An Eventful Month

LOCAL MUSIC
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VAUDEVILLE 3/25
Reflecting On What Has Been Achieved
The 3 Canyons Wildlife Corridor

David Seibert, Executive Director, Borderlands Restoration

It’s true—the property formerly known as 3 Canyons, with 200 houses and thin strips of land loosely defined as a ‘conservation easement,’ will not be developing as planned. It will, in fact, be protected as a wildlife corridor, with human and other animal activities negotiated through close collaboration with local communities. Up to 20 existing lots in the south end of the property may have to be sold over time in order to pay the enormous mortgage and insurance costs incurred by scores of family and friends, but these will not be exclusive or high-end sales. In fact, many who contributed to the effort emptied retirement or savings accounts to make this happen, and they continue to volunteer tirelessly. It’s imperative that we all understand these facts. And it is for those who have given, and for many others who continue to give and always will, that we at Borderlands Restoration will work harder than ever to make this effort work in every way possible, including opportunities to work on the land.

We continue to conduct interviews, surveys, erosion control recon, trail planning, fence repair, and public outreach to neighbors. There is much to do yet and much to talk about, but thanks to PRT, Patagonia Area Business Association, Patagonia Regional Business Coalition, the library, Gathering Grounds, the Town, and many others, we’ll have time and space for this. Join us, learn, and contribute.

Respectfully shared below is a letter Ron Pulliam wrote to some of us who have nearly laughed and cried ourselves crazy over the challenges we faced on the journey to secure the corridor. In spite of his humble reluctance to publish it, I think it’s beautiful and important to shine a little light on him, just this once. As Director, I’m going to go ahead and make sure it’s in the local cultural archive in this way. Thank you, Ron. He wrote it right after closing on the land, and there are many more hard workers than are mentioned here to thank for their efforts.

December 2014:
Dear Friends,

Although there is still plenty to worry about, cash flow for example, I am happy to report that I am enjoying 3 Canyons more each day. I visit the land almost every day and almost always see a new vista or encounter a new animal or plant that I have not seen there before. Even though the perimeter is over 8 miles, a 1250-acre ranch isn’t that big by Arizona standards. And even though there are at least four federally-listed threatened or endangered species that live there, it is not so much the number of species or the number acres but rather the connectivity it provides that makes it so special. Three Canyons and the adjacent Sonoita Creek Ranch connect the species-rich Huachuca, Patagonia, and Santa Rita mountains and form a vital natural corridor for animal movement. Patagonia sunrises are often spectacular, but last Tuesday [closing date] was perhaps the most glorious daybreak I have ever seen. By the time we closed escrow that afternoon, the sky was gray and the sun was obscured, but we were happy. Some of us took a bottle of Cava and a few folding chairs out to the land and found a little knoll with a view. We called Jack May, toasted the wildlife, and celebrated. David Seibert and I talked about how many times we thought the deal was dead, only then told ourselves that we just had to find another way to make this work. Thank you Sy and Kate, for your optimism, and Jerry, for saying that gray sky was spectacular. Thank you, David and Jack for sharing so many ups and downs. And thank you Janice, for putting up with an obsessed husband. We have so much work ahead of us. We are planning rare plant surveys, cover hedgerows to conceal ocelot movement, a riparian restoration for Yellow-billed Cuckoos, and breeding ponds for endangered fish and frogs. We are engaging the community, creating new jobs, planning a restoration farm for growing rare plants, and looking for ways to accommodate birdwatchers, butterfly collectors, hikers, equestrians, dog walkers, and kite flyers, while keeping in mind that more than anything else, this land is for wildlife. I suspect there will still be days when it again seems like everything is falling apart, so David, don’t forget to tell me that we just have to find another way to make this work.

Forever grateful,
Ron Pulliam

The next public meeting and planning session on the corridor will take place on March 24 at 7 p.m. in Cady Hall. Check us out at borderlandsrestoration.org.
New Information and Resource Center to Open

By Donna Reibslager

When Patagonia Visitor Center lost its location at Mariposa Books & More last year, it also lost its visibility. Since then, it's been housed at Metamorphosis Gallery on Naugle, which is only open a few days a week.

In a new collaborative effort, Patagonia Regional Times (PRT) and the Patagonia Area Business Association (PABA), which is in charge of the Visitor’s Center, have rented the space on the corner of Third and McKeown, owned by Ted Piper. Borderlands Restoration also shares space in the building.

The new location is ideal for a Visitor’s Center, as it is visible to anyone who enters town. And for PRT, having an office provides a more public presence and makes the newspaper more readily accessible to readers and contributors. Although PRT staff will continue to work outside the office for the most part, there will often be a PRT staff member on site. It is anticipated that the space will not only offer information to visitors, but could become an informative source for the newspaper, a welcoming place to stop in and share some news.

The Visitor’s Center will expand its role, and plans to offer information on businesses from Elgin to Nogales, as well as community resources, activities and events. The many uses to which this space might contribute are still being explored.

The idea for this venture can be credited to Ann Katzenbach, PRT Co-Editor, who has also had a major role in cleaning, painting and furnishing the office. She saw the benefit of having a tangible space for the newspaper, and approached PABA in an effort to interest them in becoming a part of it. She and PABA President, Heather Dodge, have worked out a plan that seems to benefit all parties.

The Regional Visitor’s Center is an important asset for town businesses—informing tourists and promoting our area. It requires reliable volunteers who are familiar with Santa Cruz County. Already several people have signed up, but many more will be needed. Until May 31, the center will be open every day from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. and then until mid-September, it will just be open Friday, Saturday and Sunday. Heather Dodge, who volunteered to coordinate this effort, has not worked out a schedule of shifts, but would like to hear from anyone who can spare a few hours, a morning or afternoon, during the week or weekend. The space has WiFi and a front porch and will soon have greater curb appeal with bird feeders, hanging flower baskets and comfortable seating.

So if you’ve been looking for something to do to support the community, volunteering at the new Regional Visitor’s Center might be just right for you.

There's also a wish list of furniture and equipment. It’s not a big space, but we will need a locking file cabinet, a few office chairs with casters, a 9” x 12” area rug, a love seat or arm chair, some desks or work tables, a bulletin board, a dry erase white board, and a desk top computer to display slide shows.

PRT plans to open the new office and Regional Visitor's Center on March 13, with a reception that evening. If you are a member of PABA, please come and see how your membership dues are being put to work.

If you want to volunteer or donate, please get in touch with Heather Dodge at 520-732-0598 (hsdodge712@gmail.com) or Ann Katzenbach at 360-385-9771 (annmkat@gmail.com).

Junior P & Z Committee Appointed

By Mary Munroe

At the Town Council meeting of February 4, the Mayor and Council welcomed in seven young students as the first members of the newly formed Junior Planning and Zoning committee. They will join the regular adult members of the Planning & Zoning Committee at their meetings and contribute their thoughts to the deliberations.

The students will provide their input on P & Z issues, helping to educate them, as they represent the generation who will be the next to govern. The new members are Guadalupe Bueras, Elizabeth Leon, Elizamar Leon, Annika Coleman, Danny Miranda, Alexis Montanez, and Ralphie Padilla.
Armida De La Ossa Celebrates Her 100th Birthday

By Ann Katzenbach

Armida De La Ossa was born in Santa Cruz, Sonora on January 26, 1915. Today she lives in Patagonia, and according to her children, she doesn’t think that being 100 years old is anything to get excited about. She still does her own cooking and washing and hangs her laundry on the line. When one of her many family members gave her a cane, Armida put it in the garage. “Those are for old people,” she said.

She had eight children. All but the youngest were born with a midwife at home. Those children have now given her 20 grandchildren, 38 great grandchildren, and 3 great-great-grandchildren. Her eldest child, Adalina Beyerle, counts 73 family members, many of whom came to Armida’s 100th birthday party in January, filling her yard and her house with celebration.

This amazing centenarian lived most of her life in and around Lochiel, as her husband, Abel, worked as both a ranch hand and a miner. She cooked on a wood stove, did laundry by hand, drew water from a well, and made bread and tortillas every day. She raised animals for meat, milk, cheese and eggs, and in summer she would go to Santa Cruz, stock up on fruits and vegetables, bring them home and can them. Once a month the family would go to Nogales with a list of supplies that included large quantities of flour, sugar and lard. There would be a visit to J.C. Penney’s for clothing for the family.

