home Depot and Lowes.

On the following Saturday, April 29, beginning at 8a.m., PRBC will sponsor a cleanup day for all non-hazardous trash. This all-volunteer effort, the third sponsored by PRBC, is made possible by donations of labor, trucks and other equipment by both local citizens and some from as far away as Tucson.

All kinds of non-hazardous trash items will be accepted that day, including furniture, appliances and mattresses. With sufficient advance notice, those who need help moving heavy items to the curb may be able to get that help by contacting Charlie Montoy.

The town is being divided into four sections with a pick-up team assigned to each. Collection will continue until the entire town has been serviced. All items must be at the curb by 8a.m. to insure pick-up. Residents are urged to recycle items that can be recycled and to donate their still-serviceable items to local thrift shops.

Volunteers are needed to help with the April 29 collection. If you want to help you can get started with free coffee, juice and donuts at the gazebo from 7-8a.m. before joining the work crew. Bring gloves, water and sun protection.

Questions about the events can be directed to Charlie Montoy. Stop by his gas station or call him at 604-1659.
Watch Your Language

“Nut jobs” is the label Martin Levowitz assigns to people who commit hostile or selfish acts. Oh, no, that’s incorrect. It is only people who behave unacceptably AND who have a mental health disorder that he calls “maladjusted mechanisms.”

It is the second time he has referred recently to a subset of people with mental health diagnoses as “genuinely crazy people.” He is careful to modify, not using blanket condemnation. But he uses “bipolar,” “schizophrenic” and the phrase “aren’t really human after all when they break rules” in the same paragraph.

 Civilization is indeed fragile and easily disrupted. We need people with diverse abilities and ways of thinking to create and sustain community. We do not need more invitations to isolate and stigmatize people with mental health diagnoses – which, by the way, includes more and more of us, thanks to the profit motives of the pharmaceutical industry, aided by intolerance.

I’m writing more to address readers who laughed at his language. I hope that “most normal, so-called ‘healthy’” Patagonians will hold him to account – instead of overlooking his objectionable language out of “weariness and frustration” or dismissing its importance by laughing, “Oh, that’s just Martin.”

Consider the concept of neurological diversity, which suggests that abnormal minds result from normal genetic development. By not just accepting but even valuing the eccentric ways some people process and respond to information, we become more likely to recognize the contributions of every “crazy” person – me and Martin included.

Let’s retire “nut jobs” from our vocabulary. Let’s stop using “crazy” to refer to people with illnesses that impact cognitive and emotional processes -- even when their behavior is a problem.

Deborah Dakota, Patagonia

Response from Martin Levowitz:

Deborah Dakota is justified in finding my use of words like “nut jobs” and “crazy” disrespectful and undignified. My article, while seemingly about certain “insane” behaviors, was covertly an article about Donald Trump, whose disorders character and behavior have pretty much driven me crazy. When I mentioned that “out of weariness and frustration” we must sometimes accept that some of our acquaintances are not normal human beings, but are “maladjusted mechanisms,” I was thinking of what I’ve seen in my own and other families for years when people refuse to face the fact that one of their relatives is simply unable to behave rationally, or to compromise, or to stop provoking. To regard someone as crazy can seem dismissive, and should not be indulged carelessly. On the other hand, when someone is habitually maladjusted and destructive, to ignore or deny that fact is, well .. crazy.

I do not, in general, or in my article, encourage anyone to “isolate and stigmatize people with mental health diagnoses.” I merely acknowledge that doing so is not uncommon. As a lifelong oddball myself, I have always sought out and enjoyed other eccentrics. Viva Patagonia! A number of people I’ve known assure me that among their fellow inmates in mental hospitals, they met some of the most gifted, clear-sighted humans they have ever encountered. Makes sense to me. You’re considered crazy whether you’re half a lap behind, or half a lap ahead. In either case, you’re out of sync.

We Get Who We Deserve

My favorite opinionist, Mr. Levowitz, has overanalyzed our president, playing right into his game. We are obsessed with entertainment, and Trump is the most entertaining guy in this country.

Trump was anointed, not elected. It’s easier to get used to it than to change our ways. Somebody said a long time ago: “We get who we deserve.”

Long live your newspaper!

Doug Morris, Sonora

Response from Martin Levowitz:

I agree with everything Mr. Morris has said in his letter. The last thing a narcissist needs is to have all of us making a fuss over him. I am including here the web address of a brilliant article, forwarded by Ann Katzenbach, which goes into wise detail about how to respond and not respond to narcissists.


Errors & Omissions

In last month’s issue, the article about the Voices from the Border group was incorrectly titled. The correct title should have been “Local Group Formed,” not “Local Women’s Group Formed.” Organizer Carolyn Shafer writes, “The issues being addressed are applicable to both female and male gender and MANY of our local men participated in the January 21 march and even MORE of our local men are participating in Voices from the Border.” We apologize for this error.

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The Art of IMPROV

By Janice Pulliam

About twenty-five years ago, I took a class in improv (short for improvisational theater), and that led to my first improv performance. The audience applause was a definite high. What keeps me coming back was—not having to memorize lines!

The essence of improv is that most of the words, actions, stories, and characters are created in the moment of performance. The audience participates by making suggestions or joining in. What is set and practiced ahead of time are the so-called “structures,” the rules of the games within which the players improvise.

In Patagonia, Pick Up Schticks does on-the-spot improv. This is a type of short form improv that consists of many quick skits. For each one, the structure is announced and audience suggestions elicited. For example, an activity or personal relationship, a famous person or a location is given and incorporated into the action.

In long form improv, players change or redefine their roles in a skit lasting a half hour. There are also dance improv and Christina Wilhelm’s musical “Comprovisation.” At one performance, Pick Up Schticks experimented by acting out a long poem read by a narrator, after having held only one rehearsal, and with players switching roles.

Besides providing entertainment, improv can be serious and useful. It encompasses pure comedy, social comment, skill building, and political action. “Theater of the Oppressed” was invented to empower citizens by having them act out roles of both the oppressed and the oppressor, in order to understand a problem from all sides and create workable solutions. Schools and businesses sometimes use improv to develop skills such as communication, focusing, confidence, and brainstorming. Medical improv is used to train medical personnel who may need to respond instantly to unexpected reactions of their patients. Surely, being ready for anything is a life skill anyone can benefit from.

What is the fundamental aspect of real improvisation, of giving a true response rather than a conditioned reaction? The answer is being fully present in the moment. This means no thinking, just doing.

You’ve heard, “Look before you leap,” but when improvising, the players don’t look, they just leap, no self-editing, no judging whether something is appropriate, logical, or funny.

Also necessary is listening, tuning in to the other players. Each must collaborate rather than try to make a skit move in the direction he or she imagined for it. That’s where the famous “Yes, and...” comes into play. The players take a cue given by the audience and their fellow players and build upon it, propelling the action forward. No stopping the flow of energy by denying what has been given.

To see improvisational theater in action, come to Pick Up Schticks next show “Calling All Fools” on Saturday, April 1 at 7 p.m. or on Sunday, April 2 at 2 p.m. in the Tin Shed Theater. Admission is free with suggested donation of $5. There will be new structures as well as old favorites. Audience members may bring a hand-held item for a fake “appraisal” in a spoof of Antiques Road Show. Come take your mind off your worries, and laugh.

Reflections on the Patagonia Opera House 1935 – 1945

By Lucy Mihalik

My first memories of the Patagonia Opera House began in 1935 as a seven-year-old girl and continued until I graduated from Patagonia High School in 1945. The Opera House was the center for social events and town gatherings. Because of the Depression, people were very poor and just trying to get by. The Opera House provided relief from hard times and served as a community center for everyone. It was amazing that several groups traveled to this little town to entertain us.

