Photos from our readers of the snowfall on Dec. 25 clockwise from top left: Mowry, by Nancy Coyote; Atascosa Lookout, by Anne Townsend; near Harshaw Road, by Ali Morse; San Raphael Valley, by Kathy Pasierb
MEG GILBERT
A Voice of Reason in the Town Council

by Lynn Davison

Meg Gilbert has lent her support to community projects since she moved to Patagonia in 1988. Back then, she was part of a group that set up and ran a volunteer recycling program, sorting and storing recyclables and driving them up to collection locations in Tucson each month, which they did for six years. Trained as a naturopathic physician, for ten years Meg also played an active role as a member of the Family Health Center, which remains a mainstay of primary health care for many Patagonia area residents.

Meg operated a naturopathy clinic for 18 years, treating illnesses and promoting health. “Dr. Meg” was often approached by friends or neighbors seeking answers to their medical health questions, for which she always had time to listen.

In December, Meg retired from eight years of service as a town council member, a position to which she consistently brought a judicious, well-considered point of view. Her good judgment and ability to focus on the issues at hand helped to shape several important decisions during her tenure. Among them she cites the creation of the use permit, which gives the town residents some say in what type of businesses can be established here.

While working for the community, Meg has also entertained us many a time in roles she’s had with the Patagonia Players. She compares community theater to local politics, noting that “both are vehicles of expression for the community.”

When Meg first came to Patagonia, she says that she saw “an amazing sense of community bursting out all over here.” In the years since then, she has contributed her energy and wisdom to the well-being of that community. Thanks, Meg, for your generous spirit, civic responsibility, and your many, many contributions to the people of Patagonia. Enjoy your retirement from the town council as well as that from your medical practice!
At the PUHS First Annual Door Decorating Contest on Dec. 20, the school’s pre-kindergarten through fifth grade students marked their ballots and voted on seven decorated doors.

Over 35 Christmas carolers met at the Patagonia Volunteer Fire Dept. on Dec. 23, then rode the fire truck spreading Christmas cheer to the elderly and shut-ins. A good time was had by all and what kid, be they three or 73, doesn’t like to ride on a fire truck?

Photo by Jude Weierman

Patagonia Town Council Notes

By Bob Brandt

Discussion of and possible action on truck regulations and the drought preparedness plan were the main agenda items for the Town Council meetings in December.

On Dec. 14, both topics were the subject of a special workshop the council held immediately before the regular council meeting. Michael Stabile voiced his concern that the current truck regulations being reviewed did not include a frequency limit for overweight vehicles traveling through the proposed route (from Hwy. 82 through town and out Harshaw Road). He asked that the limit of 50 trips a week be put back in the ordinance. Council member Andy Woods agreed on the importance of limits for protecting the town and its infrastructure, and some detailed discussion followed. The council then instructed town attorney Michael Massee to revise the truck ordinance to include limits on frequency of trips by overweight vehicles, in addition to restricting the routes they can use, their weight, and the time of day they are permitted to drive through the town’s streets. At the meeting on Dec. 28, the council agreed to postpone the vote on the revised ordinances until the new council members begin in January and have had some time to review it.

Melissa Murrietta reported at the regular council meeting that the Planning and Zoning Committee had begun reviewing the town’s General Plan by covering the first 17 pages at its Dec. 7 meeting. Pages 18-40 of the plan will be reviewed at a special workshop session at 6:15 p.m. on Jan. 10 and the public is encouraged to attend.

The council decided to move its first regular meeting in 2017 from Jan. 11 to Jan. 4, at which time new council members Michael Stabile and Ron Reibslager will be sworn in.
An Interview with Diana Nash

by Ali Morse

In the cozy lobby of the Circle Z, owner Diana Nash shares some history of this iconic local guest ranch that turned ninety in 2016.

“My mother-in-law, Lucia Nash, originally purchased the ranch. I married into the family in 1993 and first came to the ranch just after we were married. This is where I would spend time with Lucia and my husband still runs an automotive restoration business in Missoula.

Rick, Diana, and Preston Nash, owners of the Circle Z Guest Ranch

Rick always sat in on ownership meetings and I gradually became involved. When Lucia had a stroke several years ago, Rick and I became even more involved. We have since assumed the ownership role and have no plans to do anything different for the ranch. It will always be a horseback riding ranch—simple and low key but very nice.

We’ve done some upgrading and remodeling since the cottages were built in the 1920s, while still trying to keep the same style and feel of them. Three years ago, we added the Recreation Room on the site of the original lodge that had burned to the ground in the late 1940s. A ramada was built on the concrete pad in the 1980s and then it was enclosed to house games for children, including a pool table. Last summer we also built a couple of shade ports and round pens for our horses.

When we have family and kids, mostly around the holidays, our capacity can go up to 45 but 35 is really the preferred maximum. That makes for more intimate groups. We haven’t marketed a lot to the foreign business but we do get people from the U.K., Germany, Denmark, Sweden, and a lot from Canada. But most guests come from Arizona and California.

A lot of our guests have their own horses and are good riders. We also get some beginner riders and guests who have never been around horses and this is a great place for them to learn. People come back again and again because they feel like they’re coming home. Every week we have both returning guests and new guests.

We have 120 quarter horses and eight experienced wranglers. Safety is number one. We still breed and train our own horses and we get two to five foals each year. I was around horses most of my life and my brother runs a ranch in Montana. I always wanted to be a cowgirl on a ranch.

Our cooks prepare fresh wholesome and delicious meals (breakfast, lunch, and dinners) that are served buffet style. We often have cookouts for lunch rides. We do bar rides to the Wagon Wheel in Patagonia and sometimes trailer the horses and do rides in the San Rafael Valley, a favorite with our guests. We offer morning and afternoon rides and all-day rides, providing sack lunches for guests. The Boot Room has a supply of boots for guests with any shoe size. Guests often donate their boots and hats as well.

The total acreage of the Circle Z, including leased land, is approximately 8,500 acres. We recently acquired a property that we have been riding on for some years. We’re pretty much surrounded by Forest Service and state land now, so there’s not a lot to add.”

Congratulations to the Circle Z for keeping this treasured horseback riding guest ranch alive and thriving.

PRCF Grant Application Workshop

Nonprofit organizations in the Patagonia area are invited to attend a grant workshop to learn more about the application process and elements of an effective application in advance of the Patagonia Regional Community Fund’s upcoming grant cycle.

Representatives of nonprofit organizations, public schools, churches and government agencies are welcome to attend the upcoming workshop on Thursday, Jan. 5 from 2 to 3:30 p.m. at the Patagonia Museum, 100 School Street, Patagonia. Topics to be discussed during the workshop include the application timeline, eligibility requirements, guidelines and instructions for the Arizona Community Foundation online grants center. Register for the Patagonia Regional Community Fund Grant Workshop now at patagoniagrant2017.eventbrite.com.

The grant application will be available online beginning Jan. 9, 2017. To be eligible for consideration, applications must be completed and submitted no later than 5 p.m. on Jan. 30, 2017. The Patagonia Regional Community Fund’s Steering Committee will evaluate proposed projects based on their ability to meet present and enduring needs of the community.

With the direction of the Community Fund’s Steering Committee, grants of up to $5,000 will be awarded to support projects serving Patagonia, Sonoita, Elgin and Canelo.

Additional information about the grants process is available at www.azfoundation.org/grants. For more information, contact Rebecca Pickett, Regional Philanthropic Coordinator for the Arizona Community Foundation of Cochise, at 520-505-3678, or via email at RPickett@azfoundation.org.