Every spring Armida would order 200 baby chicks from Sears. She did a thriving business selling eggs and cheese to the miners and their families. The children were her delivery service. “We walked a lot,” remembers daughter Ophalia Spence.

In 1966, Abel De La Ossa went into the cattle business, which meant he would be traveling. He moved the family to Patagonia so they would be near school and medical help. Arnulfo, the oldest son, built the house where Armida still lives.

The De La Ossa children say that Armida does not want help with anything. A steadfast Catholic, she stopped walking to mass just a few years ago. She is independent and a little stubborn. Not long ago, she told her friends and family her recipe for good health and a long life. “Never go to the doctor, never take medication, and drink a glass of tequila before bed. It will help you sleep.”

Each year the Mountain Empire Rotary Club provides college scholarships to high school seniors residing in the following zip codes: 85624, 85637, 85621 or 85611. Rotary awards the scholarships to provide financial assistance to high school or home schooled seniors who have demonstrated leadership skills and the desire to be of service in their club or school. The scholarship of $1,000 can only be applied to an accredited college, trade school, or certification or licensure program. If the student maintains a good academic record (2.5 or better), the scholarship can be renewed for a second year. Applications can be obtained from Inge Meyer (ingemeyer@q.com) or Susan Archibald (eggsuetrev@aol.com) phone: 520-990-4648. The deadline for applications is Saturday, March 28, 2015.
Clean Up of Lead Queen Mine to Begin
By Ann Katzenbach

Last September when heavy rains flooded old mining tunnels and sent heavy metals into the local watershed, many government agencies assessed the damage, trying to determine how toxic the run off was, where it was coming from, and how to prevent it from happening again.

Test results showed high concentrations of lead and arsenic in water, soil and waste rack samples at the Lead Queen Mine which is on land owned by the US Forest Service (USFS). At the time, the Sierra Vista Ranger Station told the PRT that they had no funds for emergency clean up, but that they were going to assess the situation and request the funds.

Earlier this month the Forest Service issued a Time Critical Removal Action Approval Memorandum. This is a lengthy and detailed history of the mine, the September overflow, the heavy metals present in the area, the kind of harm those metals can do to humans and wildlife, and what needs to be done to correct the situation.

To strengthen its case in asking for these funds, the USFS stresses the biodiversity of the Patagonia Mountains and notes that it is popular with birders and home to a variety of endangered species.

The proposed action for the Lead Queen site “is to remove soil, ochre sediment, and waste rock containing excessive amounts of lead, zinc, arsenic, copper, cadmium, mercury, iron, and aluminum and other heavy metal and dispose onsite at a consolidation cell.” In addition, the proposed action includes closure of other mine features such as adits and shafts. It also proposes to reconstruct parts of the forest service road that accesses the site.

The work on this project will be done by an environmental firm and is estimated to cost $175,000. The document issued by Regional For ester, Calvin Joyner on February 10, states that work on the Lead Queen Mine is scheduled to begin in April. They plan to wind up before this year’s monsoon season.

For further information regarding the USFS Removal Action Memorandum, contact Eli Curiel, P.E., On Scene Coordinator, at 520-388-8413; or Maria McGaha, P.E., Regional Environmental Engineer, at 505-842-3827.

Student Host Families Needed

The Mountain Empire Rotary Club is looking for host families for the 2015/16 school year. We are excited that next year we will be hosting a youth from another country at the Patagonia Union High School.

The host family is a critical element in any cultural exchange program for youth, providing a first-hand opportunity to experience a new culture and to help others to better understand the culture that they represent. The Rotary program is distinct from other exchange programs because it is operated completely by volunteers around the world. Each student participant and each host family is carefully selected and actively supported by Rotary volunteers within their own community. Host families are in close contact with volunteers from a local Rotary club and Rotary district who will guide and assist them throughout their experience. Hosting a student can be an extremely rewarding experience for everyone in a family, but of course, there are responsibilities. Most are natural since they are what a family would expect to do for one of its own children. For details regarding the rewards and responsibilities of being a host family in this program, as well as general information about the program, please go to: www.rotary.org/Ridocuments/en/pdf/749en.pdf. If you are interested or want more information please contact Sue at eggsuetrev@aol.com or 520-990-4648.
Bluebird Project Is A Win-Win

By Keith Ashley, Tucson Audubon’s Paton Center Coordinator, and Jonathan Horst, Tucson Audubon Restoration Ecologist

When we hear about people transforming bird habitat, it’s often for the worse—but not in this case. In early February a troop of Tucson Audubon volunteers mounted nest boxes for Azure or Mexican Bluebirds on two of the Sonoita Wine Guild’s vineyards in an effort to strengthen this vulnerable population of the Eastern Bluebird subspecies, Sialia sialis fulva. At the same time, students from the University of Arizona, under the direction of bluebird researcher Dr. Renee Duckworth, mounted boxes at four more vineyards. In total about 50 new nesting cavities are now available to this tiny bluebird colony of southeast Arizona.

The collaborative project is dubbed “Win-Win for Arizona Bluebirds and Arizona Vineyards” to emphasize its reconciliation ecology dimension: a conservation project with potential economic benefits for wine growers and the region. A stronger population of bluebirds could serve the vineyards as free and natural pest control. They might also draw more nature enthusiasts to the region through positive publicity around using land wisely to support both human and avian interests.

And, with this project, the “Wins” just keep coming. Dr. Duckworth studies the dynamics of bluebird range expansion, inheritance of behavior, and a host of related ecological factors. Tucson Audubon is striving to ensure that our conservation efforts can augment her research, while her research strengthens our conservation efforts by informing us of the experimentally determined best practices for supporting the Azure Bluebird—the largest and palest subspecies of Eastern Bluebird, which happens to be a year-round resident in our region.

Yet another significant “Win” is the small band of dedicated volunteers moving this project forward. For several months now Joe DeRouen of Oro Valley has been the carpenter genius behind our experiments, providing several different box types: the Carl Little, the F-30, and the top-opening box Dr. Duckworth uses for her bluebird research in Montana. Many volunteers have helped to assemble the kits Joe cuts, though recently the lion’s share of assembly has fallen to Gary Prosch. Behind the scenes Rick Fletcher has taken on some administrative duties, helping Tucson Audubon’s Paton Center for Hummingbirds to become an official affiliate of the North American Bluebird Society. Lorry Wendland, Lois Manowitz, and Jim Dolph are generously contributing their prior knowledge of bluebird trails and boxes, dexterity with GPS, photography skills, availability to mount and monitor boxes, and citizen conservation ethics.

A final “Win” would be to have your help! Several of the folks on our monitoring crew are snowbirds and will be migrating to cooler climes in the late spring. The project could use a few more people to help with the weekly monitoring of boxes. If you would be interested please contact Keith Ashley: kashley@tucsonaudobon.org or Jonathan Horst at: jhorst@tucsonaudobon.org.

Make That A Library To Go

By Lou Schatz

Several local artists have been busy creating unique housing for the Little Free Libraries project. Since the call went out last year, at least 15 local crafts people have volunteered to make one or more. The finished products will go on display at the Patagonia Library, as well as at various area businesses, early this month, and they will be auctioned off on April 18. A Little Free Library may be purchased prior to the auction at its established price or at the auction itself by making the winning bid! Purchasers will then be able to set up the Little Libraries at their chosen spots.

The Friends of the Patagonia Library, sponsors of this project, hope that it will encourage informal book sharing by people who leave books that they love or take books of interest from the quirky little boxes. Visitors, walkers, and neighbors can all share in the treasures found in a Little Free Library and may find a new passion lurking in a book that they might never have read or simply some entertainment when they most need it.

Proceeds from the Little Free Library event will fund a major expansion of the book sale capability at the library. Plans are to remodel space for display of sale books so that many more options are available to showcase the huge variety of donated items for sale to the public.

Look for further information in fliers, local media, or the library website as we get closer to the auction date.
Asian students spend 3.5 more hours on average doing homework per week than students in the U.S. Oak Knoll Elementary School in Menlo Park, California, is considering eliminating homework altogether. Duke University reviewed numerous studies and found almost no correlation between homework and long-term achievement in elementary school and only a moderate correlation in middle school.