We had live theater, live music, dance performances and popular movies. One of the most memorable and interesting performances was that of a traveling group of Swiss entertainers. The group was traveling throughout the United States. How did they ever find Patagonia? We were impressed by their bright colored costumes and their impressive dance steps. And then, they began to yodel! Now, we had never heard this before and had no idea what this was about. All the children burst out laughing. We went home, and for days after, my cousin Carrie and I worked hard to perfect our yodeling!

Monthly dances were well attended by families. Parents, grandparents and children of all ages enjoyed live music and visiting with neighbors. One of my sweetest memories was dancing with my father. I adored him and felt that I was in heaven! We had an incredible trio of local musicians. Alvessa Ochoa (Hummel) played a mean saxophone! Her foot never stopped tapping to the music. Alvessa’s brother Bonifacio (Pacho) Ochoa played the banjo, guitar and other instruments. Mr. Ochoa’s son, Rudy, recently shared his memory of going to all the dances with his father since the age of five. And Frank Lamma played the drums. Frank had a full-time job but made time to play at all the dances. They played until midnight, when the dance promptly ended. At that time, local ladies were there with homemade tamales for sale.

Movies were shown two to three times a month and tickets cost ten cents. Many children were so poor they could not afford the ten cents. The man in charge allowed those children to bring in two pieces of wood for the wood stove, and then they could see the movie too. My memory is of Westerns on the big screen. We were inspired as children to play act as Thunder Riders, running through the hills and streets of town with our capes made of whatever rags we could find!

One of my favorite activities was roller skating at the Opera House. It cost us ten cents to skate for one hour. My friend and I loved to skate and would stay for the entire two hours. We were lucky that our father could provide us with the forty cents.

The large building was also used as the high school gymnasium where the basketball teams would play. The girls’ team, which I played on, wore a one-piece navy blue uniform. We were cheered to victory or defeat by the many people who came and watched the games.

In spite of people struggling to survive the Depression, life in Patagonia had many happy times. We were fortunate to have The Opera House which provided opportunities for many fun-filled activities for all members of our community.

I don’t know much about the building. It was a large, one story wooden structure, with a great wooden floor. It was situated on McKeown Ave. next to the now Painted House.” The owners of the painted house were an elderly couple named Henderson’s. No one ever heard them complain about the noise. I was gone when it was torn down because it was a “fire hazard.”
Elgin Athletes Sweep River Canyon League

The female athletes at the Elgin Elementary School were honored for their record-breaking year at a ceremony held at the school on March 17. The girls softball, volleyball and softball teams all finished first in the River Canyon League, which Coach Nate Porter called a ‘Triple Crown’ victory. “It is the first time in Elgin history that there has been a sweep,” he said. The team has come a long way, he noted. “Three years ago the girls won only one game.” The girls were victorious in games against much larger schools, including schools in Nogales and Vail.

Eight girls, Brianna Young, Hannah Young, Ember Hubbell, Carolina Quiroz, Madison Vines, Olivia Barton, Sophia Routledge and Mackenzie Beyer, played in all three sports. “Their work ethic and dedication made them the most coachable group of athletes I’ve worked with in my 12 years,” Porter said. “They have created a legacy of expectation and desire for female athletes here at the Elgin School.”

2017 Sonoita Rodeo Royalty Crowned

The 2017 Sonoita Rodeo Royalty Little Miss, Sierra Olson-Ganem, Princess Rylee Anforth, and Queen Shelby Williams.

By Kristin Tomlinson and Marion Vendituoli

The 2017 Sonoita Rodeo Royalty contest had nine young women, ages 7—23, vying for a piece of rodeo history. On Saturday, March 4, 2017, the girls competed in a day-long event for the chance to be named Queen, Princess or Little Miss, and represent the Sonoita Memorial Day and Labor Day Rodeos.

The contestants were judged on their horsemanship skills, individual interviews, a written test and public speaking. It was a long day for the contestants and organizers, as the competition started at 8 a.m. and continued until 9 p.m.

At the evening portion of the contest, Valerie Burleson and Amanda Zamudio prepared dinner for more than 100 guests, which was served by local 4-H members.

The contestants then took the stage to introduce themselves, give a prepared speech and answer impromptu questions that demonstrated their knowledge of the sport of rodeo and current events.

Representing Sonoita as Queen for 2017 is Shelby Williams of Tucson. Williams completed her reign as Benson Butterfield Rodeo Queen in 2016. Princess is Rylee Anforth, 12, of Apache Junction. Anforth also participates as part of the Southern Arizona Sisters, an equestrian drill team. Little Miss is Sierra Olson-Ganem, 7, of Huachuca City.

The horsemanship portion of the contest makes up 60 percent of the total score in each age group. Williams and Olson-Ganem won horsemanship for Queen and Little Miss.

The mission of the Sonoita Rodeo Royalty organization is to develop leadership skills and foster self-respect for themselves, others, the community and the sport of rodeo. “If this group of contestants is any indication, the future is bright for the Sonoita rodeos and the royalty program,” Rodeo Royalty contest chairperson Kristin Tomlinson said. “What an impressive group of young women.”
LIFE AMONG THE HUMANS

Rapture Rupture
By Martin Levowitz

Surfing the Internet, recently, I came upon two items, back to back, which seemed unconnected at first, but then, upon further reflection, did seem related. (The human mind, of course, simply adores connecting dots.) The first thing I watched was some big-deal affair of state, a Governors’ Banquet at the White House, where a bunch of politicians, all dressed up real fancy, were mouthing lofty platitudes, everyone flattering everyone else, even those whom they were known to mistrust and despise. I’ve heard diplomacy defined as “the art of not telling the truth.” I favor the opposite tack; by which I mean the frank or blunt approach. Or did you know?

Few politicians tell the straight-up truth, and those who do, like Terrier Princess Liz Warren, for example, seem angry almost all the time, or at least vehement. They have to be, to swim upstream against the current (status quo) of truth-bending courtiers. That gets old. Such trend-buckers are quickly known. Outspokenness is their defining trait. That’s a real social plus in Washington, like crossed eyes or buckteeth in elementary school. Soothsayers rarely make it to the top, except at special moments when the public’s rage at waste and fraud ascends to fever pitch. Only then will an aspirin tablet command more respect than a Rolls Royce. And, only then (yep, times like these) will Bernie Sanders even stand a chance. But, even then, the honest lose, since they refuse to cheat.

One flimsy satisfaction in Hillary’s recent loss to The Minotaur was that she and her close cronies at the tainted D.N.C. were playing dirty poker to keep Bernie in the shade. Some people say that’s simply how democracy is played. (I disagree.) Yet, thereby hangs our current tale of woe. To those more smooth (or compromised) a penchant to announce, “I favor the opposite tack; by which I mean the frank or blunt approach. Or did you know?”

The other thing I came upon that night, not connected at first, but then, upon further reflection, did seem related. (The human mind, of course, simply adores connecting dots.) The first thing I watched was some big-deal affair of state, a Governors’ Banquet at the White House, where a bunch of politicians, all dressed up real fancy, were mouthing lofty platitudes, everyone flattering everyone else, even those whom they were known to mistrust and despise. I’ve heard diplomacy defined as “the art of not telling the truth.” I favor the opposite tack; by which I mean the frank or blunt approach. Or did you know?

But First, Coffee
By Cassina Farley

A wise person once told me that you should never scrimp on three things, shoes, wine and coffee. The first can be fudged. You can always pick up an expensive pair of second hand shoes. The second can be ignored. If the cheap wine at the market gets the job done, who cares? According to me the third rule can never be broken. I am a self-proclaimed coffee snob. I may not worship every day down at the local coffee shop, but believe me, I practice the religion of Coffee.