The Patagonia Regional Community Fund is a collection of locally-focused charitable funds managed by the Arizona Community Foundation of Cochise, which was established in 1998 as a permanent philanthropic endowment. Guided by dedicated local residents, this permanent charitable resource serves as a repository for charitable donations to help meet the needs of our community, now and in the future. Gifts to the fund from individuals, families and businesses are pooled and professionally managed to yield investment returns, a portion of which are distributed annually as grants to community organizations working to address local needs.
New Managers Join Two Patagonia Habitat Centers

by Ann Katzenbach

Martin Lawrence
The new manager of The Nature Conservancy’s (TNC’s) Patagonia-Sonoita Creek Preserve will be starting work early this month. Marty Lawrence has spent the last 15 years managing TNC’s Hassayampa River Preserve (HRP) near Wickenburg, Arizona. This Nature Conservancy holding has been transferred to Maricopa County Parks and Recreation Dept. Lawrence says, “The scenario won’t be changed much for me regarding the preserve. Much like HRP, the main interest of TNC is in preserving the uncommon cottonwood-willow forest type and the associated critters drawn to it. The main interest of the visiting public is likely the rich birding and wildlife to be found in such an attractive setting and getting in some bonus hiking as well.”

Lawrence does ponder the question of why he would move from a small town of 9,000 to a much smaller town of 900. He grew up in Montana so apparently is familiar with really small towns. He also cites the experience he recently had at the post office. “I was pleasantly surprised by a lovely, patient, and greatly helpful postal agent named Jackie who stuck with me until things were properly sorted out. I’m guessing that I’ll come across many similar folks in similar situations during my time in Patagonia, so maybe that provides the only answer I really need. See you soon.”

At the Paton Center for Hummingbirds, Jonathan will be living in the midst of a construction project for the next month as Tucson Audubon moves ahead with plans to upgrade the backyard. Contractors will remove the old backyard fountain and expand the bird-watching area closer to the creek. The next step will be construction of an architect-designed viewing platform, replacing the canopy that has sheltered birders in the past. The center will be closed during this time. The web cam at the hummingbird feeders will still be showing live action at tucsonaudubon.org. The project is

Jonathan Lutz
Jonathan Lutz is the new Paton Center Coordinator, representing Tucson Audubon Society in Patagonia. Most recently Jonathan was the Director of the Montana Audubon Center in Billings. His professional experience includes seven and a half years as the Executive Director of the Michigan Audubon Society. Jonathan credits his parents for encouraging a life-long interest in natural history and the outdoors. His interest in birds grew while a resident of coastal South Carolina—Jonathan’s home for six years after earning a BS in environmental policy at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor.

“I’m deeply appreciative of the opportunity to join the staff of the Tucson Audubon Society, an organization I’ve admired from afar for several years. My new role at the Paton Center is reminiscent of my tenure as the resident Environmental Program Director for a small, ferry-accessed barrier island community near Charleston, South Carolina. My introduction to the site occurred in September when, as a casual visitor, I enjoyed looks at my first-ever blue grosbeak in the Richard Grand Memorial Meadow. I’m looking forward to waking up each morning and sharing the world of birds with visitors in my backyard—an homage to Wally and Marion Paton.”

Jonathan and his dog, Jonesy, began their residence at the Paton Center on Nov. 14, 2016. He can be contacted via email, jlutz@tucsonaudubon.org, or by phone, at 520-415-6447.

Errors & Omissions

In the December issue of PRT, The article “The Hazards of Javelina” was incorrectly credited to Victoria Collette. We apologize for this error to the author, whose name is Victoria Colette Reynolds.
The New World Odor
by Martin Levowitz

When He appoints, He does not disappoint. The beat goes on.

Old Dondle keeps things shaken up. His chokehold on the public eye, and knowledge of Reality TV, equip the man to keep us on the edges of our seats. (Denied attention, Donnie Boy might just deflate and croak.) The cavalcade of sycophants and maybe-appointees parading through the lobby of the Trunt GoldPlate Chateau was fun to watch. The billionaires and generals come curtseyng, to woo. Who will the lucky winners be? Not me, my friend, or you. (But don'tcha just adore the way Chris Christie looked in his cerise tutu?)

The Donald will not hedge His bets and won't placate His foes. His nominees are quite extreme—the fungal folks you'd half expect to find between your toes. It's billionaires and generals, far as the eye can see. Whilst playing to the working class, and knowing their concerns, He castigated Hillary for schmoozing with tycoons. So now He's chosen Goldman Sachs and other mega CEOs to "fix" the slack economy and help the workingman. What a great plan!

A Secretary of Education who dis-favors public schools? An environmental secretary who denies climate change? A Secretary of Energy who vows to abolish the Department of Energy? The Trumptster's message to the world is clear: "I'll do whatever I damn please, no matter how you feel or what the custom used to be. If you don't like it, just take your marbles and go home." The problem, though, for some of us, is that this is our home.

When Little Mammon Trumpalump went down to Mexico some months ago, it popped into my head that if elected president, a man devoid of conscience, for whom Money = God, could use his office as a sort of malefactors' guild. His chummy stance toward Vladi Puto ("Comrade Oligarch") might be the tip of something, which, if given room to spread, could spawn a worldwide web of parasites. Rejoice, dear brethren, fear ye not, though here before us the dark chasm yawns. With any luck at all, someday, we'll all be slaves, not merely pawns.

It's hard for us, here in the West, to break the habit of assuming that our leaders will have some concern for decency—or at the very least pretend to care. Again, to that extent, we are naive. If somebody unprincipled attains a chance to steer, that gives us an orangutan as captain of our fate. (Idi Amin with long orange hair.) Imagine a network of political bullies and corporate cartel capos, watching each other mistrustfully, like panthers tearing up a hog, each willing to cooperate but only if assured his ragged chunk of bloody meat.

I know this all sounds paranoid and quite fantastical, like Marvel Comics' League of Evil or outright Sci Fi, but that, too, shows our naiveité. Just look around the world right now and count the countries run by evil parasitic thugs who urinate on human rights and starve or murder anyone who dawdles in their way. Just think about your little pal Bashir, in Syria, who's made carne asada out of half his countrymen. To psychopathic leaders we are mere commodities—like cows or soybeans, lumps of coal—important only to their egos and the bottom line.

I feel a little sorry for those hard-working, credulous Midwesterners: farmers, diesel mechanics, and nurse's aides, who, understandably angry at being invisible to the East Coast political establishment, avenged themselves by choosing a glib New York con man who told them what they knew they hoped to hear. Like sheep led to the slaughter by a wily, wooly wolf, they leapt out of the frying pan—Viva la Liberté!—then got in bed with Donald Trump. Ouch, Damn! Good God! Oy Vey!
The Ring is Not the Thing
by Cassina Farley

As I write this column, Zach, my husband of 20 years (this month!), is tearing the kitchen apart trying to make a breakfast burrito. This happens every morning during the work week. I lie in bed listening to the sounds of an epic struggle and at no point do I intervene. This is what marriage is. After 20 years of a successful marriage I feel confident that I now have some clout. I feel justified in giving advice to the recently married and to those struggling to make sense of this sometimes-weird voluntary partnership. Zach and I are survivors and for the most part we have reached our stride. I offer this bit of advice to those who may not be finding themselves on the cusp of marital bliss.