A study by MetLife found that 38% of high school students and 28% of elementary students reported being very stressed out by their homework. Is homework really necessary? Most teachers assign homework as a drill to improve memorization of material. But according to the U.S. Dept. of Education, most math teachers can tell after checking five algebraic equations whether a student understood the necessary concepts.

The National Education Association (NES) recommends that homework time increase by ten minutes per year in school. A third grader would have 30 minutes while a seventh grader would have 70 minutes. Patagonia Schools Superintendent Denise Blake supports this recommendation, but only as a guideline. Blake says that she first asks whether the teacher ensured that learning occurred at an independent level prior to assigning the homework, so that the student who is learning the new concept has achieved some basic control of it. And, she adds that homework should never be given if the student was not guided through the concepts in class prior to the assignment.

Superintendent Blake calls her model of instruction “Gradual Release.” Teachers introduce a lesson “Gradual Release.” Teachers introduce a lesson. Then, the teacher and the students work through the concept together. And finally, students demonstrate their learning of a concept within the classroom, with only minimal support from the teacher. Then and only then is homework assigned to strengthen what has been learned in school.

By using this model, Superintendent Blake believes that high school graduates should be well on their way to becoming independent learners and ready for large quantities of work at the university level. Blake feels that parent involvement should be kept to a minimum. Many studies show somewhat negative effects when parents are asked to help students with homework. The parent’s role is to facilitate—provide a quiet place in the home that can be observed by the parent.

Superintendent Christopher Bonn deals with the same dilemmas with elementary school students in the Elgin School District. He says “There is research that supports increasing homework time ten minutes a day per grade in school. But other research suggests homework isn’t beneficial and only causes frustration, anxiety and tension. Unfortunately parents in the U.S. rate the quality of a school by the amount of homework assigned.” Bonn feels that “Homework is only effective and necessary when it aligns to the curriculum being taught. It engages the students and allows them to practice concepts being learned in the classroom.”

Concerning parents, Bonn feels that “homework should never require parents to re-teach or explain the concepts sent home. Chances are parents won’t be able to assist the student with homework. If I send home questions about graphing linear equations or solving quadratic formulas, many parents wouldn’t be able to assist their children.”

In conclusion, Superintendent Bonn says that “homework needs to be effective and help the students master concepts. It should not be additional time to make up work not understood. Having these elementary school kids read, re-write a rough draft, study spelling words, practice tables or research information about a topic are all appropriate examples of homework. It isn’t the quantity of homework that is essential-- it is the quality.”
David Seibert, who is the director of Borderlands Restoration, rented a small house on the outskirts of Arivaca while doing restoration work and research for a doctorate in cultural anthropology. On February 19 he gave a talk about that research at the Patagonia Library; the mysterious and interesting title was “The Things They Leave Behind: Placed-and-Found Objects Along the US-Mexico Border.” Every seat in the room was taken.

While a series of images of the wilderness along the border were projected on a screen, Seibert talked about what it was like to live in a remote place near the border. He said that he never knew what might happen when it got dark—who would come to his door, what travelers or traffickers were nearby. He said it was dangerous, but he was more curious than fearful. He gave his audience a glimpse of what it means to move in darkness in strange territory without connections, language, food, or water, and with only the determination to find a safe harbor in a place where you are not wanted.

The overreaching sense of Seibert’s talk seemed to be that we have found no way to deal with this tragic situation in which men, women, and children must somehow prevail or die in the desert. He also mentioned that there are areas on the Tohono O’odham reservation where even the Border Patrol does not go—the violent business of drug smuggling is the other reality of life and death on the border.

Many people raised their hands when Carolyn Shafer asked how many in the audience had had personal encounters with border crossers. So, we are not unaware of the desperation and danger, but, as Seibert pointed out, there’s no apparent solution, and thus we don’t talk about it very much. In the hope that we can look more closely at this American conundrum, Seibert has said he will share some of his stories and ideas with our readers. Look for his writing in the April issue.
If you attended a performance of “The Vagina Monologues” on Valentine’s Day weekend, you probably experienced a few squirmy moments. There are words and descriptions in this play that uncover our emotional scars and ingrained taboos. Remarkably the audience also gets to laugh a lot.

Eve Ensler wrote the play in 1996, based on interviews she did with over 200 women, interviews that focused on sex, relationships, and violence against women.

The performances at The Tin Shed earned standing ovations both nights. As each woman took the stage to share stories of intimate sex, orgasm, gynecological exams, pubic hair, genital mutilation, rape, and the crude sexual slang that is used in reference to women, their commitment to the production was apparent. The monologues were emotional and intense, and most of the actors conveyed the ability to get deeply into their roles. There were rants, memories, and histories, some sad, some informative. And there was a lot of humor.

Laura Wenzel performed three of the monologues, each one with highly charged elements of anger, pathos and humor. To take the stage three times with the same intensity was a remarkable feat.

Francesca Claverie, who directed the play, also took the part of an elderly woman looking back at an early sexual trauma that plagued her entire life. Wearing a grey wig and speaking with an accent, the old woman's narrative showed how vulnerable women are and how awful sexual experiences can tarnish a life. The audience laughed as they also cringed at the account—an effect that many of the narratives produced.

When Francesca introduced the play, she said that she'd seen “The Vagina Monologues” in college and all the actresses had been college age. What she loved about this acting company was the variety in their ages, and although she played an old woman and Janice Pulliam took the part of a 6-year-old, the other characters acted their age. One notable performance was that of Sharon Calvert, who talked about a very ordinary man she had known who was in awe of vaginas. She did the part without a script and in the middle she forgot her lines. With great aplomb, she explained that she was getting a bit forgetful, pulled out a script, looked at it, and carried on with her amazing act.

All the women handled their parts with skill, but the standout performance was by Erin Blanding - combining a great script and an excellent actress. Erin took the part of an S&M sex worker who helped women find new ways to enjoy sex. It was a long monologue that included recreating a repertoire of women's moans during sex. The audience sat in amazement. It was a virtuoso performance.

An amazingly powerful monologue came at the end, with a detailed description of childbirth. Bethany Brandt hypnotized the audience with a nuanced and emotionally contained performance, a positive reminder of this most important and life-giving aspect of a woman's vagina.

Thanks to everyone who helped produce this remarkable play. Most of us need to be reminded of the many light and also dark associations we carry in our complicated brains when it comes to talking about "down there."
LIFE AMONG THE HUMANS

In His Image

By Martin Levowitz

Let's begin with the basics. To the extent that anything can be thought wrong, shooting other people is generally thought wrong. Circumstances vary, of course, but one of the less acceptable "reasons" for murdering others is that their culture differs from one's own.

Some religions use pictures and statues to inspire reverence. Others refuse to use pictures or statues. Why? Because, in their view, God is infinite and incomprehensible—beyond the ken of scrawny human minds—so any attempt to depict her will be misleading.

Judaism forbids all depictions of God. His name is even spelled Ghyphen D. Islam is especially rigorous in its rejection of imagery—not just of God and the prophets but of depictions in general. In Muslim tradition, art—blurring the line between reality and illusion—is sometimes called the devil's work. Islamic creativity has been diverted away from pictures and statues into architecture, calligraphy, and geometric design. Strange to say, the best of those designs are literally hypnotic. Meanwhile, ironically, in modern secular societies, where worship has withered away, it seems to be the job of artists, not priests, to conjure up infinity and show us the sublime.

In Europe, recently, as you well know, Mohammed was depicted in cartoons. Islamic reaction, worldwide, has been violent, ranging from riots to mass murder. If Muslims violate Muslim tradition, and are consequently punished by their own community, well, perhaps that's their business. (Perhaps?) But when any group presumes to punish outsiders—nonbelievers—for disobeying the laws of their sect, that's barbaric, and, sadly, not rare. In civilized society, we don't kill those with whom we disagree; we simply despise and heap scorn upon them.

Democracy postulates freedom of speech and thought. Should French and Danish journalists have lampooned Islam's prophet as they did? I, personally, empathize with anyone who pees on sacred cows. (Tough luck if those you tease can't take a joke! Though you might want to put on your flak jacket, first.) Those irritants who rock the status quo—the gadflies/satirists/provocateurs—can help us notice where our limits lie: the point where we no longer laugh.

Even a child knows it's both rude and risky to hurt someone else's feelings, especially after you've been warned. That goes double when those whom you laugh at are heavily armed. Perhaps we ought to keep in mind that words and even pictures are just scribbles on a page—until we invest them with meaning, that is. (And, of course, we reliably do.)