Zach finds my obsession irritating. I find it comforting. It is the last thing I think about at night and the first thing I think about in the morning. It is the one thing I plan my whole day around and the one thing that can send it all spiraling out of control.

My plan for the perfect cup:
1. Fresh ground beans. These beans, in my opinion, need to be from Central America, preferably organic and Guatemalan and ground just moments before brewing. I have recently acquired a $50 Burr Mill that sent Zach into a tailspin. What was wrong with the $12 dollar grinder we already had? Nothing if you are an amateur.
2. Filtered water heated to 200 degrees. No exceptions. I can tell when you don’t let the kettle heat all the way up Zach. I CAN TELL.
3. The perfect little French press that makes exactly two cups.
4. And lastly the most important part, the cup. We fight (and laugh) about this almost every day. What’s the big deal? The cup needs to be the perfect size; not the dinky 8oz size and not the giant size that seems like drinking out of a bowl. It needs to have the perfect rim size. If the rim of the cup is all fat and awkward, forget it, throw it out. The handle needs to be a perfect fit for my hand. I’m not going to hold my cup from the bottom like one of those sappy women from the movies. It also doesn’t hurt if there’s a chicken on it.

But First, Coffee
By Cassina Farley
As a physician I dread the return of “the good old days” of American medicine that preceded the Affordable Care Act (ACA) also known as “Obamacare.”

I serve Patagonia, a community that like Nogales has benefited tremendously from the ACA, especially through its expansion of AHCCCS (Arizona’s Medicaid). Our clinic has always provided primary care regardless of ability to pay but prior to the ACA it was often impossible to meet our patients’ more advanced needs. Many times I sent a patient to a consultant only to learn later that they left without being seen because they were asked for cash up front. I will be forever indebted to the handful of consultants who did accept what they knew would be charity cases over and over again. I tried to send paying cases their way.

Within my own practice financial hardships played a role in my decision making. Maybe a cheap medication wasn’t the best choice for a particular condition but I knew the patient would leave the better, more expensive choice on the pharmacy shelf. Could I get away with waiting when I thought a patient really needed a CT scan? What should I have done with the woman whose symptoms might or might not be retinal detachment? She risked vision loss when she chose to pay her rent to avoid eviction rather than paying the ophthalmologist. How hard should I have pushed her? These choices were demoralizing to me and potentially devastating to my patients. The greatly increased insurance coverage the ACA brought to Patagonia now allows me to base my decisions on best medical practices rather than financial concerns.

Trump and the Republican controlled Congress are dead set on repealing the ACA and rolling back the AHCCCS expansion our communities rely on so heavily. They propose tax credits foolishly believing the struggling poor will choose to buy insurance over food. They threaten to punish the laid off person who loses his insurance by raising his rates 30% when he tries to buy it later.

Our national medical policy is being rewritten by a privileged class of legislators who don’t understand the real life decisions the less fortunate make on a daily basis.

But constituents are having an impact and we have seen some softening of hardened political stances. Sign a petition in support of the ACA (available at the Nogales Mercado on Friday afternoons). Better yet call your representatives. Thank Congressman Grijalva (622-6788) for his continued support of the ACA. Demand that Senator Flake (575-8633) and Senator McCain (670-6334) guarantee they won’t repeal the ACA without an immediate replacement that protects your family’s uninterrupted affordable health care.

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Consul General Talks Trade, Tourism in Sonoita

By Marion Vendituoli

Ricardo Santana Velasquez, the Mexican Consul General for Nogales, Arizona, travelled north on March 16 to meet with the Southern Arizona Republican Club at the SEFD fire station in Sonoita. Chairman Emmett McLoughlin welcomed guests to the meeting, which attracted many democrats and independents, as well republicans, interested in hearing the consul general speak.

Velasquez, who has been stationed in Nogales for 10 months, has been in the foreign service since 1981. He stressed the importance of the relationship between the U.S. and Mexico. He told the group that there are 50 Mexican consulates throughout the United States. This represents the largest number of consulates any country has in a foreign nation. Additionally, the United States has its largest consular network of any country in Mexico, according to Velasquez.

He described the mission of the consulate to be to protect Mexican citizens, to aid in the transfer of remains, protect human rights, and repatriation, and to provide documentation, including birth certificates and passports. The consulate also issues visas to American citizens. “The largest diaspora of American nationals live in Mexico,” he pointed out.

The consulate also works to promote Mexico as a tourist and business destination. “We foster a global interest in Mexico,” he said. “To do this, we engage culturally, economically and politically with communities abroad.”

The consulate has been very active in Santa Cruz County, promoting trade and cultural exchanges. It has donated $35,000 to Mariposa Health Center, and provides $22,000 each month to the Santa Cruz Community College. The consulate also sponsors cultural events, such as the recent film screening at the Tin Shed Theater in Patagonia.

When asked by an audience member why so many Mexican nationals come to the United States, Velasquez said, “The U.S. is the economic superpower of the world.” He then called attention to the fact that, since 2010, net migration of people from Mexico has decreased to zero.

Jerry Bianchi, of Sonoita, asked the consul how he felt about Trump’s proposed wall. “The wall is a decision of the U.S. government, but it is not a good sign of friendship. I don’t know what is going to happen, but the United States is the best friend of Mexico,” he said. “We are partners, and we must be good neighbors.”
Is April Our New May?
Climate Change at Our Doorstep!

Here we are in mid-March and our local temperatures are pushing 90 degrees. To anyone who doesn’t have their head buried deep in the sand, clearly the world, including our little slice of paradise here in the Sky Islands, is getting hotter - much hotter. Climate deniers aside, what does this inextricable shift portend for our local environments. Can we predict how our diverse flora and fauna might adapt to this rapidly changing paradigm?

It was not so long ago that winter showers brought April flowers. This may soon become a thing of the past. This past winter, rainfall has been about average, bringing on a fair array of wildflowers. Mexican poppies, evening primroses, desert anemones, and many other species sent out a flourish in March that may linger a bit into April.

With current temperatures nearing 90 degrees, however, the likelihood of our floral display going deep into April is low. Every day that we receive no precipitation is a net loss day in soil moisture, which soon banks each flower of its water account. Thus, spring wildflower displays that in the past may have extended for several months, may only be present for a month or less. Time will tell.

Fewer plants in April translates into less wildlife, as whitetail and mule deer, desert cottontails, various rodents, and other herbivores struggle to find sustenance. Lacking these resources during this critical season can unduly stress these and other species, thus decreasing their populations, as well as the predators that rely upon them. If April proffers less, then what about May and June - two of our driest, hottest, and most austere months?

Beyond direct impacts on wildlife, including a more depauperate diet, drier times in April will create an earlier and longer fire season. Dry grasses and other plants that in the past remained greener longer, now dry into a veritable sea of tinder in our deserts, grasslands, woodlands, and forests. While fire has profoundly influenced and shaped our various habitats for millennia, this new change leaves much to be desired.

Earlier, more frequent, and larger fires can be expected. Given the proper precipitation, one would expect the same habitat to eventually return post-fire. With increased temperatures, however, our evaporation rates have increased tremendously. This translates into the following fact: to maintain the same habitats that we now have in the Sky Islands, we will need an increased amount of precipitation in the form of snow and rain to compensate for this ever-increasing rate of evaporation. This is, at best, an unlikely future meteorological scenario.