- The ring isn’t important. Mine came from Walmart and Zach’s was bought with money from shoes that were returned. Eventually mine had to be cut off of my finger by a doctor when I smashed it at work. It sits in a little bowl on my dresser and represents the time I lost my fingernail and Zach’s?… it’s on my finger now.
- Don’t take advice from the patrons of your local bar. We learned this the hard way early on. Call me crazy but the guy who sits on the same barstool day in and day out may not know what it means to be in a loving relationship. His age and the fact that his third wife is sitting next to him doesn’t make him an expert. A happy couple stays out of the bar and out of the “headlines.”
- Make sure your finances are in order. We had jobs but no real financial knowledge. We kept our money in a little drawer of a spice rack and spent it on things like six-packs and Big Macs. No one told us about building credit and how to balance a check book. Keeping track of your money will keep you from eating spaghetti every night and will make it so you don’t have to call your parents for a bail out. (Thanks Mom)
- Spend time apart. This is an important one. My memory of driving through El Paso, Texas will always be of Zach and me screaming at each other on a return ride home from an eight-day road trip. Sometimes you just want the love of your life to shut up. Alone time makes for a happy marriage—that and limited road trips.
- Fight fair and pick your battles. This goes back to the burrito thing. Could I help him? Sure. Do I want to see the giant mess and how he used my good knife to pry the lid off the can of green chiles? No. See how that works?
- And lastly, get married for love. I was 20 and he was 23. From the perspective of a 41-year-old, we were just kids. Love was all that really held us together. It wasn’t money or tax breaks and it wasn’t kids. We grew up together and together we decided our values. We became Team Farley—a bigger better version of ourselves. Marriage is hard and I am really glad everyone can do it. We will spend our twentieth anniversary sitting on the tailgate of my little truck somewhere in these Patagonia hills with a six-pack and a couple of Big Macs, reminding ourselves of how far we’ve come. Twenty years went by so fast.

The Tipping Point
by Ali Morse

When you enjoy a meal out and receive good service, it’s customary to tip. Typically, a guest is expected to tip 15-20% of the pre-tax bill for a full-service, sit-down meal. Tipping is also the norm for service providers such as hairdressers, manicurists, bell hops, valets, housekeepers, etc. What the general public may not be aware of, however, is something called “tip credit.” While the word “credit” may have a somewhat positive connotation, it’s not so advantageous for the tipped employee.

Arizona’s new minimum wage (starting Jan. 1) is $10/hour and the law allows employers to claim a tip credit of $3 an hour. This means tipped employees can be paid $7/hour, which happens to be less than the federal minimum wage of $7.25/hour. If an employee doesn’t make at least $3 an hour in tips, the employer must cover the difference so the employee earns $10/hour. In essence, the employee’s tips help cover the wage paid by the employer.

To some, this doesn’t seem fair, but the practice is more common than one might imagine. There are only seven states that require employers to pay tipped employees the full state minimum hourly wage: Alaska, California, Minnesota, Montana, Nevada, Oregon, and Washington. This means tipped employees receive the state’s full minimum wage plus their tips.

So, the next time you decide to eat out, take a taxi, or use a bell hop, consider where you are and who is providing the service. Unless you are in one of the seven states mentioned above, the employee is making a fraction of that state’s minimum wage and depends on your tip to make up the difference. If the service was good, be generous—an extra few dollars will go a long way.

Elemental
I was searching for Ideas that could move my mind to take flight then remembered they are found in ancient roots of words buried deep.

How do we find them dig them up to behold what lies within?

Elemental Ideas are wrapped in garments rich in color from countless cultures places and times—recalled through words spoken with sounds invoking cosmic forces we are shaped by infused with roaring rhythms wild waves and winds waking us to feel the mystery of Be-ing.

— by Patra Kelly
Last month we introduced Walter Vail and Herbert Hislop who first met in San Francisco and set out for the Arizona Territory to make their fortune in ranching. Hislop wrote about the journey in a diary-style letter to his grandmother. “We took steamer to Los Angeles which took us 3 days and 2 nights touching at Santa Barbara and San Luis Obispo and Santa Monica for Los Angeles.”

Walter and Herbert arrived in Los Angeles in the midst of the centennial celebrations of Independence Day 1876. Events on the Fourth of July Eve included, “...firing anvils in the streets. The way they fire anvils is this, they bury one anvil in the ground, the bottom side uppermost and fill the little square hole with gunpowder, placing the other anvil on the top and then with a red hot iron about 12 feet in length set fire to the gunpowder and the explosion is just like a huge cannon going off, quite deafening to be anywhere near at the time.” They departed Los Angeles on July 5 on the Southern Pacific Railroad. “Left Los Angeles for Tucson at 2:30 p.m. having girded on our revolvers and belts. We arrived at the end of the railroad [Indio, California] at 11 p.m. At 10 p.m. we had to stop the train to clear the line as we were caught in a sandstorm which blocked the line like snow.”

The next leg of the journey continued via stagecoach, following the Bradshaw Trail through Riverside County, California. “Started in the stagecoach with 6 horses at 20 to 1 a.m., travelling all night. When daylight broke you never saw such pictures as we looked, what with the heat and dust. The man that was opposite me at night, when I saw him in the morning I could not believe it was the same man. He looked so strange with the dust all over his clothes and face to the thickness of a penny. Changed horses for the first time at 8:30 a.m., not getting breakfast till 12:30 p.m. Then changed again at Cañon Springs... where we had an accident which might have been very serious. We had 6 horses that were half broken and when the driver wanted them to start they began bucking... and bolted away, the reins breaking. I never heard any man swear like the driver did. I really thought he had gone mad as he kept it up so long.”

On July 7: “Arrived at Chuckawalla [Chuckawalla Springs] where we breakfasted off bacon and beans and had coffee. Here we saw lots of varieties of cactus and got some of the fruit which is just like a dried fig and very good. It seems to be the only thing growing on the Mohave Desert, some of them are as high as 40 feet and more. 8:10 a.m. again changed horses and passed some dead horses... The dust was very bad again, it being alkali dust parched one so. Reached the Colorado River [near Blythe, California] at 5 p.m. but had to wait a long time till they ferried us across, which they did after we had fired off revolvers and blown bugs. It took us over an hour to cross and the river is only about 50 yards wide, but the stream is so very swift that they have to be very careful and the little boat, only fit for 4 persons, had over 14 besides baggage.”

Next month’s episode covers the grueling trip from Ehrenberg to Tucson.
by Bob Brandt

Last month we paused the Anne Stradling saga as she and her new husband, Floyd, were settling into their ranch on Harshaw Road. With her daughter now grown and two marriages and trick riding days behind her, the time had finally arrived for Anne to transform her long-held dream of creating a Museum of the Horse into reality.

She seized the opportunity and set about searching for a suitable home for the enterprise. Not surprisingly, no such facility existed in Patagonia at the time, so she came up with an alternate plan—purchase prime property on the main commercial avenue and modify it to meet her ends. With plan and purpose firmly fixed, and ample access to the Schley family fortune, she acquired a row of buildings on McKeown Avenue and ingeniously unified them by erecting a large aircraft-type hangar overhead. After remodeling them for museum operations, she proudly opened her Museum of the Horse in 1960 in the space now occupied by Global Arts, Creative Spirits, Bowden’s Fitness, and Vivapura Superfoods. Some of the features of the original buildings Anne bought and remodeled can still be seen in the Vivapura headquarters.