Religious laws, like any laws, are drawn in the sand. They can bring out our vehement side. Humans—mostly human males—are excited by conflict and destruction, especially where a chance to be constructive is denied. Men never embrace violence more enthusiastically than when it's "justified" by some high moral cause, be that the Bible, Koran, or Third Reich. Religious and patriotic "indignation" is often just an excuse for thugs to throw their weight around. Add to that our absurd reluctance to distinguish between symbols and what those symbols represent. When people burn a flag or bra, it's cathartic, of course, as if they had actually inflicted some small, real injury on whatever they resent. But, face it, Jack: a flag is just a piece of colored cloth. To me, it seems somehow bizarre that Islamists slaughter cartoonists while Islam downplays the importance of imagery. What could make pictures seem more important than flamboyantly murdering those who draw them?

In response to an immense, incomprehensible universe, awe and uncertainty seem more appropriate than dogma. Religion often takes itself rather seriously. Humor is perspective. Where humor ends, idolatry begins. When humans act as if they know what's true, as most fundamentalists do, they're only slightly less absurd than your grandmother's Shih Tzu would be, standing up on its little hind legs in a turban or tux and telling us, emphatically, what God requires of us. (Maybe that's why they call it dogma.) Theologian Paul Tillich once said, perceptively: "The opposite of faith is not doubt. It's certainty!"
Ground Up Rice And Houseplants?

By Ann Katzenbach

The concept of trust is getting a bad name of late. Will you ever look at a rerun of "The Bill Cosby Show" in the same way again? Will you ever look at all? Will Brian Williams ever have the same gravitas if he comes back to The Nightly News? Bernie Maddof, remember him? How about Lance Armstrong, Barry Bonds, Alex Rodriguez, Marion Jones? How many politicians do you believe will fulfill their promises?

There have always been psychopaths and sociopaths, people with little or no conscience: also a group who know right from wrong, but let greed or revenge get the upper hand. Statistics would say that as our population grows, the ratio of honest folk to these bad apples stays pretty much the same, but, really, doesn't it seem like there's been an uptick in bad behavior, especially since our economy imploded in 2007?

What got me thinking about this was the news that in a recent investigation by the state of New York, about 80% of the health supplements found on the shelves of big box stores, proved to be nothing more than ground up rice, houseplants, hydrated vegetables and/or wheat. If you're taking Ginko biloba to keep your memory sharp, ginseng to boost your energy, or Saint John's Wort to ward off depression, chances are none of these herbs is in your system. You might think you're smarter, bouncier or happier, but that's called a placebo effect. Really, you are spending good money on less than nothing and that in itself is depressing. The trust that's being broken here is as old as before snake oil, and the rationale is that you have no one to blame but yourself -- "you pays your money and takes your chances," but there is a more wicked scheme afoot here.

Americans spend $13 billion dollars a year on these products that we buy because they are hyped by various experts who may or may not be on someone's payroll, and because we believe that in this country we can trust what the label tells us. The Federal Drug Administration requires that companies verify that supplements are safe and accurately labeled, but there is no enforcement. The industry supposedly runs on trust and that's not a good way to manage anything where lots of money is to be made. Orin Hatch, the senator from Utah has successfully kept any and all federal regulations of the supplement industry from moving forward in congress. The fact that many of these manufacturers have headquarters in Utah, and that Hatch's own family is involved with them, stands as a shining example of insider Washington wheeling and dealing. As I see it, people who buy supplements at Walmart, Target, Walgreens, etc are being cheated first by the manufacturers and then by the government.

As the number of dishonest folk increases and they come up with more and more insidious ways to lie, cheat, and steal the number of those who are naturally trusting seems to stay the same.

I put myself in this category. I've had my pocket picked, believed false promises, lost money to clever salespeople, and been taken in other ways over the years, but having lived as long as I have, I've become less gullible and don't trust anyone without very good reason. However, I do use a credit card and my social security number is on file here and there. I think my passwords are clever, but I suspect a good cyber thief could make a mess of my financial life. Most of us who shop and bank in these times are at risk. The world is full of people who spend their time thinking of ways to take our money while we work hard trying to pay our bills. I can't imagine that the world will become more safe or that the number of honest, hard-working people will gain much on the cheaters.

What can one do? The positive preachers would say we should all become more trustworthy ourselves, and set an example. Or we should forgive the cheats and liars and scam artists, try to understand them.....Personally, I don't find paying for ground up houseplants parading as anti-depressants understandable or forgivable. Maybe it's time to stop being depressed by all this and do something. Don't just sit there. Boycott those guys, write to your congressman, let the box stores know you feel cheated, find a decent politician to vote for, impeach Orin Hatch!
My Speaker’s Corner

by Ken Plattner

A few years ago I retired. My wife, Claire, and I sold our house and most of our belongings and moved to southern France. We lived in a vineyard village on the Orb River. It was beyond beautiful. The down side—only three of the 600 people in that village spoke English. After lots of struggle, isolation, bureaucratic red tape, and some homesickness, we chose to return to the States. We bought a home in Patagonia.

I imagined that my working days were over, but soon after we returned from France, I accepted a job as director of volunteer services at a hospice based in Tubac. It was just what I needed. It allows me to be paid for doing what I most enjoy—being engaged in people’s lives, loving, and being of service. I teach volunteers how to become compassionate companions to patients who are dying. It’s challenging. It calls me to open up—to change, to own that I have resistance/denial, to see the ways I hide from what I don’t want to know.

These patients are amazing—just regular folks who accept that they don’t have much time left. Many of them have looked death in the eye, making peace with loss after loss after loss. Being with them has changed me; it has changed the volunteers too, as they watch new friends learning to “let go” and face the losses. It is humbling, sad, exhilarating. Mostly, it has taught me that I need to look at my own death, too, whether it happens in two years or twenty.

As I enter the later seasons of my life, I accept that wisdom is to see (really See) the beauty that is all around me and then to live (really Live) with appreciation for each breath I have left. And all this has caused me to become ridiculously happy—light as a feather. I feel drenched in appreciation, curiosity, and good times.

I find that it’s the little things that cause me to feel delight. Simple things. For example, one recent night we walked through the Nature Conservancy preserve up to the cemetery with our dog, Mika (whom we brought back as a “souvenir” from our French experiment). We got there in time to watch the sun go down. I took out a bottle of French brandy and two small glasses. Claire brought chips and goat cheese. We watched the colors dance and skate on the sky. We chatted while waiting for the moon to rise. Below we could hear the sounds of 18-wheelers making their way from Nogales, intermingled with the harmonic sounds of coyote choirs singing to each other across the highway.

It was fun just to chat about our week. Claire reminisced about daily trips to the post office, meeting friends from the town. I told her about my afternoon visit to the Gathering Grounds for coffee and pie a la mode; we sipped brandy, told tales of village life, made landscaping plans, and just sat in the nighttime stillness of the cemetery, where black birds nested. A chill came up, settling into our bones, then chasing us down the hill and home to our cozy fireplace. I love and appreciate the simplicity of our life here.

And I am grateful for this platform that is the Patagonia Regional Times. It’s like having a podium set up as a Speaker’s Corner in our town paper. I’ve been given an opportunity to “speak up.” This is weird for me, because I spent most of my life as a professional listener, seldom a speaker. So, I feel privileged and called to speak. My muse is a constant visitor. She’s on a mission. She whispers sweet vignettes of love, service, and appreciation. That’s the stuff of life that has meaning to me, and, as her humble servant, I stand before you.

So, in my run-on style, I give thanks to Inspiration and Source for the opportunity to honor, bless, and appreciate the challenge/joy in exploring a life well lived.