At ground level this means that our desert areas may become even more sparsely vegetated over time, while gradually replacing our grasslands that have already extended higher into the mountains. These grasslands can easily become self-perpetuating, as they provide ample fuel for fires. Most grasses, including our non-native ones, thrive in such a frequent fire regime at the expense of woody vegetation, such as trees and shrubs. Since, by definition, our Sky Islands are wooded or forested islands, separated from each other by intervening “seas” of grasslands and desert, it seems that the tide is indeed rising, and may eventually doom our region.

Other regions of the globe with wooded mountains in arid regions have likewise experienced a decrease in forest cover - are we next?

Vincent Pinto and his wife, Claudia, run RAVENS-WAY WILD JOURNEYS, their Nature Adventure & Conservation Organization devoted to protecting the unique biodiversity of the Sky Islands region. Visit: www.ravensnatureschool.org

Hike to Save the Headcut

By Bob Brandt

The riparian area along Sonoita Creek above Patagonia Lake has been repeatedly altered by monsoon floods, cattle grazing and other factors ever since the damming up of the stream in 1968. One of the effects is that a headcut, a kind of small waterfall, has been created in the creek. The headcut has steadily moved upstream, resulting in an ever-expanding degraded and eroded landscape, in contrast to the much more pristine area above it, known as a reference area.

Friends of Sonoita Creek hope to save the area above the headcut from the fate that has befallen the area below it. FOSC invites the public to join a walk on Tuesday, April 4 along Sonoita Creek above the lake to see first-hand the clear difference in the landscape above and below the headcut. Members of the Friends’ stream assessment team will demonstrate some of the techniques used to measure the health of the creek and will solicit ideas for preserving the reference area.

The hike is limited to 20 people. Register by emailing Andy Gould at gould226@hotmail.com. Patagonia Lake State Park officials have agreed to waive the day use fee for this activity. Participants are advised to bring sun protection, water and binoculars. No dogs please.

Friends of Sonoita Creek collect data to monitor the health of the watershed.
Three Days of Surprises - The Banamichi Adventure

By Ann Katzenbach

The road that runs south from the border town of Naco is two lanes wide with no shoulders. It follows the dry river bed of Rio Sonora through a brown and stony landscape. Then, after many miles, suddenly there is a green field, fences, cattle. The river’s water has made an appearance. This sudden change was the first of many surprises on the Patagonia Museum’s trip to Banachimi March 7 - 9.

First, there was the food. Twice on this journey we were treated to meals cooked over wood fired ovens. There were canned peaches from last summer’s harvest, the freshest salsa and tortillas, soups, and sauces that taste familiar but have subtle mystery. And there was lots of it.

Then there were the churches – soaring architecture in small towns, adorned with beautiful statues and paintings. In one you could see a skeleton lying under glass below the floor. He is a beloved soldier from one of the many Mexican wars. His uniform has disintegrated, but the rusted metal buttons are still intact.

All this came with guides and musicians. Rebecca Orozco, a professor of anthropology and history, delivered history lessons as we rolled along, and at each stop, Bill Steen, who lives in Canelo and made this region of Mexico his second home, shared local stories, took us to private homes, showed us the crumbling ruins of old flour mills, and shepherded us to an afternoon picnic that no member of the group is likely to ever forget.

The Ronstadt Generation, a multi-instrumental trio with blended voices, entertained at every event with songs in English and Spanish that went perfectly with the food or the margaritas or—and this is one of the other surprises - the bacanora!

The memorable picnic took place down a rutted, dusty road in a grove of mesquite trees outside Banamichi. There was lots of smoke from the outdoor kitchen and also from the bacanora still. This powerful, unique tequila dripped into a plastic container while some of the women on the tour attempted to make tortillas from the small balls of dough laid out next to the oven. They all failed, laughing at themselves and their drippy cobwebs. Then the local cooks took over and stretched the dough to perfection.

As we sat down at tables, the food just kept arriving. The freshly cooked tortillas were fantastic. Peter, Bobby and Alex filled the air with music while, in the adjacent field, a man and a mule plowed the spring earth. If you wanted to taste the bacanora, you just walked over and let some drip into your cup. Several children from the host families shyly appeared and disappeared. The patriarch of the family sat on his horse, watching the whole scene and, at some point, convinced Susan Abagnale to sit behind so he could give her a tour of the property.

Nothing about this trip was predictable.

But the evening’s entertainment, a troupe of local young people who perform Mexican folk dances in the town plaza under street lamps, had been described at some length, so most of us thought we know what to expect. Bill Steen is their biggest fan and has worked tirelessly to promote and fund-raise for them.

The music began, the dancers walked out, and within a minute the audience was amazed. Everything about their performance was polished and professional. The steps were impossibly fast and intricate. The costumes belonged in a Broadway production. The girls were lovely, the boys proud and handsome. One couple, adult members of the troupe, gave an especially dazzling performance.

There were a lot of unexpected twists and turns packed into this three-day trip which may be the last of the Banamichi experiences. Museum president, German Quiroga, our stalwart organizer, is thinking about other Mexican adventures. Whatever they may be, get on the bus.
Once a Lobo, Always a Lobo: A Night of Community and Talent

By Laura Wenzel

The Patagonia Union High School Annual Spaghetti Dinner and Talent Show on March 16 was a bittersweet show of song, dance and even poetry.

Almost 200 people were in attendance to cheer their family and friends and to eat a spaghetti and meatball dinner, the proceedings of which went to the senior class. English teacher Journ-ee Hayes, who helped organize the event, estimated that around $1600 was raised for the senior class trip, which they have been fundraising for since their freshman year.

“I would just like to say a huge thank you to everyone involved,” Hayes said. “A fundraiser that big can’t be pulled off without community involvement.” And what community involvement! The senior class served the meal, almost all of which was donated by Wild Horse Restaurant and Red Mountain Foods.

Table decorations were donated by Borderlands Restoration and were for sale for $10 each. A silent auction, with items donated by various community members and organizations, was set up in the back of the room for those who wanted to donate more to the seniors’ cause.

Emcees Coy Newman and Calvin Whitcoe kept things light and jokey for the crowd. The show began with a performance of “After the Fox” by the PUHS Jazz Ensemble. Senior Alisa Gutierrez sang songs in between serving guests food, while faculty members and judges Jason Schreiber, Augusta Lucas, and Liz Collier tallied scores for the performers.

Schreiber said that contestants were judged based on four different criteria: talent ability, artistic merit, creativity, and vitality/enthusiasm. “I look forward to the annual Patagonia Talent Show every year,” he commented. “It’s amazing to discover some of the talents that exist in our kids that I don’t get to see in my regular music classes.”

One of the most incredible and emotional moments of the night occurred at the end of the show, with a poem written and performed by high schoolers Exeelee Budd and Duke Norton. Titled “Once a Lobo, Always a Lobo,” the poem was dedicated to former PUHS Superintendent Denise Blake, who recently passed away. It was a truly powerful, beautiful tribute to a woman who clearly left her mark on students, faculty, parents, and community alike.

Students Lily Wharton and Mikey Ramirez greet guests to the talent show.

Patagonia FFA Students Excel at State Competition

By Liz Collier

The Patagonia FFA Ag Mechanics Team placed sixth in the FFA Career Development Events State Conference held at the University of Arizona March 3. The team, comprised of sophomores Nathan Bronstein and John Hubbell, freshmen Bryan Gutierrez and senior John Swift competed against 80 other chapter teams. As part of the Ag Mechanics contest, students had to take a written exam on mechanical math with work-based formula problems. They were also asked to test their skills in flux cord arc and wire welding, build wooden rafters, wire three-way light switches and create a 3-way switch diagram and construct, wire and test a solar photovoltaic water fountain.