As one would expect, the museum featured all manner of things equine—everything from full-scale horse models, to saddles, blankets, bridles, bits, and artworks including Frederick Remington sculptures. Artifacts of the horse world were augmented by displays of her extensive collection of high quality American Indian jewelry and pottery. The gift shop, billed as the Indian Pony Trading Post, was well stocked with fine merchandise (much of it Native American) as well as souvenirs appropriate to the museum. The centerpiece of the museum, however, was the wagon display—so numerous were they that she had special elevated platforms built to create a double decker viewing arrangement that both enhanced the viewing experience and made maximum use of floor space.

In 1964, the draw of the museum, or perhaps Anne’s persona alone, was sufficient to merit a visit from none other than Senator Barry Goldwater as he campaigned for the U.S. presidency. Unfortunately, the visit was marred (but also made more memorable) when the horse drawn surrey he and Anne were riding in through town overturned, ejecting its passengers. Neither Anne nor Goldwater was injured, but it did not portend a good year for the Arizona statesman.

After operating the museum for over a decade, Anne recruited Doug Thaemert from New Mexico to establish a blacksmith shop within the museum, primarily to restore the dozens of wagons she wished to display. This decision turned out to be a stroke of genius as Thaemert’s team of restoration craftsmen brought wider recognition and higher regard to the museum.

Given the size of the town and its somewhat remote location, the museum never attracted the numbers Anne had hoped for, but it was nonetheless an economic shot-in-the-arm for the region at a time when the local mining industry had already gone bust and the railroad was about to do its disappearing act. Business was brisk enough for Anne to be convinced that building an adjacent hotel would be worth the investment, so with the encouragement of John Wayne and other actors who filmed many movies nearby, she bought the mercantile building on the southwest corner of Third and McKeown, tore it down and built the 43-room Stage Stop Inn in the late sixties at a cost of some $700,000—the equivalent of about $5 million in 2017 dollars.

Anne Stradling and her museum are now gone but not forgotten by longtime residents of this community and next month I will share some of their remembrances of life in Patagonia as shaped by this extraordinary woman.
Public Objection to Adobe and Hog Canyon Road Closures

by Donna Reibslager

The US Forest Service (USFS) is facing opposition from local hunters and property owners over its decision to close off public access to Adobe Canyon and Hog Canyon Roads. A draft decision notice posted on their website Nov. 11 states that they will decommission a quarter mile of those two roads, which provide access to National Forest land from Highway 82. Heidi Schewel, spokeswoman for the Coronado National Forest, explains that those roads pass through private land and are not intended for public access. Because they are not meant to be public roads, the USFS feels that it should not be maintaining them.

Those roads have traditionally been used by many bird hunters who come here in the fall and winter, as well as by hikers, bikers and campers. Hunters Ron Walp and Greg Gunther say that such a closure would force them to go through Gardner Canyon to get to Forest Service land, adding hours to the trip, traveling on difficult terrain.

Kurt Bahti, who owns 12.5 acres in the Hog Canyon area, argues that both roads have always been left open to the public. He adds that closure would compromise the safety of homeowners on those roads, as it would limit access by fire and emergency personnel and Border Patrol. In response to Schewel’s remark about the cost of maintaining these roads, Bahti says that they are, in fact, maintained through property owner’s dues. He believes the Forest Service is trying to close the roads in an effort to gain legal right-of-way from property owners, which would take away their control over use of the road.

People who responded to the decision during the public comment period have 45 days from Nov. 18 to file an objection with the Forest Service. The Forest Service will then respond to each individual who objected, and decide whether to uphold their decision. Bahti and Munther are encouraging people to contact the Coronado Forest Supervisors Office in Tucson at 520-388-8300 to voice their concerns.

Arivaca EcoFest and Home Tour

The 2017 Arivaca Home Tour scheduled for Saturday, Jan. 28, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. is a bit of a departure from earlier years. Billed as an EcoFest, the event includes a self-guided tour of eco-friendly homesites as well as speakers, exhibits, demonstrations, and a host of local offerings from food and music to a seed swap, book sale, and swap meet.

Among the features at the tour sites are solar energy, water harvesting, earth restoration, raising alpacas, crop cultivation, fish-farming, and alternative building techniques from straw-bale to cob. There will be a total of 11 tour sites. New this year is a series of presentations by experts from several local organizations including Borderlands Restoration and Native Seeds/SEARCH. An array of exhibitors and vendors will share and demonstrate eco-friendly products, technologies and opportunities.

Tickets for EcoFest are $10 and can be purchased in advance online at: www.ArivacaEcoFest2017.wordpress.com. They can also be purchased the day of the event at the Arivaca Action Center.
Predicting Environmental Outcomes

by Lynn Davison

There was a full house at Cady Hall on Saturday, Dec. 17 to hear USGS scientist Laura Norman, PhD, talk about our water, the liquid gold of the Patagonia watershed. Her presentation was sponsored by the Friends of Sonoita Creek (FOS).

Dr. Norman has been working in the Patagonia area for over 20 years and knows a lot about our watershed. She uses models that rely on topography (the 3D surface of the land), soil characteristics (the proportions of rock, sand, clay), land cover and use (the presence of trees and other vegetation and built structures, roads, and parking lots), and meteorological information (temperature, precipitation, humidity, wind) to predict surface water flows and other characteristics.

The audience was treated to maps, graphs, charts, and pictures that are the result of many years of modeling work. Our watershed has been sliced and diced in numerous ways, each offering a piece of the overall picture of the water in our region. In the midst of her data-rich presentation, Norman paused to admit that scientists agree, “all models are wrong, but some are useful.”

So why should we be interested in all this data, especially since each individual model will likely be wrong? Here are some of the useful reasons. The modeling can assess the impacts of changes in the land cover on water infiltration, storage, and run off. Those changes in land cover could, for example, include large construction projects or significant losses of vegetation from wildfires. Models can also forecast the extent of flooding from different-sized rain events. More recently the modeling has helped guide the design and evaluate the results of riparian restoration projects, like building rock structures in stream beds to reduce flows, increase sedimentation, restore revegetation, and encourage standing pools of water.

David Seibert, Director of Borderlands Restoration, says “Norman’s work is particularly helpful in organizing multiple variables to determine specific locations where restoration activities might be the most beneficial for a variety of goals, like habitat improvement, groundwater recharge, flood control, holding native seeds and plants, mitigating the effects of surface disturbances, and others.”

Norman has done several recent studies of the impacts of riparian restoration methods at Deep Dirt Farm located in Stevens Canyon near Patagonia. She used modeling to help determine how effective the rock retention structures put in place on the farm are in slowing flow, increasing sedimentation, and promoting the regrowth of vegetation. The results are encouraging. Kate Tirion, owner of Deep Dirt Farm, said, “Understanding the effects of our work from a scientific perspective is very important and it echoes my observations on the ground: grasses & trees do better, soil remains in place and erosion heals. That is hard to beat!”

In closing, Norman suggested that volunteer citizen scientists are key to USGS’s work. There are opportunities to participate in weather monitoring, stream flow measurements, and well studies. FOS is currently sponsoring a volunteer project to conduct rapid stream riparian assessment measurements and observations on Sonoita Creek. FOS and the Borderlands Restoration Leadership Institute are also partnering on a study of private wells in the Patagonia watershed.