Poem for Maya

we buried her in the afternoon
when the sun had warmed the ground
a sheer white curtain for her shroud
little black dog
with a tail like a plumy feather
spindly little legs
and big eyes that always turned to me
i miss you girly girl
—Donna Reibslager

Nail

I’d not want to be the nail driven to fasten lumber,
nor part of what holds a wall or a roof together.
For far too long I’d be fixed,
as if impervious to other forces.
No, if that were to happen,
I’d be the nail loosening its grip.
I’d pine with my squeaky voice
to anyone within hearing range.
I’d be the one someone
would take another hammer to,
only to find I’d conspired
with the warped nature of wood.
I would rather be the nail that bent
with that first poor strike, the one
with contour looking around
for the many paths to be taken,
the one to get yanked and tossed,
and catch the cross verbiage
reserved for unruly nails.
I’d lie in tufts of grass,
feel welcomed by soil and sun,
I’d commune with the sky and when
those steel-blue clouds
lowered with the promise of rain,
I’d begin my transformation.
Who knows what I could become?
—Robert E. Druchniak

To contribute your opinion or commentary to PRT, send it in Word format to prteditor@gmail.com
PRT reserves the right to edit all submittals for language, length, and content
Three Important New Issues For Seniors
By Ed Bagnaschi

There are three important recent issues whose impact could affect the financial well-being of seniors. The first issue is a change in the PBGC (Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation) that affects blue-collar workers in multi-employer pension plans. These pensioners no longer have pension protection because of a change in the PBGC that was passed at the end of last year. This PBGC change could conceivably affect more than one million private pensions. Retirees in all 50 states are affected, although the biggest of the pension plans in danger of collapse is the Teamster-affiliated Central States Pension Fund, which has some 410,000 participants in the Midwest and South. This change was enacted despite four decades of federal law promising that vested pension benefits would not be cut.

The second issue is the possible reduction by 20% to monthly Social Security disability payments beginning in 2016. This is due to the new House rule adopted by the 114th U.S. Congress, that bars the U.S. House from replenishing the disability (DI) trust fund by shifting some payroll tax revenue from Social Security’s retirement trust fund. This was done even though the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities states that reallocating some taxes between the retirement and disability trust funds is a historically noncontroversial measure that the U.S. Congress has taken 11 times, in both directions depending on which trust fund was running short.

The third issue is a pending Supreme Court case: King v. Burwell. Approximately 6 million Americans, over 125,000 of which are Arizonians, could lose tax subsidies to buy health insurance plans through the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (ACA) if the appellants in this Supreme Court case are successful. Arguments in this lawsuit will be heard by the Supreme Court in March with a decision expected sometime in June. This lawsuit challenges the legality of tax subsidies in states that did not set up their own state-run health insurance exchanges. Many will lose the ability to buy affordable health insurance policies if these tax subsidies are denied. Seniors who have not reached the age of 65 and who do not have health insurance either through an employer or retirement benefits such as TRICARE will see large increases in their health insurance premiums. This will force many to drop their health insurance coverage; negatively impacting the financial health of Arizona hospitals, especially rural ones, because of an estimated increase in uncompensated care. It’s possible that the U.S. Congress could make a quick technical fix to restore the ACA subsidies. In the event that this does not occur Arizonians could still retain their subsidies if the state of Arizona establishes its own ACA health insurance exchange.

Irrespective of political affiliation or ideology, it’s unconscionable that our U.S. Congress, which bailed out the fat cats on Wall Street during the 2008 financial crisis, is now turning its back on our nation’s most vulnerable. To paraphrase a quote by Howard Beale in the movie Network “we should be mad as hell, and we should not take this anymore!” Write your United States Congressional representatives in Washington, asking them how they intend to resolve these three issues. Contact your state legislature representatives and governor to ask what they will do if their constituents lose valuable federal tax subsidies that would be available in other states. Each of us has the civic responsibility to at least vote during each election. It may be a good idea to keep a score card and keep track of how your elected officials vote on important issues. Use your score card and avoid all the political advertisements during political campaigns to determine if a candidate deserves your vote.

Ed Bagnaschi is a Member of SEAGO Region VI Advisory Council on Aging.

Preparing For The Cost of A Medical Emergency
by John Fielding

Last year, 37 local residents were transported to a hospital by a medical evacuation helicopter because of life-threatening trauma from a stroke, heart attack, or serious car accident. Benefits from this service are easy to calculate when you consider the time and distance it takes to get to a hospital in Tucson, Sierra Vista, or Nogales by ambulance.

There are two medical helicopter companies within reach of patients in the Sonoita-Elgin-Patagonia area—Life-Net in Nogales and Air Evac in Sierra Vista. When a helicopter is needed, the one closest to the medical scene is dispatched. The crew includes a highly trained pilot and a critical care nurse.

This valuable service is expensive. A resident who has been transported to a hospital by medivac can expect to be billed $7,000 or more by the transport service. Most health insurance providers don’t cover this cost. Fortunately, both companies now offer a yearly membership plan that assures that the patient will not have to pay anything for a medically necessary air transport over and above the amount paid by their health insurance provider.

The Omni-Advantage membership plan provides benefits for transportation by Life-Net. Its rate for a family with primary health insurance is only $49.00 a year. For patients who have no health insurance or have only Part A Medicare, yearly membership is $99.00. For more information, contact OMNI at 855-877-2518.

A second membership plan is offered by OMNI Cares; it covers flights by Air Evac. Its rates are similar—$50.00 a year for families with health insurance and $100.00 for those who do not have insurance. Information from this plan is available at 888-435-9744.
Karaoke Virgins Take a Dive
by Lynn Davison

Have you ever been to the Wagon Wheel on a Saturday night? If you were "lucky" enough to have been there a few weeks ago, you would have seen quite a spectacle—six women, all over 60 (so they should have known better), attempting to sing "Walking After Midnight" and then "Dancing Queen." One young woman sitting behind us at the bar, after trying to help by adding her lovely voice to the cacophony, commented to a friend, "Trainwreck!"

The back story only slightly explains what went wrong. While out on a Sunday hike, several women came up with the idea of making a karaoke debut. We agreed to meet for a practice session on the upcoming Saturday evening, right before heading to the Wagon Wheel. Our initial song choice was "Respect," but, fortunately, we did not embarrass Aretha by sticking with that one. It was clearly beyond our capacity. Instead, we settled on "Going to the Chapel" and dutifully practiced our unique rendition (including dance steps).

Alas, when we got to the Wagon Wheel two things went horribly wrong. First, the karaoke man did not have our song on his machine, so no "Going to the Chapel." Second, all the other performers really knew how to sing. I mean really! Unfortunately, we were un-daunted and agreed to try the Patsy Cline classic. Among us, there was one soft but melodious voice, one modestly in tune voice, two droners, and two that had been told to mouth the words in the choruses back in their grade school days. The combination was not pretty. Hysterical laughter on the part of singers and audience did not add much either. Instead of resting on our laurels, such as they were, we decided to try one more. This time we chose something slightly more current—a hit from Abba’s repertoire. It was decidedly not a hit when we got hold of it. Our version of “Dancing Queen” was beyond description (except for, maybe, the trainwreck comment).

Our two performances were bracketed by some truly lovely singing, in both Spanish and English, by two young women who come regularly from Rio Rico to serenade the Saturday night patrons with their beautiful voices. And the locals! We were amazed at the quality of many of the renditions delivered by our neighbors and friends. These gifted performers encouraged and supported our woeful efforts. We were even invited back. Hmm . . . maybe with just a little more practice . . .

How I Learned To Say The V Word
By Cassina Farley

Nothing horrifies me more than being invited to a party with an all-woman guest list. Baby showers, wedding showers, Tupperware parties, bachelorette..... you get the idea. It’s not that I hate women, I hate what they talk about. For me it’s fear. Women have no fear, and frankly, they over share. Men get along just fine in life never discussing their daily hygiene routines or bodily functions and that’s okay with me. Say what you will -- maybe I’m repressed -- maybe I’m not a feminist. (That term scares me by the way.) Maybe I am not a team player. Perhaps I’m just immature, I still giggle and get red cheeked when girls talk about “down there” as if discussing their brand of laundry soap. I feel like it’s a serious subject that requires a doctor or at least one paid medical staff professional guiding us through making sure we avoid any pitfalls all the while wearing gloves and a mask for safety.

So imagine, if you will my horror when it was announced that "The Vagina Monologues" was to be acted out, IN PUBLIC at my place of work. Nowhere to run. Nowhere to hide. My worst nightmare -- women talking about their vajayjays (we will use this word from now on) for fun in public. Naturally, my friends who performed in this personal nightmare knew of my hang-ups and would clearly understand if I did not attend. Yet, somehow I became a participant.

Because I work right there, I walked past the bright pink painted backdrops and the suggestive papaya paintings every day. Eventually I stopped blushing and even offered suggestions for other possible drawings. At some point the talk at work inevitably culminated with me speaking of vajayjays almost daily. Either I was growing up or cracking up. Finally I knew it was important for me to see this no matter how uncomfortable I would most definitely be.