Patagonia’s Vet Science team which included freshmen Alexandra Palsanes and Gilberto Osuna, sophomore Brayden Johnson and senior Brynn Lough, placed 23rd. Senior Alisa Gutierrez placed 21st in the Job Interview category. The Vet Science competition included identification tests on species/breeds of large and small animals, veterinary tools and procedures, parasite and parasite life cycles. They participated in two handling practicums which consisted of muzzling a large dog and administering an intramuscular rabies vaccine to a 6-year-old gelding horse. The team also had to research and answer questions on the Leptospirosis virus affecting humans and dogs in Arizona. They also were asked to create a skit using props and veterinary tools to deal with a goat that had Caprine Arthritic Encephalitis (CAE), to demonstrate their knowledge on the signs and symptoms of the disease, its progression, management and treatment.

Patagonia Ag teacher, Jayme Frazier states, “I am proud of these students; they worked hard to master all the skills that were expected of them and the hard work paid off. This is only the second year that our team has competed in the larger contests and each experience offers a lesson improvement.” Frazier is excited about the future of Patagonia’s FFA club and their Ag program. “Most of the students are under classmen and the school is adding more elements to our Ag program.

Next year, Patagonia will be adding a green house, tanks for fish farming and a small orchard for fruit trees. With expanded knowledge and experience, I am looking forward to another successful year.”
Glimpses Into Our Past

By Alison Bunting

The Library of Congress database, Chronicling America, provides a fascinating glimpse into our past through indexed digitized pages of historic newspapers published between 1789 and 1924. Examples of southeastern Arizona newspapers included are: Arizona Citizen, Tucson; the Bisbee Daily Review; Tombstone Epitaph; and the Border Vidette, Nogales. A recent search turned up the following description of the Sonoita Valley and some of its early settlers published in The Weekly Arizonian (Tubac), May 12, 1859.

On the road to Calabazas ranche,* from Tubac, when about one mile from the former place, the traveler will notice a wide opening in the range of hills upon his left hand, and a slightly marked road extending in an easterly direction. This is the entrance to the Sonoita valley, or, rather, canon, which contains some of the best farms in Arizona. The total length of Sonoita valley is about eleven miles, its breadth from fifty feet to half a mile; the sides precipitous, and very rough. The road winds along the bed of the stream most of the way, between tall cliffs occasionally, where the passage is very narrow.

The Sonoita, a clear, rippling brook, runs through the valley, like all streams in this country, intermittent, and before it reaches the Santa Cruz, toward which it runs so briskly, dives into the sand and disappears. Now and then the valley widens a little, leaving a small Interval, which can be irritated, and here are the farms, hemmed in by the adjacent hills, which roll away into formidable mountain ranges. There are seven farms on the Sonoita, besides one or two little spaces, where there are houses inhabited by laborers. In all, there is probably six or seven hundred acres of arable land capable of regular irrigation, in the whole valley. First comes Findlay's ranche, the largest of the lot, containing nearly two hundred acres.

Here a grist mill is being created, which will be a great benefit to the country.

Next, Pennington's and then Marshall's. Mr. Marshall has about one hundred and sixty acres of land capable of easy and highly profitable cultivation. It is well situated, and bears, some fine timber for this country. We next come to Wodsworth's ranche, which is very productive and well-watered. Mr. W. raised last year, among other crops, barley to the amount of five thousand dollars. Ward's and Ake's farms are naturally supplied with water, and produce, good crops. At this time, the barley, which is seen on all the ranches, as a preliminary to the corn crop, although late, looks well. A greater part of it will find a market at Fort Buchanan, to be used as fodder for the troop horses. The road along the Sonoita valley is at present in a very bad condition. If it is to be a public highway, and it ought to be, the inhabitants would profit to expend some labor in repairing the bad places, cutting away trees, and filling up dangerous holes. It is a romantic ride along the banks and channel of the little stream, which is a treasure beyond price to the farmers of the neighborhood. "Sonoita," in Spanish, signifies clover, and there was never a more correct appellation, for the narrow valley is matted with a luxuriant growth of clover, which, when short and green, is much, relished by cattle. For a wonder there are a few fish in this stream diminutive specimens of the mullet tribe, such as are called "dace," or shiners, in the States. They are liable, however, to be made "small fry" in double sense whenever the water dries up.

The Sonoita is one of the chief agricultural districts of the country, and there is a prospect of its product this year being very large in proportion to the land cultivated.

editor's note: The Sonoita Valley ran south west from Patagonia along the Sonoita Creek

*archaic spelling of ranch

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PUHS Talent Show Winners

**K-5** grade winners:
1st place—Addy Thompson
2nd place—Dance Force: Jayme Dodson, Alexis Fimbres, and Natalie Cooper
3rd place—A.J. Schreiber

**9th-12th** grade winners:
1st place—Eden and Sophie Lattanzio
2nd place—Kylie Kueneman
3rd place—Nick Botz and Quinn Chrisemer

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Small Town Kid

By Exellee Budd

I am a small town kid, and let me explain.
We are, drive an hour to the closest mall kids and learning to shoot a gun before you’re 10 kids.
We are, calling the history teacher coach because after school you’ll find him on the football field.
We are, going mudding, hiking, fishing to have fun kids.
The most excited you’ll ever see us is when the county fair comes to town.
Yes, we are the cliché country kids... but we are so much more.
We are bursting at the seams with tradition and old fashioned, I cannot tell you how many generations have lived here.
We are raised rough and tumble, and no girl ever backs down from a fight.
We are loyal and close knit, outsiders are not welcome here, it’s not our fault we’ve had bad experiences, let’s just say we had an exchange student for a year...
If you’re lucky, Friday nights are spent driving in circles down back roads but that’s okay with us because we are grateful kids.
We learn from a young age how to count our blessings and that the delicate line between life and death is walked upon like a tightrope.
We are helpful kids but not just washing the dishes, I’m talking carrying eachother to the finish line because we’ve only got each other.
We are, kids with different stories, different backgrounds.
And you’ll never know the pain we have helped eachother through.
Teens tasting beer to see if they can understand why their daddy left them, why their momma left them, why their brother left them...
We are raised as family and I’ve called the boy down the street my brother since I was two.
We are tough skin and a protective nature, when blood pours from our wounds you know we’ll be okay, and when tears pour from our eyes, every brother and sister is looking to kill who’s responsible.
There is nothing I wouldn’t do for these small town kids, and as a small town kid myself, I know they would move mountains for me too.

Exellee Budd is a student at PUHS
Although the Tree of Life Center is known to Patagonians as an international retreat center for organic, vegan, and holistic healing, most local residents are unaware of the charitable work done by the Tree of Life Foundation, whose director, Rabbi Gabriel Cousens, MD, MD(H), DD also serves as CEO of the Tree of Life Center in Patagonia.

The Tree of Life Foundation funds projects across the globe to alleviate suffering and improve the lives of people in developing countries. In late February, for instance, representatives from the foundation visited the towns of Imuris and Benjamin Hill in Sonora, Mexico, delivering food and clothing to hundreds of needy children.

In Imuris, the foundation has rebuilt and funded the orphanage El Reino de los Ninos (Kid’s Kingdom).

It provides 1,400 meals to the orphanage and community each week, and has funded the college educations of four children from the orphanage.

The foundation has also created a relief center for feeding and clothing migrants in the town of Benjamin Hill. Some of these migrants arrive there having not eaten for three days. They partner in these endeavors with Portable, Practical, Educational, Preparation, Inc. (PPEP), Patagonian John Arnold’s Tucson-based organization.

Similar projects fostering the health of children around the world are funded by the Tree of Life Foundation. In Owerri, Biafra, it sponsors a school and provides 700 meals each week. It has also raised funds to bring electricity to a school for the deaf in Nigeria. This program was undertaken primarily to illuminate the school grounds at night, to help prevent girls from being sexually assaulted in the dark.