If you are on a well in the Patagonia watershed, contact Kathy Pasierb at kpasierb1@gmail.com to sign up. For more information on Norman’s work at USGS, contact her at lnorman@usgs.gov. For more information on FOS activities, contact Anne Townsend at townsendas@aol.com.
The New
Velvet Elvis

by Donna Reibslager

The Velvet Elvis is opening this month under the management of Alec Bezzina, as The Velvet Elvis Pizzeria and Bistro. Bezzina says his Italian heritage will be reflected in the restaurant, where he plans to serve gourmet pizza and pasta dishes with a Mediterranean influence. Cecilia San Miguel, the restaurant’s owner for the past 18 years, says that she believes Bezzina has the kind of energy and vision that is needed to carry her venture forward.

Bezzina notes that he first heard of the Velvet Elvis eight years ago, and was intrigued by it even then. Last April, he moved to Patagonia from Tucson, where he has been enjoying the special nature of this small town community.

Born in Italy, Alec grew up in a small Kansas farming town, and credits the town and the Hispanic workers there with instilling in him a strong work ethic. Although restaurant management is a new endeavor, he has owned and managed small businesses since he was 18. And, as an ardent “foodie”, he adds the experience of having enjoyed fine meals in thousands of dining establishments to his credentials.

The restaurant will be open seven days a week, and future plans include extending the patio seating area and offering some live music. Bezzina says he admires the way San Miguel created a successful business with “love and integrity,” and will continue operating the business under those principles.

And Cecilia? She says that she will not be taking her son up on his suggestion that she relax and take a long cruise. She is hoping to return to her birthplace, Ecuador, to explore the possibility of a new business venture centered around spiritual healing.

Revisiting Patagonia After 75 Years

by Linda Jade Fong

It’s 1941 in Patagonia and a young mining laborer, here for the summer from California, is hailed, “Hey, Saguaro! Are you going to the boise?” “Si, you’ll see me there!,” he answers as he heads into town for the Saturday night dance at the Patagonia Opera House.

Seventy-five years later, 95-year-old Bill Russell (called “Saguaro” by his fellow miners) looks over past the Gathering Grounds and beyond Red Mountain Foods. He asks, “Where’s the Opera House? It used to be right over there! There were six bars in town, a service station, and a little market. There was no one here except for miners and Circle Z ranch hands. A guy used to come by in a Chevy panel truck with a projector to show movies once a month in the Opera House.”

But, he says, the best thing about the Opera House was the dances with the local girls. He remembers one girl named Lupe Valenzuela. “Her aunt would sit outside with all the other mothers and aunts to watch that you didn’t sneak outside with any of the girls,” he smiles.

Bill has come on a nostalgic car trip to the village he knew as a twenty-year-old. He was a mining engineering student at the University of California, Berkeley, seeking hands-on experience in the mines. That’s how he landed in the Patagonia Mountains at a copper/lead/zinc mine belonging to American Smelting and Refinery Company (ASARCO). At the time, it was one of the richest strikes ever, surpassing those in California.

“I was a mucker,” he explains. “I wanted to find out what it was like from the ground up, and boy did I find out! Being a mucker underground is not a great job. After a blast, I’d have to clear out the dirt and rock to where the miners could get in and drill holes for the next blast. I had to keep shoveling ore onto the underground ore cars which we would push to the mine shaft. From there the ore would be dumped into a big bucket to be hoisted up to the surface.” There were two drifts, or tunnels, parallel to each other. At the end of each shift, they would be blasted at the same time to get ready for the next shift to come underground to muck them out.

The miners worked around the clock in three shifts. They slept in sheet metal bunkhouses with no circulation or insulation. If you worked night shift you tried to get in as early as possible because it quickly became too hot during the day. Bill remembers, “I sometimes took my sleeping bag outside to sleep in the shade of a cactus, and a cactus doesn’t give much shade!”

At the end of that summer of 1941, Bill returned to college. He recalls that tuition was $26.50 a semester. After graduating, he was sent to Peru to work on a mining project, but the war started. He joined the Navy, and ended up becoming both a World War II and Korean War veteran, reaching the rank of Lieutenant Commander.

Russell keeps scanning McKeown Street, from the Patagonia Community Church, down to the block of retail shops where his companion bought him a Patagonia baseball cap. “The town doesn’t look much different than 75 years ago. I thought there’d be a Walmart or Costco by now,” he laughs. I pointed out the new opera house opening soon, across the street. Maybe he can come back to dance in it.
After more than a decade of bringing world-class music into private homes in Santa Cruz County, the Santa Cruz Foundation for the Performing Arts (SCFPA) announces the Grand Opening of its permanent performance venue, the Benderly – Kendall Opera House. The public is invited to the Inaugural Dedication and Ribbon Cutting Ceremony at 2 p.m. on Saturday, Jan. 28, 2017. The event will take place at 344 Naugle Ave. in Patagonia.

According to SCFPA founder and executive director Christina Wilhelm, “The Opera House will become the epicenter for the performing arts in Santa Cruz County. Programs of the highest caliber are already in the works, featuring talented local musicians as well as internationally acclaimed performers.”

The 2017 Concert series includes ten performances at the Benderly – Kendall Opera House through May 14, 2017 with more concerts to be announced. The first season begins with “Beethoven’s Wig” on Thursday, Feb. 9 at 7 p.m. Created and performed by Richard Perlmutter, his is an imaginative interactive multimedia concert for children and adults.

In addition to providing a permanent home in the Santa Cruz River Valley for quality performing arts, the Benderly – Kendall Opera House will also serve many other purposes: rehearsal hall, retreat for musicians, center for artists-in-residence programs, children’s and adults’ music camps, and master classes.

The name, The Benderly – Kendall Opera House, recognizes two principal benefactors, Virginia Benderly and John Henry Kendall. The name also aligns the structure with the best traditions of the early West, when small town opera houses provided a much-needed and immensely popular form of entertainment. The new Benderly – Kendall Opera House in Patagonia will not only preserve this tradition but also extend to the entire Santa Cruz River Valley the “small town opera house culture,” the fulfillment of a promise and a commitment to the entire region.

For more information about the Inaugural Dedication and Ribbon Cutting on Saturday, Jan. 28 and the 2017 season, visit scfpapresents.org or call: 888-202-1942 or 520-394-0129.

The interior of the beautifully appointed new Benderly - Kendall Opera House

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provides wheelchairs, walkers, hospital beds, crutches, shower benches, toilet lifts, mobile commodes, incontinence supplies and much more
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ABOVE: The cast of Patagonia Union High School theater group presented two plays at the Tin Shed Theater on Friday, Dec. 16. Augusta Lucas directed “Something Funny Happened on the Way to Fifth Period,” and “He Done Her Wrong.”

Photo by Cassina Farley
Every fall in the weeks leading up to Christmas, birders across the United States spend a day counting birds in their geographic area. Organizers send the results of these counts to the National Audubon Society and data collected in this long-running wildlife census help to assess the health of birds populations and guide conservation action.

Abbie Zeltzer organizes the Patagonia bird count. This year the count took place on a warm and sunny Thursday, Dec. 15, with 40 birders assigned to 17 sectors. Zeltzer reports, “approximately 6,500 individual birds of 132 species were seen. An elegant trogon, yellow-bellied sapsucker, nine black-capped gnatchatchers, two magnificent hummingbirds (at the Paton Center), a golden-crowned sparrow, a five-striped sparrow (on private property), and a wintering Scott’s oriole were among the highlights.”
by Bob Brandt

How time flies! It’s already been nearly a year since the Patagonia Museum opened a new chapter in its still young life by having a grand opening of its new venue in the Old Main School building overlooking the town from its prominent School Lane position.