I volunteered to collect tickets and watched as girl after girl, lady after lady filed into the theater so much so that I started to get that “Tupperware party” panic. I pressed on, no turning back. There were also multiple enlightened men, and those seeking answers, and of course, the men who had no choice. Those men, who, when the play starts, will leave their bodies. (Who knew? I might have joined them.) As the monologues started, I feared the worst, but what I saw was women at their best, speaking about what made them whole. I didn't blush. I instead felt pride -- pride for my friends. These brave, talented and courageous women spent their evening educating me on the joys of embracing, loving, respecting and admiring my vagina. There. I said it without blushing or giggling. I guess in a way this is my "Vagina Monologue." Thanks girls, I needed this.
At far right, Russell Compton watches as wife Kelly belts out a tune at the Wagon Wheel on Karaoke night. Compton provides the set up for the weekly Saturday event, which draws some great voices and some wannabes from nearby and as far as Rio Rico.

Guess Who’s 81?

This birthday girl was born in British Columbia. She’s a talented artist and plays a mean game of tennis. She’ll be 81 on March 10. Who is she?
Where to Find

A Little Local MUSIC

KARAOKE
at the Wagon Wheel

Saturdays at 9 p.m. you can be a performer or join the audience and listen to some great vocals by locals. (See story on page 14.) Rikki Tikki Karaoke at The Wagon Wheel Saloon, 400 Naugle, in Patagonia. (520) 394-2433.

Tia Nita’s Cantina

Tia Nitas offers pizza and BBQ, a jukebox, pool table and red-checkered tablecloths, and live music performances. On March 7, Phoenix Hooker Cops, a punk rock group from Phoenix) will play, together with Junkie Vomit from Tucson; On March 20-Hank Topless (cowboy blues) from Tucson. Call for times. (520) 455-0500. 3119 Hwy 83, Sonoita

Jody And FRIENDS

On the 1st and 4th Wednesday of the month, from 6 to 8 p.m., the Steak Out features music by Jody Welch, Barry Muehe, Jeff Latham, and Will Hadley, performing as Jody & Friends. These four seasoned musicians play a blend of rock, blues, folk, country, and bluegrass. (520) 345-5205.
**The Charles Mingus Hometown Music Festival.** Friday, April 24 is the Mingus Invitational Jazz Festival for Arizona middle and high school bands to be held at Nogales’ James K. Clark Performing Arts Center. Saturday, April 25, the Festival moves to the First Fidelity Bank plaza across from the site of the Mingus Memorial Park at Western and Bejarano streets in Nogales. Both events are free and open to the public.

*And Coming in April...*

Every Thursday from 5 to 7 p.m., The Cafe hosts a performing guest in their outdoor courtyard. It’s a great setting for dining or a glass of wine. This is one of Sonoita’s favorite eaterys, with a casual menu prepared by Chef Adam Puckle, a PUHS grad. Call to find out who’s playing, at (520) 455-5044. 3280 Hwy 82 in Sonoita.

Every Friday, Saturday and Sunday, from 5 to 9 p.m., you can hear an eclectic mix of bluegrass and country, with a little pop thrown in at The Steak Out. Dancing has been known to break out spontaneously. And the steaks are good too. (520) 455-5205. 3243 Hwy. 82 in Sonoita.

The Steak Out features music by Jody Welch, Jeff Latham, and Will Hadley, per- forming as Jody & Friends. These four seasoned musi-cians play a blend of rock, blues, folk, country, and blue- grass. 3243 Hwy. 82 in Sonoita.
The photographs on the walls of the Gathering Grounds in February served as a visual narrative for the intern program run by the Border Earth Care Youth Institute (BECY) to foster a sense of stewardship in young adults. BECY selects high school students from Patagonia, Nogales, Sonoita, and Elgin to be interns in a six-week summer program. The 10 students are paid for their participation and work side by side with men and women who have made careers in various aspects of conservation. They learn how to plant, how to build, how to help the earth, how to be leaders.

The opening reception, held on February 5, attracted a lot of interested people. Carlos Mingura, a senior at Patagonia Union High School, was there with school friends who worked together last fall to plant native pollinators and build structures for rainwater harvesting on the school grounds. Carlos has been a BECY intern for the past two summers. He spoke eloquently about the program, saying that it had truly changed his life and adding that caring for the environment made him aware of many new ideas and possibilities. “Now, I even eat vegetables!” he said, as proof of his new outlook. This brought a laugh from the crowd, many of whom were quite moved by the speech.

The sale of these photographs was a way of raising funds for the program. If you missed the exhibit or would like to make a donation to BECY, contact Caleb Weaver at weaver.caleb@gmail.com or go directly to http://borderlandsrestoration.org/get-involved/wish-list/investment-packages/. For more information about Borderlands’ programs, go to borderlandsrestoration.org.
On the heels of their successful opening, The Tin Shed Movie House is about to do it again. Since a new projector is still needed, the movie house committee has put together a fundraising event featuring a western classic. In honor of the many feature films that have been made in this area—most notably westerns—the Tin Shed Movie House will present a big box office hit that features the likes of Wyatt Earp, Doc Holliday and Ike Clanton on Saturday, March 14. The matinee screening will begin at 3 p.m. Admission is a $5 donation. For those attending the special event, the screening will be followed by a chuck wagon cowboy dinner at 5:30. At 7:30 there will be a presentation of personal recollections and commentary by one of the film’s producers, Bob Misiorowski, together with location manager, Lauren Ross, and Teamster driver, Bekki Jaynes. A donation of $30 includes both the matinee showing, the dinner, and the panel presentation. Participants are encouraged to dress in 1881 western attire or to come as a favorite cowboy character. (No firearms please.)

All tickets are available pre-sale through the Patagonia Creative Arts Association. Call 520-394-9369. Tickets will also be available at the door the day of the event. All proceeds raised from this program benefit the Patagonia Movie House equipment fund.

Public notice has been posted for a trustee sale of several parcels of land belonging to the Tree of Life Foundation on Harshaw Road in Patagonia. The notice, which appeared in the Nogales International on January 30, 2015, indicated a principal balance owed of $890,000. The auction was originally scheduled for March 5, but has now been postponed until March 19. The Tree of Life Foundation’s greenhouses, dormitory and several other buildings are situated on the parcels that are indicated as being up for sale. The Tree of Life’s Business Manager, Darrin XXXXX, told Patagonia Regional Times that the situation is being resolved, but had no further comment. If no resolution occurs, the auction will take place at the main entrance to the courthouse in Nogales at 11 a.m. on March 19.
WHAT'S GOING ON?

meetings

Dr. Dan Rehurek, former President of Cochise Comm. Coll. will speak at the So. AZ Republicans meeting, 3/19 @7 p.m. Sonoita Fire Station.

Friends of Sonoita Creek: Annual Meeting, March 14 @ 2 p.m. Dr. Peter Stacey presenting “The Method of Rapid Stream-Riparian Assessment”. For more info: www.sonoitacreek.org.

Wildlife Corridors Public Meeting: March 24 @ 7 p.m. at Cady Hall, Patagonia.

The Patagonia Museum - Regular meetings w/topics incl. local history; Hwy. cleanups & wkdays. For info, visit www.thepatagoniamuseum.org

AA - Patagonia Comm. Ctr., Sun., 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, just off Hwy 83; Info: 237-8091

CHOP (Community Homes of Patagonia, Inc.) Board Meeting 3rd Monday at 6 p.m. in the Patagonia Town Council Room Chambers.

Overeaters Anonymous Meetings - Pat. United Methodist Chrch, Tue. & Thu., 6:30 p.m. 404-3490

Patagonia Town Council, 2nd and 4th Wednesday of the month at 7 p.m. Town Council Hall.

Rotary Club, 1st Thurs., 7 a.m. at Patagonia H.S.; All others at Kief Joshua winery, 6 p.m. (520) 907-5829

San Rafael Community 4-H Club, 2nd Mon. at the Patagonia Methodist Church, Thurber Hall at 5:30 p.m. Tami @455-5561.

events

March 4 & 25 – Music at Stage Stop Inn: Jody & Friends perform an eclectic mix of music. 6 p.m. – 8 p.m., Hwy. 82, Sonoita.

March 7 – Phoenix Hooker Cops & Junkie Vomit: Tia Nita’s Cantina, 3119 Hwy. 83, Sonoita.