The foundation has initiated diabetes prevention programs in Nigeria and in Ethiopia, Cameroon and Liberia.

It is in the process of signing agreements with the nation of Liberia that will create nationwide diabetes prevention and organic farming programs.

Dr. Cousens has spoken in over 40 countries about diabetes prevention and has met with the Governor of Bali and the Prime Minister of Papua New Guinea to discuss the implementation of such programs. The foundation currently conducts 19 projects for diabetes prevention in 14 different countries.

In Ghana, the foundation partnered with PPEP to finance the digging of 53 wells to provide potable water to residents, whose only source of water previously had been a polluted river. The diabetes awareness, spiritual, and holistic health activities are also conducted in Papua New Guinea, Bali, New Zealand, Australia, Brazil, Nicaragua, Costa Rica, Panama, and Argentina.

Funding for The Tree of Life Foundation comes almost exclusively from the profits of the Tree of Life Center in Patagonia. While most private corporations devote, on average, 1% of pre-tax profits to charitable giving, the Tree of Life Center contributes 25% of its profits to this work.

The Tree of Life is a major employer in Patagonia. Over the years, clients from 128 countries have come to Patagonia for treatment and participated in the local economy, helping to make this small town a destination known throughout the world.

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Sonoita / Elgin Area to Get Van Service for Seniors

The Senior Citizens of Patagonia (SCP) is acquiring a third wheel-chair accessible van. This van will be specifically available for use by seniors and disabled people in the Sonoita, Elgin and Canelo areas and will be housed at the Sonoita-Elgin Fire Department. Fire Chief Joseph DeWolf was very enthusiastic about the prospect of having a transportation van in the area and housing it at the fire station. He said his department will spread the word to those in need.

Gama Leyva, president of SCP board, said, “We are excited and pleased to accept the van offered by the Arizona Dept. of Transportation. We do have one major concern, that we will not be able to recruit enough volunteer drivers for the Sonoita, Elgin and Canelo areas.”

Because of this concern, the board is working with ADOT on a six-month trial period for the van. “We know there is a need for the van in these communities, but we need to show that there is also a commitment, that we are willing to support the van with volunteer drivers,” Leyva said.

Becoming a volunteer driver is not a complicated process. It only requires a valid driver’s license and a good driving record. For more information contact Heather Dodge, SCP executive director, 520-394-2494 or hsdodge712@gmail.com.
Part 5. Visiting the Rincon and Happy Valley Ranches

By Alison Bunting

Last month’s article described Walter Vail and Herbert Hislop’s visit to a ranch owned by E.N. Fish located 52 miles southeast of Tucson.

Vail and Hislop departed on July 21, 1876 for the Rincon Ranch, located about 30 miles east of Tucson. Hislop describes their positive reception by the owner, Joaquin Tellez: “Here we had great hospitality shown us, the Mexican and his family who did not speak a word of English, but having been studying up Spanish and having a book with me I got along first rate. Our meals consisted of beans and baked flour and water and bad coffee, but even that I relished as I have such an enormous appetite and can eat nearly anything. Bedtime came at last and I inquired if there were snakes or tarantulas as they call them here, which are very large spiders and are very poisonous, and they told me there were, so you can imagine I slept none too comfortable in my blanket that night.” Neither partner recorded their assessment of the ranch itself. They must not have been impressed as they departed the next afternoon for a second look at Fish’s ranch, travelling 30 miles south through Davidson’s Canyon.

Hislop records the miserable stormy night they endured: “We made our bed, using our saddles for pillows, having one blanket underneath us and two over us, but the rain soon penetrated through and... the rain had just soaked us through. I was lying in a pool of water which had drained off my saddle and felt none too lively.... Got up at sunrise and rode away to try and find the road. We felt pretty cold and miserable I can tell you and were suffering from thirst and found a place called Davidson’s Springs at 11a.m. where we had a breakfast of eggs and bread and milk. I never felt so pleased before.” Arriving at Fish’s ranch on July 24, they “Rode round the ranch and helped the man to herd his cattle, as we wanted to see what our work would be like and here we stayed for a week, he providing us with horses.”

After returning to Tucson on August first, they visited one more ranch. Vail wrote: “Hislop and I expect to start out in the morning to look at a ranch that belongs to Mr. Page [the Happy Valley Ranch]. Page’s place is about 45 miles from Tucson and is situated between two high mountains which are as good as a fence as they are too rough for cattle to travel over which would make it a very easy range to manage stock on as they could not be driven off without being found out.”

Hislop notes that after spending the night on the trail they reached “the ranch at 8 a.m. [and] started for a ride round the ranch, which took us 4 hours to go over about 10 miles of it as it was very hilly and rocky. The next morning we were up again at dawn of day and started for another ride on the ranch. He [Page] took us to his marble quarry that he had there... Between the two sides of the quarry there was a good stream of water running through and over marble as white as snow, having little waterfalls and natural bridges which had been formed by water and time. It was the most picturesque and romantic place I think I ever saw.”

Historical note—though Hislop and Vail did not purchase the Happy Valley Ranch in 1876, Walter Vail purchased the ranch in 1882 as he expanded the land holdings of the Empire Ranch.

Next month the partners purchase Fish’s ranch and begin ranching operations.
## Calendar

### Meetings

| AA | Patagonia Comm. Ctr., Sun. at 8 a.m.; Sonora Bible Church, Tues., 7:30 p.m.; Pat. Methodist Church, Fri., 7:30 p.m. |
| CHOP (Community Homes of Patagonia, Inc.) | Board Meeting 3rd Mon. at 6 p.m. in the Patagonia Town Council Room Chambers. |
| Patagonia Town Council | 2nd & 4th Wed. at 7 p.m. in the Town Council Hall. |
| Rotary Club | 1st Thurs., 7 a.m. at Stage Stop Inn; 3rd Thurs., 5:30 p.m. at Kief Joshua Vineyard. Info: Sue, 520-990-4648. |
| San Rafael Community 4-H Club | 2nd Mon. at the Patagonia Methodist Church, Thurber Hall, 5:30 p.m. Tami, 455-5561. |
| Overeaters Anonymous | Tue. & Thurs. at 6:30 p.m. Fragrance-free meeting. Patagonia United Methodist Church, 520-404-3490. |

### Community Services

| Lunch for Seniors | Fresh-cooked meals, Mon. thru Fri. at the Patagonia Community Center. Noon—1 p.m. |
| Sr. Citizens of Patagonia Van Service | Medical transportation Mon.–Fri. for seniors & disabled by appointment only. Info: 394-2494. |
| Patagonia Food Bank | Community Center; 2nd Wed. of the month, 9-11 a.m. |
| Patagonia Methodist Church Thrift Shop | Fri. 10-2 p.m., Sat. 10-2 p.m. |
| Angel Wings Thrift & Gift Shop | Our Lady of the Angels Catholic Church, 12 Los Encinos Rd, Sohoita. Thurs—Sat. 10-2 p.m. |