Looking back over the past year, museum president German Quiroga notes that the cadre of volunteer docents has welcomed well over 300 visitors in 2016 despite the very limited hours of operation—2-4 p.m. Thursday through Saturday (October through May), Friday and Saturday, 10:30 p.m. to 12:30 p.m. (June through September).

Some noteworthy changes have taken place since the museum made the move to Old Main. The main exhibits in the Centennial Room and the Journey Stories Exhibit Room have been joined by a new exhibit of ranching history created by the Santa Cruz County Cowbelles. An entire room is devoted to this exhibit which features a wide range of artifacts, photos, books, videos and other items that give the viewer a glimpse into the lives of Southern Arizona ranchers, past and present, as seen through the eyes of the fairer sex. The exhibit is on loan from the 1904-built Santa Cruz County Courthouse in Nogales and may turn out to be a permanent feature here. The loan was arranged and carried out with the help of Santa Cruz County Cowbelles Posy Piper, Linda Vensel, and Emily Wilson.

Another addition to the historical displays is a five-panel exhibit on the life of Anne Stradling, noted Patagonian who founded the Museum of the Horse here (see related story, page ??). The exhibit, which is on a two-year loan from the Bowman-Stradling History Center, is mounted on the west wall of the Centennial Room and focuses on Stradling’s early life. It is supplemented by a three-ring binder on a nearby table containing related material on Stradling’s family history and her museum.

Quiroga invites long-time residents of the area to come by the museum and see some of their fellow citizens pictured, and in some cases, quoted in the exhibits and newer residents to come and get better acquainted with the history of their adopted home.

The museum is a tax-exempt 501(c)3 organization operated entirely by volunteers. Quiroga reports that the organization is seeking grant funds to support the construction of a ramp to provide access for handicapped visitors and to repair a leaking roof that has proven difficult to fix. The organization also is restoring and improving the Lochiel School, sponsors programs open to the public on topics of historical interest, and does a Highway 82 cleanup project quarterly at the west end of town. Contributions of time and money are always needed and gratefully accepted. For more information call Quiroga at 520-343-5641.

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**John Kendall Sponsors a Ben Carson Reading Room**

by Jessi Beebe

Through the generosity of John Henry Kendall, the Carson Scholars Fund is pleased to announce the opening of Arizona’s first Ben Carson Reading Room at Patagonia Montessori Elementary School. The grand opening ceremony and ribbon cutting took place on Thursday, Dec. 8, at 10 a.m. Kendall is the grandson of John Henry Cady, an early Arizona pioneer, soldier, and builder of the Patagonia Hotel (that now houses the Patagonia Public Library).

Kendall, who has helped support other Patagonia institutions, traveled from his home in California to attend the opening day ceremony. There were presentations by all of the Montessori students as well as motivational speeches from Kendall and Santa Cruz County Superintendent Alfredo Velásquez. After the ribbon cutting, guests enjoyed tours of the room.

The Ben Carson Reading Project is an initiative of the Carson Scholars Fund that was founded by retired world-renowned pediatric neurosurgeon and best-selling author, Dr. Ben Carson, and his wife Candy. The reading project is dedicated to promoting reading as a key to unlocking a child’s full potential. “Reading is such a fundamental part of learning,” said Jessi Beebe, principal of Patagonia Montessori Elementary School. “We feel so very honored to be opening our own Ben Carson Reading Room. The Montessori philosophy of providing a prepared environment and instilling a joy of learning in every student lines up nicely with the reading room project and the vision of Dr. Ben Carson. Our students are excited to have a beautiful, comfortable place to open a book and explore.”

There are over 160 Ben Carson Reading Rooms across the country and this is the second to be sponsored by Kendall. “Reading was a poor boy’s access to knowledge and understanding. It seemed to prepare me for taking advantage of the opportunities that would come into my life. I’m delighted to make this resource available to the Patagonia Montessori Elementary School students,” said Kendall in his dedication speech.

To learn more about the Carson Scholars Fund visit www.carsonscholars.org.
JANUARY CALENDAR

MEETINGS

AA - Patagonia Comm. Ctr., Sun. at 8 a.m.; Sonoita Bible Church, Tues., 7:30 p.m.; Pat. Methodist Church, Fri., 7:30 p.m.
Al-Anon - Wed. at 6 p.m., Sonoita Hills Comm. Church, 52 Elgin Rd., Info: 520-237-8091

CHOP (Community Homes of Patagonia, Inc.) - Board Meeting 3rd Monday 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 Patagonia High School; All others at Kief Joshua Winery, 6 p.m. Call 520-907-5829 for more info.

San Rafael Community C-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. Call 394-2494

Patagonia Food Bank, Community Center; 2nd Wed. of the month, 9-11 a.m.

Patagonia Methodist Church Thrift Shop, Fri. 10 a.m.—2 p.m., Sat. 10 a.m. - 12 noon.

Angel Wings Thrift & Gift Shop, Our Lady of the Angels Catholic Church, 12 Los Encinos Rd., Sonoita. Thurs—Sat. 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

EVENTS

Jan. 4 - Exhibit by Julius Badoni, Native American artist; paintings and prints. Reception 5 - 7 p.m. at Gathering Grounds
Jan. 6 - 12th Night Concert of the Santa Cruz Singers, 5 p.m. at St. Theresa Catholic Church, 222 N. Third Ave., Patagonia, Free.

Jan. 7 - Gail Corkill, author of "Images of America: Circle Z Guest Ranch," will speak at 10:30 a.m. in the Patagonia Library, 342 Duquesne Ave.


The Woman’s Club - Jan. 14 at 1 p.m. Talk by German Quiroga at 2 p.m. Cady Hall, Patagonia Library, 342 Duquesne Ave.

Jan. 14 - Appleton-Whittell Research Ranch Living Gently on the Land potluck. Begin at 5 p.m., potluck at 5:30 p.m. followed by presentation on Black-Footed Ferrets by Holly Hicks, AZ Game & Fish. 366 Research Ranch Rd., Elgin. RSVP to Suzanne Wilcox, swilcox@audubon.org or call 520-455-5522.

Jan. 21 - Historian Doug Kupel will speak at Patagonia Museum’s Annual Meeting, 10:30 a.m. in the Patagonia Library, 342 Duquesne Ave.


Feb. 1 - Rex Allen Jr. at the Elgin Community Club, 475 Elgin Rd., Elgin, 7—9 p.m.


Feb. 8 - FRANK talk on War, Liberty & Law: The U.S. Constitution and Crisis, 6:30 p.m. at the Patagonia Library, 342 Duquesne Ave.

Feb. 9 & 23 - Short Attention Span, 2 p.m. at the Patagonia Library, 342 Duquesne Ave.

Feb. 25 - Dave Stamey at Santa Cruz County Fairgrounds, Sonoita, 7—9 p.m.

SPECIAL INTERESTS

Medicaid help with Amaury Gama, Jan. 12 & 26, 3—5 p.m. at Patagonia Library, 342 Duquesne Ave.

Stretch and Strengthen Class, Weds., 9:15—10:15 a.m. at Sonoita Bible Church. $7.

Drum Circle, Mons., 4—6 p.m. at Sonoita Crossroads building courtyard by Chuckwagon Grill, Free. No exp. Req’d. 520-490-4991.

Santa Cruz Singers rehearsals for January concert, Thursdays at 5 p.m., SCFPA office, 348 Naugle, Patagonia. New members welcome!