March 8 – Russian/Ukrainian Duo: Magic Strings, 3 p.m. in Tubac. For info/reservations email scfpapresents.org or call (520) 394 – 0129.

March 13 – Opening reception for New Visitors’ Center; 5-7 p.m. Third & Naugle, Patagonia. Refreshments.

March 14 – Puppies & Pairings Adopt-a-Thon: Event to Benefit Santa Cruz Humane Society. $25 a ticket. 10:30 a.m. – 3:30 p.m. at Rancho Rossa Winery, Elgin. Call (520) 604 –2356 for info.

March 14 – Western Movie Night: Matinee, dinner and presentation starting at 3 p.m. at The Tin Shed, Patagonia (see info on p.15).

March 20 – Hank Topless: Cowboy Blues, 8 p.m. at Tia Nita’s Cantina, 3119 Hwy., 83, Sonoita.

March 25 – Old Time Vaudeville: 7 p.m. at the Tin Shed Theater in Patagonia. Tickets $5, available in advance from the Art Center.

March 7 – Wom’n’s Club Celebration: Cady Hall, Patagonia; 5 p.m. – 7 p.m.; wine & snacks.

March 25 – Humane Society Adoption Event: Dogs for adoption from 10 a.m. – 1 p.m. at the Plaza, 277 McKeown Ave., Patagonia. (520) 287-5654.

March 28 – “Spring Sproing”: Pick Up Schticks performs Improv. 6 p.m. at the Tin Shed Theater, Patagonia. $5 suggested donation. (706) 614-6959.

March 28 – Rotary Club Golf Tournament: Kino Spring Resort; Registration at 8 a.m., shotgun at 9 a.m. $85, proceeds benefit community. For more info call (520) 455 - 0055.


special interests

Yoga for Seniors: Mondays, 8:30 a.m. – 9:45 a.m. at Ecobody Acupuncture in the Patagonia Plaza, Patagonia. $10. (520) 559-1731.

Santa Cruz County Writers: Writers support grp. 1st and 3rd Tuesdays, Patagonia Library, 10:30 a.m. (706) 614 - 6959

Community Acupuncture Clinic: Call Dr. Papin at (520) 559-1731.

Sonoran Permaculture Sustainable Living Workshops, March 21-28; www.sonoranpermaculture.org/courses-and-workshops/.

Ukrainian Egg Decoration Workshops: March 21 & 22, 28 & 29: Patagonia Creative Art Center. Call Susan for times, rate info and to pre-register (required.) (520) 394–2626.

Adult Art Classes - at the Patagonia Art Center, Thursdays, 2 - 4 p.m.; Figure Drawing: first Thursdays of the month. 394-9369.

Art Makers - After school art classes, ages 5-12; Tuesdays. Call Cassina @ 394-9369 for info.

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

Bikram Yoga - Patagonia; call 520-604-7283.

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

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

Open Tennis – PUHS, Tues. & Thurs. at 5 p.m., Sat. at 8 a.m., Call 394-2973 for info.


Sonoita Plant Parenthood Gardening Club - contact clarebonelli@gmail.com.

community services

Lunch for Seniors - Fresh-cooked meals, Mon. - Fri. at the Community Center. Tuesday is Pie Day! Try the Thursday Special!

Sr. Citizens of Patagonia Van Service - Medical transportation available Mon. - Fri. for seniors & disabled to Sierra Vista, Tucson, Gr. Valley & Nogales. By appt. only, 394-2494

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

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

Angel Wings Thrift & Gift Shop Our Lady of the Angels Mission Catholic Church, 12 Los Encinos Rd, Sonoita. Thurs-Sat. 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Info: 455-5262
Patagonia Lake State Park Activities:

**On-Going**

**Bird Walks** Mon., Wed. & Fri. at 8 a.m. (Note that Bird Walks are starting an hour earlier) Free after admission to Park. Meet at east end of Campground.

Avian Boat Tours of Patagonia Lake on Saturdays and Sundays at 9 and 10:15 a.m. Lake Discovery Tours at 11:30 a.m.

**Twilight Tours:** Saturday evenings. Reservations required. Call 520-287-2791 for reserve. & info.: $5 per person per tour.

The Visitor Center hours are 8:30–4 p.m. Lake Discovery Tours at 11:30 a.m.

**Junior Ranger Activities** - Sat. at 2 p.m. & Sun. at 10:30 a.m. at the Visitor Center.

**Hikes**

Monday, March 5. **Full Moon Hike to Overlook Hill.** Moderate hike. Wear sturdy shoes, bring water and perhaps a walking stick. Call to register at 520.287.2791 - Meet at Visitor Center at 5:45 p.m.

Friday, March 13. **Petroglyph Site Hike** across the lake (some rock scrambling required.) Call to register at 520 287-2791 - Meet at Visitor Center at 9 a.m.

March 20. **George Wiess Spring Hike** ranger/naturalist-led hike to newest SCSNA property. Strenuous. Hike will go off trail (cross country). About 7 miles RT. Bring a lunch, water etc. Call to register at 520.287.2791 - Meet at Visitor Center at 9 a.m.

Friday, March 27. **Sonora Creek Natural Area Hike** - ranger/naturalist-led hike on SCSNA system trails. Approx. 3 miles RT; bring lunch. Call to register at 520 287.2791 - Meet at Visitors Ctr., 9 a.m.

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**Old Time Vaudeville Show Returns**

by Brofy C. Froboge, PRT’s Special Entertainment Reporter

It’s time to light the lights, it’s time to dress up right, it’s (almost) time to raise the curtains on the *Vaudeville* show tonight!

On Wednesday, March 25 at 7 p.m., the Tin Shed Theater will once again become an Old Time Vaudeville House, complete with wise-cracking jugglers and a whip-cracking cowboy, in a show for all ages.

In 2013, Geoffrey Cobb, Patagonia’s own sword-swallower laureate, brought a cavalcade of variety and circus performer friends from the Arizona Renaissance Festival to town and is doing so again in 2015.

“I guess the first time we did it, it was kind of a two-way ego thing. As a performer you always want to show off; and I wanted to show off my friends to Patagonia and show off Patagonia to my friends,” says Cobb, a former circus clown. “Last time, I lived in Patagonia, but didn’t yet consider myself a “Patagonian.” Now that’s changed, so this year’s show is really about doing something for the community.”

Returning this year will be Geoff Marsh, who delighted the audience last time when he involved children in his plate spinning routine. Also back is Adam Crack, who holds multiple Guinness World Records for whip cracking. Big changes this year include the fact that the show will be hosted by Minnesotan comedian Muggsy and feature trio juggling group, The London Broil.

Another change this year is that a ticket will be required for admission. Tickets will be $5 and can be purchased in advance at the Art Center between 9 a.m. and 2 p.m. on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays, until the performance or until they are sold out.

Cobb says that the tickets aren’t an effort to make money, but instead to make sure those that want to see the show get a seat, and that no one has to be turned away at the door. “When we did this last time we had to turn people away due to occupancy restrictions, which was a great sign of success but felt terrible. So, this time with advance tickets, hopefully people will commit early and we can avoid turning people away.”

Turning people away was not the only sign of success for the 2013 Vaudeville show; another sign was that all the performers enthusiastically wanted it to happen again. These are professional entertainers who are donating their talents to make this happen. While the performers are not paid to perform, Cobb is looking for local businesses, organizations and even individuals to be sponsors and help offset his production costs of meals, lodging and travel for the performers. If you are interested in being a sponsor, please contact Geoffrey Cobb at 520-841-1155.

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New Improv by Pick Up Schticks

By Janice Pulliam

Pick Up Schticks will perform its fifth Improv (comedy improvisational theater) show, “Spring Sproing” at 6 p.m. on Saturday, March 28 in the Tin Shed Theater in Patagonia. Spring is when joyful, delightful things happen, and Sproing is when unexpected, goofy things happen. The audience will be invited to rate each skit as a favorite. Big changes this year include the fact that the show will be hosted by Minnesotan comedian Muggsy and feature trio juggling group, The London Broil.