### Events

| Apr 1 | 39th Annual Blessing of Sonora Vineyards ceremony and festival, 10-4 p.m. $20.00 admission online, only 250 available, $25 at the door. Lunch may be purchased on-site from The Steak Out for $10/plate. |
| Apr 1 | 12th Annual Mountain Empire Rotary “Golfing for Scholars” Tournament, 9-2 p.m. at Kino Springs Golf Course. Info: Chuck Carlson at chucks@otsky.com. |
| Apr 1 & 2 | Pick Up Schtick’s April Fools Comedy Improv Show, 7 p.m. and 2 p.m. at Tin Shed Theater. $5 suggested donation. |
| Apr 4 | Hike to the Head Cut with Friends of Sonoita Creek, 8:30-11 a.m. RSVP at gould226@hotmail.com. |
| Apr 7 & 22 | Kitchens of Nogales: La Zona Gastronomica Tour, 2:30-8:30 p.m. $60 BCA Member, $80 BCA Non-Member, $100 Tour & BCA Membership. Info: bordercommunityalliance.org or call 520-398-3229. |
| Apr 8 | Spring Wing Fling, 7-11:30 a.m. at Paton Center for Hummingbirds. Info: tucsonaudubon.org/spring-wing-fling/. |
| Apr 9 | Inwood Baroque, 3 p.m. at Benderly-Kendall Opera House. Info: scfpapresents.org or call 888-202-1942 or 520-394-0129. |
| Apr 12 | Magdalena: Then and Now Tour, 8:30-6 p.m. $75 BCA Member, $95 Non-BCA Member, $115 Tour & BCA Membership. Info: bordercommunityalliance.org or call 520-398-3229. |
| Apr 15 | Exhibitions on Screen presents: “Vincent Van Gogh: a New Way of Seeing,” 2 p.m. at Tin Shed Theater. |
| Apr 18 | Premier Balalaika artist Tanya Khonenko presents a concert at 7 p.m. preceded by a lecture at 4 p.m. at Benderly-Kendall Opera House. Info: scfpapresents.org or call 888-202-1942 or 520-394-0129. |
| Apr 19 | A Voice for Young Authors Open House, 5-6:30 p.m. Come support our youngest cookbook authors! Patagonia Library. Info: 520-394-2010. |
| Apr 19 | Quilt Show and Friends of the Library Brunch, 10:30 a.m. at Cady Hall. Tickets $35. Info: Patagonia Library, 520-394-2010. |
| Apr 23 | Musicians On Tour, 3 p.m. at Benderly-Kendall Opera House. Opera scenes and arias. Info: scfpapresents.org or call 888-202-1942 or 520-394-0129. |
| Apr 25 | Kindergarten Round-Up, 9-10:30 a.m. at Elgin School. Info: 520-455-5514. |
| Apr 27 | Cross Border Tour: Tubac to Nogales, 9-5:30 p.m. $60 BCA Member, $80 BCA Non-Member, $100 Tour & BCA Membership. Info: bordercommunityalliance.org or call 520-398-3229. |
| Apr 29 | Exhibition on Screen presents: “The Impressionists & the Man Who Made Them,” 2 p.m. at Tin Shed Theater. |
| Apr 29 | Patagonia Youth Enrichment Center 3rd Anniversary Party and Open House, 3-6 p.m. Info: pyec.org. |
| Apr 29 | Nathan and Jessie “Gypsy Blues,” 7 p.m. at Benderly-Kendall Opera House. Guitar, accordion, and string bass. Info: scfpapresents.org or call 888-202-1942 or 520-394-0129. |
| Apr 22 | 10-3, Très Unique Boutique of local arts and crafts at the Patagonia Senior Center. Call Heather at 732-0598 for more info. |

### Special Interests

| Santa Cruz Singers | Rehearsals Thursdays at 5 p.m. beginning Feb. 16 SCFPA office, 348 Nauge, Patagonia. New members welcome! |
| Bingo | St. Theresa Parish Hall, Patagonia, 1st & 3rd Mondays at 6 p.m. Info: 455-5681. |
| Crossroads Quilters | Sonoita Fire Dept., 2nd & 4th Mon. at 9 a.m. Info: 520-732-0453. |
| Open Tennis | PUHS, Sat. at 9 a.m., Info: 394-2973. |
| Sonoita Tergar Meditation Practice Group | 1st Mon. Free. Info: Jonelle 455-9222. |
| Patagonia Youth Group | Meets at Patagonia Community Church, 387 McKeeon, every Sunday, 5:30—7:30 p.m. Info: Pastor Tom Jelinek at 394-2274. |
| Community Youth Bible Hang Out | Ages 12-18, Sonora Bible Church, 2nd & 4th Wed, 6—8 p.m. Dinner, music, Bible lesson, & fun activities. Info: April Anderson at 520-508-2502, or Steve Lindsey at 520-559-9155. |

Answers to current events quiz, page 25

| 1-F | 9-D |
| 2-K | 10-J |
| 3-C | 11-B |
| 4-O | 12-H |
| 5-I | 13-N |
| 6-M | 14-E |
| 7-A | 15-L |
| 8-P | 16-G |
**MISC.**

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**NEED MORE ROOM?**
Call Les’ Storage Units: 520-988-0421, 432 Harshaw Rd., Patagonia.

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**HELP WANTED**

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Please email your resume to admin@highspirits.com.

**Strong back? Able to transfer 200 lbs?**
If you’re an experienced or certified caregiver, call Pat. Assisted Care: 520-604-8179.

**PT HOUSING ASS’T for chem. sensitive woman in 30s. Must be fragr. free!** Org. skills, cooking, cleaning, etc. Lizzie: elizabethday12@gmail.com, 928-864-6085.

**HOUSING RENTALS**

**JACK AND JILL BDRMS** w/shared bath, $350/mo. each. Seniors preferred. Short-term rentals available. Don 520-297-7065.


**SPACIOUS 1 BR/1 BA HOME IN PATAGONIA**
Furnished, laundry, fenced yard, WIFI, DTV+extras. Year lease. $1200/mo. Avail. 5/15, 406-646-9232.

**LARGE 1 BR/1 BA APT IN PATAGONIA**
Fully furnished, WIFI, DTV, laundry, fenced yard, private parking. Year lease. $900/mo. Avail. 4/1, 406-646-9232.

**RENTAL HOMES, RETAIL COMMERCIAL OFFICE & STORAGE SPACE** Contact Kathy O’Brien at Sonoita Realty, 520-455-5381.

**CLASSES/INSTRUCTION**

**Julia Green Voice and Piano Studio:** voice & piano lessons $45/45 mins. 505-350-8543
www.juliagreenmusic.com Patagonia 85624.

**Stretch and strengthen class,** Weds., 9:15-10:15 a.m. at Sonoita Bible Church. $7.

**Adult hand-building ceramics class,** Weds., 4-6 p.m. $65.
520-604-0300.

**Ukrainian Egg Decorating Classes,** April 8, 9, 15. Fees and times vary. Pre-registration required.
520-394-2926, susanazcorl@gmail.com.

**CHURCH SERVICES**

**Patagonia Community United Methodist Church**
387 McKeown Ave., Patagonia 394-2274
Sunday Service: 10 a.m.

**St. Andrews Episcopal Church**
Casa Blanca Chapel of Sonoita
Justice of the Peace Courtroom
2nd & 4th Saturdays: 10 a.m.

**Sonoita Hills Community Church**
52 Elgin Rd., Sonoita 455-5172
Sunday Service: 10 a.m.

**St. Therese of Lisieux Catholic Church**
222 Third Ave., Patagonia 394-2954
Sunday Mass: 10:30 a.m.

**Sonoita Bible Church**
3174 N. Highway 83, Sonoita 455-5779
Sunday Service: 10:30 a.m.

**Our Lady of the Angels Catholic Church**
12 Los Encinos Rd., Sonoita 394-2954
Sunday Mass: 8 a.m.

**Canelo Cowboy Church**
Hwy 83, MP 14, Elgin 455-5000
Sunday Services: 8:45 a.m. & 11:00 a.m.
(except third Sundays)

**Harvest Christian Fellowship/ Sonoita Foursquare Church**
3107 Hwy 83, Sonoita 455-5505
Sunday Service: 10:30 a.m.

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Santa Cruz County Fairgrounds News

By Jen Rinaldi

As we head into April, we have been busy working on renovations to the Ranchers Ramada and the construction of our new stage. We anticipate that we will be ready just in time for the Sonoita Horse Races in May. Our Rodeo Royalty Contest brought out the community to cheer on our nine talented and personable contestants. More than 100 dinners were prepared by Amanda Zamudio and Valerie Burleson, with the help of local 4-H members and their families. This event becomes more popular every year.