Adult hand-building ceramics classes Wednesdays, 4—6 p.m. $65 Call 520-604-0300

Bingo - St. Theresa Parish Hall, Patagonia, 1st & 3rd Mondays at 6 p.m. 455-5681

Crossroads Quilters - Sonoita Fire Dept., 2nd & 4th Mon. at 9 a.m.; 520-732-0453.

Open Tennis - PUHS, Sat. at 9 a.m., Call 394-2973 for info.


Patagonia Youth Group meets at Patagonia Community Church, 387 McKeown, every Sunday, 5:30—7:30 p.m.. Please call Pastor Tom Jelinek at 394-2274 for more information.
AVAILABLE FOR ADOPTION

Leo is a very vocal kitty who’s 3 1/2 months old, loves people and attention, enjoys toys and playing with his kitty friends!

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Santa Cruz Humane Society
232 East Patagonia Highway (Rt. 82) Nogales, AZ 85621 (520) 287-5654 Mon. - Sat. 8 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.
Community Development Committee Formed for Sonoita Commercial Zoning

by Robert Dorney

Opponents to construction of a Dollar General store in Sonoita have formed an ad hoc committee to present a major amendment to the county comprehensive plan. “We want buildings to fit in with the character we have now,” said Susan Scott, who also chaired the three meetings in November to protest planned development of the site on the northeast corner of the intersection of State Routes 83 and 82.

“Most of the buildings there now are either western or southwestern style. We want to continue identifying the area as rural ranching and tourism,” she said. Working in conjunction with Jesse Drake, Santa Cruz County Director of Community Development, the committee will address guidelines for future development of property that is currently zoned as commercial or manufacturing. Scott explained that the committee is a bit under the gun because county supervisors will only accept an amendment in the first three months of the year, so March 31 is the deadline.

The amendment will require input from all the property owners impacted by changes in the plan. Members of the committee who joined through social media include Jim Johnson, John Kugler, Laura Ridner, and Kat Crockett. Scott said Kugler was involved in development of the current comprehensive plan and Crockett was involved in a community plan for Whetstone, when she resided there. “Yeah, I guess I’m the instigator,” said Scott, a past president of the Rotary Club. “I couldn’t stand by and do nothing. It just irritated me no end.”

Darcy Mentone, one of the most vocal critics of Dollar General at the November meetings, said she had called DCM and tried to speak to the Lechner brothers about a dozen times. There were no callbacks. “I haven’t heard a peep,” she said. Mentone said she also drove up to Tucson and visited the office in person because she was so irritated. No one came out to meet her.

A woman answering the telephone at the Tucson office of the developers said neither Chris Lechner or David Lechner were available for comment and there would be “no comment” prior to publication of this issue of Patagonia Regional Times. Dollar General emailed PRT that “Dollar General has been well-received by many communities in the states where it has opened new stores. Both in Arizona and across the 43 states that Dollar General operates in, we are respectful of community concerns and thoughtful in store design in order to be consistent with the charm and character of the towns we serve.”

Copper Hop Brewery: The First of Several Microbreweries to Bubble up in Sonoita-Elgin

by Robert Dorney

When TV host Dan Davis stayed at Xanadu Ranch Getaway last August, he and his crew were planning to do a show on the Sonoita-Elgin Wine Trail. To expand his view of the area, Xanadu owner, Karen Kauk, personally took Davis to see Copper Hop Ranch Farm Brewery. “He thought it was the best place around here,” Kauk reports. “Some visitors just don’t get excited about wine but they get excited about beer. Everybody I send there just loves it,” Kauk said of her guests. “It’s a great addition to the area. It’s all organic. They grow their own hops. They brew it themselves,” she said. At the conclusion of the televised episode, “AAA Presents Highroads with Dan Davis,” which aired Oct. 8, 2016, Davis enthused, “Of all the things we have seen around the vineyards — our favorite, a craft brewery right here, down on the farm” as he led into the segment on Copper Hop. The episode on Sonoita can be seen online at highroads.az.aaa.com. Davis also paid a visit to Elgin Distillery and Flying Leap Spirits, which is scheduled to open in February.

Tom Pyle and his wife Melanie, who own the brewery, first planted hops in March 2015. They added a barn-like tasting room and then a patio with umbrellas adjacent to the hops field. Their Arizona license to sell beer and hard cider was issued on Feb. 12, 2016, making them the first craft beer brewery in northeast Santa Cruz County. In addition to bottled beer, they plan to start selling growlers (64-ounce containers) this month.

Pyle said he appreciated the referrals from Xanadu since the location (2330 State Route 83) is a little off the beaten path except for travelers to Parker Canyon Lake. However, its reputation has grown. Pyle says he recently had a visit from a Tucson resident who loaded up his RV with friends and neighbors just for a beer run to Copper Hop. Pyle favors brewing spicy beers and cider and his best-selling beer is flavored with hatch chili peppers and named Hatch ‘em High.

A second brewery is in the works. Copper Brothel Brewery (3112 State Route 83) in Sonoita, had a microbrewery license issued on (continued on next page)


**Striving to Become King of the Mountain (KoM)**

by Robert Dorney

Strava is the Swedish word for “strive,” and what better way to fulfill a New Year’s resolution to lose weight and become more active than joining, right on your wireless phone, the popular social network for athletes and fitness enthusiasts? Running and cycling are at Strava’s core but others join the global community of millions for many reasons.

When Karyl L. Wilhelm starts a morning walk with her two winery dogs, the owner of Wilhelm Family Vineyards turns on her Strava walking app. Although she was unaware of it, the intersection of Lower Elgin Road with the winery’s Mountain Ranch Drive location is also the start of a one-mile time trial segment created by a Strava member. Those with more serious intent look to compare their times with other members or become King of the Mountain (KoM) with the best record for a particular segment.

The segment by Wilhelm Vineyards is called “Lower Elgin Road Rolling Hill Climb.” It is one of the newest segments in the area and less than a dozen bicyclists are on the app’s cycling leaderboard. The best time of 3:59 for the one-mile distance was recorded on Oct. 26, 2016.

There are other Strava segments that run between vineyards. Dos Cabezas Wine Works is located near the Sonoita Crossroads where several popular segments terminate. One is naturally called “Patagonia Up TT Course to Sonoita.” It’s 11.7 miles and, at last count, nearly a hundred cyclists had ridden the route in 2016. “Four Uphill Miles to Sonoita” is a segment within a segment and begins at mile-post marker 28 where the State Route 82 shoulder transitions to smoother pavement as it heads toward Sonoita.

“Elgin to Sonoita Winery” is a 4.7-mile segment that connects the Village of Elgin/Four Monkey Winery with Sonoita Vineyards on Canelo Road. There are other segments to explore. Just check out the Strava Global Heatmap online.

If you get an early start to the New Year you may find yourself wearing the KoM crown for the best time year-to-date but don’t be surprised if you are dethroned by the end of the day or week. And don’t forget to treat yourself to a “trophy” bottle of wine. You did your personal best, right?

**Crafts Galore at “Christmas in Elgin”**

On Dec. 3, over two dozen vendors gathered in the clubhouse of the Elgin Community Club, offering their handmade wares to holiday shoppers for “Christmas in Elgin.” Colorful quilts, toys, ornaments, kitchen items, knit scarves, tasty food products, and many more items were available for purchase, while holiday tunes brought good cheer to vendors and shoppers alike.