We held the second of our Sonoita All Breed Circuit Horse Shows on March 25th. These shows are open to everyone, so come and join us, and cheer on your neighbors and friends. The third of this horse show series will be held on April 15. Pending other events, we will try to leave the trail obstacles up for a day or two after the horse shows for those members who wish to try their horses in our arena. Remember, practice makes perfect!

Not a member, but wish to try the trail obstacles? Become a member online today at www.sonoitafairgrounds.com. We need your liability release to allow you to ride at our facility. Membership also allows you free admission to the Horse Races, TWO Rodeos (Memorial and Labor Day weekends), Quarter Horse Show, County Fair and FIVE Sonoita All Breed Circuit Horse Shows plus free admission to other SCCFRA-sponsored events, free rental of tables, chairs and fridge space, quarterly newsletter, discount on facility rental and a chance to win a free membership at our annual membership dinner, not to mention unlimited volunteer opportunities.

Scholarships Available

Mountain Empire Rotary Club scholarship applications are now available. These are awarded to high school seniors in recognition of their potential for success and desire to make a difference. This scholarship is to assist those students with leadership and service potential, demonstrated by their club activity and their student life participation, to on to college or tech school to further these leadership skills. Applicant must be a high school senior residing in one of the following zip codes: 85624, 85637, 85611, and 85621. The student must be academically motivated, as evidenced by school transcript, and have been accepted by, and plan to attend, an accredited post-secondary institution or vocational program. These $1,000 scholarships are renewable for one year, and are to be used for tuition, books and materials, transportation costs or additional college related expenses. Applications are due by April 15, and the forms can be obtained by emailing Sue at eggsuetrev@aol.com.

The Art of Falconry

My fascination with the Egyptian Arabian horse, the noble Saluki hound, and the falcons of the middle eastern deserts has spurred me to take a closer look at the sport of falconry. For the Bedouins, hunting birds were important tools for survival in their harsh desert lands. These people began practicing the art of falconry over 5,000 years ago, before it then spread across Europe, Africa and Asia.

The Harry Potter books and movies are, in part, responsible for increased interest in this ancient art. It used to be the preserve of royalty and the rich, but in today’s world it is accessible to any of us. Currently, approximately 25,000 individuals engaged in this all-consuming pastime in Britain, as opposed to only about 75 in the early sixties.

Falconry is not something to be taken lightly. The keeping and training of any raptor is tightly regulated by U.S. state and federal laws. Anyone in the U.S. who is interested in flying raptors must seek out a state and federally licensed falconer to sponsor him or her through an apprenticeship period, which can take a minimum of two years and often considerably longer.

Little about the falconer’s art and tools has changed over the centuries: the leather anklets which fit around the bird’s legs, the jesses (leather straps) by which the falconer holds the bird until he is ready to release it, the handmade bells that enable the handler to hear the bird if it flies out of sight, and of course, the distinctive falcon’s hood which is slipped over the bird’s head to keep it calm, are still basically the same as they were thousands of years ago.

Exquisitely jeweled versions of these hoods, handmade and sized to fit each bird, with sky high (smile) price tags are now being produced to feed the renewed appetite for falconry among the world’s elite.

Many kinds of raptors are trained and used in hawking, including eagles, hawks, falcons, gyrfalcons, goshawks, sparrow hawks, kestrels and owls. Owls have become more of a fascination with enthusiasts inspired by Harry Potter. However, working with owls is particularly challenging, in part because almost all owls are nocturnal, which affects many aspects of their hunting habits.

Although this sport is rooted in age-old traditions, times are changing. A 13-year-old Mongolian girl has made world news for defying 2,000 years of tradition to become the first female in her culture to fly a golden eagle. This pair is now the subject of a documentary, “The Eagle Huntress,” further evidence of the growing popularity of this sport.

Dennis Samnee, a falconer for 26 years and president of the Missouri Falconer’s Association said, when asked about his relationships with his birds, “The birds are not pets by any means, but you develop a certain kind of bond by spending an abundance of hours with them. They just want a little trust. The trust developed between bird and handler is essential. Trust is what allows you to condition it to let you be a part of what it does naturally. You put so much time in to training it, it’s like watching your own kid mature right before your eyes. Falconry is not really a sport,” he concludes, “It’s a lifestyle. It requires a lot of time and the more you put in to it the more you get out of it.”

Cate Drown is the proprietor of Beyond Reason Ranch, where she provides specialized care for all beings large or small. You can contact Cate at drown_cate@hotmail.com.

Animal Tales

By Cate Drown

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In February the Mountain Empire Rotary Club provided new dictionaries to the third-grade students at the Patagonia and Elgin Elementary Schools. This was the twentieth year that the club has distributed dictionaries to these students.

These are books that each child gets to put his or her name in and keep. These books are much more than just dictionaries. There are also sections on each president, information about all the states, geographical information worldwide, descriptions of the planets and so much more. Many times, the teachers utilize these in their classrooms as well for special lessons and reports.

The smiles and enthusiasm that the students share when they receive their book demonstrates that even with google and the internet using books and turning pages continues to be special.

Elgin School (above) and Patagonia (below) third graders show off their new dictionaries.
Volunteer Drivers Needed

Now that more people have learned about our services, the Senior Citizens of Patagonia transportation program is expanding our reach.

We are seeking additional volunteer drivers for our Dodge Caravan and Ford minibus with wheelchair lift. We service Patagonia, Sonoita, and Elgin, and drive seniors (60+) and the disabled to Sierra Vista, Nogales, and Tucson, and anywhere in between. Rides are offered primarily for medical appointments, but also for airport drop-off and pick-up, shopping trips, and cultural events.

To volunteer, contact Chuck Kelly at 520-604-8087, charlesraynerkelly@gmail.com, or Heather Dodge at 520-732-0598, hsdodge712@gmail.com. To make appointments for transport, call the Patagonia Senior or Center at 394-2494 between 10 a.m. and 2 p.m. Monday-Friday.
Three Self-Guided Bike Tours Around Patagonia

Patagonia and Sonoita offer almost unlimited bicycle adventures. This map, and the description of three trails, is shared by Patagon Bike Rental of Patagonia:

“The Loop”: A great 14.4 mile round trip introduction to biking in the area. Facing the Stage Stop Inn’s front door go left down McKeown Ave. That becomes Harshaw Road. 3.2 miles out of town turn left onto Harshaw Creek Road. This dirt road features rolling terrain, right next to an occasionally running creek bed. Enjoy the varied geology of this area, old ranches, and great views of meadows and bluffs. Turn right on FR 58, then right again on Harshaw Road (paved). Make it to the top of a large hill and enjoy the views on a long downhill stretch toward town.

Mowry Loop: 29.9 miles round trip from Patagonia. Incorporates the best of the “Loop” with wonderfully varied terrain. A considerable climb to stunning views of the unique San Rafael Valley. From the “Valley View” consistently rolling terrain on FR214 and FR49 until you return to pavement. Stop for a breather at the historic (and shady) Harshaw Cemetery.

Guajolote Loop: A relatively flat 8.5 mile loop, measured from Mowry Camp, starting and ending at FR 49. There is the option of going off the loop and riding up to a nice view.

For more in-depth information about this and other biking options, visit Patagon Bike’s website: patagonbikerental.com.