The event raises money for college scholarships awarded to local high school students and also helps offset maintenance costs of the clubhouse.

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**Copper Hop Brewery, cont.**

Sept. 22, but the location remains undeveloped except for a well.

Route 82 Brew Pub, located adjacent to the State Route Market (3270 State Route 82) had its first license issued on Oct. 19. Owner Laura Ann Bryant said she hopes to have a grand opening on or before the Super Bowl in February. She said the home-brewed beers will have local names: Patagonia Pale Ale, Sonoita Gold, Elgin Belgium, Mellow Canelo, Lochiel Lager, and Crittenden Champagne Beer.

Despite its name, Arizona Hops and Vines (3450 State Route 82) has yet to receive a license for crafting beer.
A crowd of about 110 enjoyed the Elgin Community Club’s annual Christmas Dinner/Dance that took place Saturday night, Dec. 10. Highlighting the evening was our local Hog Canyon Band. Social hour began at 5 p.m., offering a dazzling array of tasty appetizers. Dinner followed at 6 p.m. and guests enjoyed sumptuous baked ham, potato casserole, green beans, mixed green salad, and heated rolls. A variety of sinfully delicious desserts were offered at 7 p.m. while the band coaxed dancers onto the floor. Kudos to Ginny Cosbey for organizing her hardworking team of volunteer cooks, servers, decorators, and dishwashers so the event was a resounding success.
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Patagonia: 325 McKeown Ave, next to the Gathering Grounds  520 394-2120
Sonoita: Corner of Highway 82 & 83 Next to the Post Office  520 455-5235

Jean Miller, Co-Owner, General Manager
Direct 520 508-3335 jeanmiller@longrealty.com

Carol Ford, Co-Owner, Designated Broker
Direct 520 604-0162 cford@longrealty.com
January in the Sky Islands tends to be our coldest month on average. Regularly the temperature plummets to below freezing overnight, forcing many ectotherms to mostly or entirely abandon activity. These are species of animals whose bodily temperatures are determined by the ambient air temperature. They cannot generate their own internal heat and thus are at the mercurial whims of the weather. Species in this category include invertebrates, reptiles, and amphibians. Despite the relative dearth of ectotherms in January, southeast Arizona nevertheless harbors a number of occasionally active "cold-blooded" species that are well worth getting to know.

Among our local winter-active insects, bird grasshoppers stand out in both stature and behavior. They belong to the Acrididae family or short-horned grasshoppers. The genus Schistocerca describes about 50 species of bird grasshoppers distributed exclusively in the New World, save for one "locust" in the Old World that historically has swarmed with predictably disastrous results for humans. In the U.S. and Canada, 12 species are extant, at least seven of which occur in Arizona. Identifying the various species is no easy task, as many confusingly resemble each other and require close examination.

What makes these grasshoppers stand out from the incredibly diverse Orthopteran crowd in the Sky Islands is the combination of their size and sleekness. A large specimen of, say, gray bird grasshopper, can be about three inches long, which might not sound like much, but in - deed is, in this Lilliputian world. Their jaws are fittingly large as well and seem capable of drawing blood. Handle one and you'll soon see what I mean!

While they can jump in the conventional manner, more often, bird grasshoppers fly longer distances, often startling human observers. Their careening, hard-to-follow, and seemingly random flight is likely how bird grasshoppers earned their name. Fittingly, such predator deterrence behavior has evolved mostly to avoid real birds. Avian species that surely dine upon bird grasshoppers include loggerhead shrike and American kestrel. Having consumed other grasshoppers as spartan fare on my wilderness survival courses, I can attest to the fact that the quick, camouflage species—like bird grasshoppers—are generally the most palatable. Hence the need for a combination of cryptic coloration along with a quick and prolonged exit to avoid becoming food.

Being able to fly has other adaptive advantages, as some species of bird grasshoppers can travel away from areas depleted of food to those relatively rich in resources. It also allows some to colonize new areas. One species recently made its first appearance on Long Island, New York. The grey bird grasshopper was accidentally introduced into the Hawaiian Islands decades ago where it has wreaked havoc, consuming about 90% of the vegetation on the isle of Nihoa! This species has spread to a number of other islands in the chain as well. Oops!

Fortunately for us, our species of bird grasshoppers are native, beautiful, and not destructive on any meaningful scale. If you see something darting away unexpectedly as you traverse our mesquite woodlands, then you may have just missed one!

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

Lisa Krueger at Gathering Grounds

Paintings by Gisa Krueger were on exhibit at Gathering Grounds through December. Most were watercolors, but Krueger’s mediums include oil and pastels. She showed outdoor scenes, plants and flowers, and some portraits which were notable for their character and expression.

Krueger is a resident of Patagonia. She moved here from Bisbee a year and a half ago and her work can be seen at Belleza Gallery in Bisbee, as well as at Creative Spirit Artists in Patagonia.

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When preparing a first aid kit for your pet, the list of items can seem overwhelming, but if anything untoward does occur, you will be very glad to have everything you need at hand, organized while you were in a calm frame of mind. You might not know what some of these things are, let alone how to use them, but in the event that time is of the essence, a professional can talk you through the necessary and possibly life-saving steps over the phone.

It is important to note that first aid kits for various pets differ; something you might be able to use for your dog could be lethal to your cat.

**First aid kit for dogs:**
- **Important phone numbers:** vet clinic information, including phone number and directions to the clinic.
- **Equipment and Supplies:** muzzle (or roll of gauze for making one); magnifying glass; scissors; tweezers; nail clippers and metal nail file; styptic powder or sticks (Kwik Stop or corn starch); penlight; nylon slip leash; eye dropper or oral syringe; cotton swabs and balls; clean towels (cloth and paper); rectal thermometer; lubricant such as mineral oil or KY jelly (without spermicide); disposable gloves; syringes of various sizes; needle-nose pliers or hemostat; grease-cutting dish soap; Bitter Apple or other product to discourage licking; pet carrier; towel or blanket to use as a stretcher plus another to keep your dog warm during transport (some pharmacies and camping outlets carry thermal blankets); cold packs and heat packs (wrap in a towel before using); and a stethoscope.
- **Bandaging Materials:** square gauze of various sizes (sterile, nonstick pads); first aid tape (both paper that easily comes off the skin and adhesive type); bandage rolls (gauze and vet wrap); and band-aids (for humans).
- **Nutritional support:** rehydrating solution such as Gatorade, Pedialyte, or a K9 brand; nutritional supplements such as Nutrical, Vitacal or Nutristat, high sugar source such as Karo Syrup.
- **Medicines:** wound disinfectant such as Betadine or Novalson; triple antibiotic ointment for skin; antibiotic ophthalmic ointment for eyes (e.g. Terramycin); eye wash solution; sterile saline solution; anti-diarrheal medicine such as Pet Pectate; Benadryl for allergic reactions (obtain dose from your veterinarian—a key item for us in this area for snake bites, bee stings and insect/spider bites); cortisone spray or cream such as Itch Stop; ear cleaning solution; hydrogen peroxide (can be used to induce vomiting—only use as directed by your veterinarian before using); and activated charcoal to absorb digested poisons (consult your veterinarian before using). Watch the expiration dates on any medications and replace as needed.

Some of the items listed above may be replaceable with a natural alternative, should you prefer. For instance, items I have added to my kit include a variety of Bach Flower Remedies and human grade bentonite clay. Please consult an alternative animal health professional to discuss possibilities.

I will feature a first aid kit specifically for cats in a future column.

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