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**Golfing For Scholars**

Tees Off March 28

This month marks the tenth anniversary of the Mountain Empire Rotary’s golf tournament at Kino Springs Resort. This annual fund-raiser supports scholarships for local high school students and other projects funded by the Rotary Club’s foundation. The $85 entrance fee includes lunch and each golfer is eligible for tournament and hole prizes. You’ll need to get up early the last Saturday morning in March. Registration at the resort that is 15 miles south of Patagonia starts at 8 a.m. and there will be a shotgun start at 9 a.m. This popular golfing event attracts participants from around the region and is always competitive and fun. Leslie Kramer has been chairing the tournament for the past ten years. It is the Rotary’s major fundraiser, with the majority of funds benefitting Mountain Empire communities. If you have questions or to sign up to play, you can reach Leslie at 520-455-0055 or by e-mail: kramerlaw@earthlink.net.

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**CHOP Fundraiser at GG**

Mark your calendar for April 3, when Community Homes of Patagonia will host a fundraiser at the Gathering Grounds. The event is from 5 to 7 p.m., and the $10 entry per person includes meal and a beverage, plus a raffle and music by Barry and Friends.
March is a momentous month in our Sky Islands, as winter exits and numerous plants and animals make their inaugural appearances. While spring may be in the offing, March will likely be as schizophrenic as ever. Temperatures will swing all over the place, with some freezing nights as well as a few relatively searing days. Incessantly stiff winds will play swiftly through the still bare mesquites. Still, March is an exciting month, full of change and even a few surprises.

March means wildflowers, but the extent of our botanical bounty is yet to be determined. A late winter rain can lead to a greater diversity, density, and longevity of native wildflowers. We'll all just have to wait and see, as we do every year.

Meanwhile, we are witnessing numerous species leafing out earlier than ever. Desert honeysuckles and ocotillos care little about average dates of foliage emergence and instead are taking advantage of our rather balmy, moist winter. They may get caught by frost and only time will tell whether or not this is detrimental to their survival.

Mexican elderberry holds no such sensitivity to sudden drops in the mercury. Not only are the leaves hardy in this regard, but the panicles of flowers are soon poised to appear. Fragrant splays of white serve to entice any would-be pollinators to the nectar bar - payment for their sexual services.

Botanical diversity helps spur avian diversity during March, as spring migration ensues for many species. Soon we'll be enjoying the haunting wails of gray hawks, as they ply the skies with their spectacular courtship displays. Only about 100 pairs of these neotropical hawks breed north of Mexico, making their presence here a true gift. Common poorwills will proffer their own names at dusk, announcing their presence to others of their kind. Some likely hibernated here, entering a deep torpor sometimes mistaken for death itself! Male vermilion flycatchers will spectacularly skylark in an attempt to woo any nearby females. Montezuma quail hatch young that are born ready to march. Many of our wintering birds will continue to linger, adding to our impressive list of March birds.

Reptiles and invertebrates too will be lured out by March's warming temperatures. Ants, butterflies, moths, beetles and other insects are on the rise this month, spurred by warmth and winter rains. These serve as food for a wide range of reptiles that come out of hibernation now. Perhaps you'll see your first whiptail seeking them or even a Gila monster hoping for some young cottontails or quail eggs. Snake sightings will increase, though nothing akin to our monsoonal blitzkrieg. More commonly encountered ornate tree lizards and Clark's spiny lizards will begin to establish their territories via push-ups and head bobs.

All things considered, March is an exciting month for a wide spectrum of natural events set amidst a kaleidoscope of weather in a month renowned for its variability.

Vincent Pinto and his wife, Claudia, run Raven's Way Wild Journeys. They offer local tours dedicated to the preservation of the incredible biodiversity in the Sky Islands.
Please see PDF for Long Realty Ad
Sonoita Welcomes Route 82 Market

The Fuel Stop Grill and Gas Station, once a famous landmark in Sonoita, has been vacant and forgotten for almost two years. Recently, Patagonia resident Lora Bryant reopened the doors, calling her new establishment “Route 82 Market.”

Bryant graduated from Patagonia Union High School and traces her local roots back to the 1880's, when her grandmother and grandfather arrived in the area and established the 800-acre Fortune Ranch.

The grill is open from 6 a.m. to 8 p.m., serving meals with a Mexican accent. The breakfast menu includes four choices of burritos, biscuits & gravy, huevos rancheros or steak and eggs. The lunch and dinner menu feature chimichangas, tacos, tostadas, quesadillas, and six choices of burritos. Bryant is proud of her home-made dressings and salsas and boasts that everything is made from scratch and not from frozen ingredients.

The new owner plans to add a full grocery store in addition to the grill, where she will feature fresh organic heirloom vegetables grown in the 3,000 sq. ft. greenhouse in her back yard. She’s also invited local growers to provide their produce for the market.

Route 82 Market, located at 3270 Highway 82 in Sonoita, is a welcome addition to local business.

The first equestrian event of the year in celebration of the Fairgrounds Centennial Celebration is the Kentucky Derby horse races on May 2-3.

Committee Chairman Deborah Fellows promises a new and better race weekend to enhance the big year-long party. The fairgrounds has been painted and repaired and upgraded to make the event the best ever.

There will be a bigger Turf Club, a new beer garden, and four locations for race betting, including a new facility under the grandstands. Also new this year, the event will offer live instruction on betting for beginners starting at 11 a.m. each morning.

There will be eight races run each day and special commemorative blankets and buckles will be awarded to winners and jockeys. Off-site betting for other races will be available this year and a simulcast of the Kentucky Derby will be televised Saturday at 3:30 p.m. Favorite Derby drinks will be available, including Mint Juleps on Saturday and Margaritas on Sunday.

Over 5000 race enthusiasts attended last year and more are expected this year. New activities and the opening of more buildings are anticipated to make this celebration the best ever. Deborah Fellows says “how much more fun can you have than at Race Day at the Sonoita Fairgrounds—where you get parking, programs and entrance fees all for $10.00?”
BBQ pit-master, Russell Compton, serves up barbeque meals in downtown Sonoita every weekend. Russell owns the familiar converted recreational vehicle often seen parked at the intersection of Highway 82 and 83. He calls his food truck "R.B.Cue" (his initials are RBC) because he says, “It’s my product. It’s my name.”

Twelve years ago Russell left his life on a ranch in the oil fields of West Texas and came to Arizona with a smile, a cowboy hat and a love for cooking. Living on a ranch, he says, taught him how to cook beef. His unique recipe for BBQ sauces became well-known, and one day a friend of his said, “This is good. Why not try to sell it?” Good idea.

Russell has worked as a race horse trainer and construction framer, but now at age 59, he’s preparing sandwiches and combination meals with beef brisket, pulled pork, or sausage. His combo meals offer sides of Texas beans, potato salad or cole slaw.

His specialty is made with USDA beef brisket cooked over mesquite wood “slow and low,” and coated with his secret dry rub. The BBQ sauce which is poured on top is also a secret recipe which he says he “will never reveal.”

Russell parks his remodeled RV at the Sonoita crossroads every weekend, Friday through Monday. The rest of the week is spent preparing food. He also does catering at the Fairgrounds and for local organizations. On Saturday nights Russell provides the popular Rikki Tikki Karaoke at the Wagon Wheel in Patagonia with his wife Kelly, a former jockey, who works at the Circle Z ranch.

Stop by and see Russell at the four corners and take home a plate of his beef BBQ dinner. For catering call him at 520-289-6251

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41 Acre Ranch for Sale
3BR, 2.5 BA  2820 sq ft

www.sonoitacreekhome.com
If you have ever made a sandwich, or even just eaten one, you will readily grasp the concept of sheet mulch—it is built of layers of materials. The deeper the mulch the more topsoil you will make. A minimum of six inches will net two inches of finished soil. Any time of the year works, but plan to have it built four months or more before you plant your garden.

In 1993, with encouragement from veteran sheet-mulcher Susan Corl, I built my first such garden on rock-cobbled iron-rich red clay soil in Patagonia. It was impossible to dig without equipment, and I was willing to try anything. So began my love affair with the sheet-mulch process, a very rapid recipe for generating nutrient-rich topsoil and for improving the underlying soil. This method is now a core part of my portfolio for improving most soils. I have successfully used sheet-mulch applications to recycle waste materials, kill undesirable plants, and turn parking lots and construction sites into productive growing environments. It is fun and rewarding!

To begin, chose a garden site that is in an active zone—one that you will pay attention to daily as you walk by. Take into account proximity to the kitchen, thus making harvesting easy when your crops are ready. Note the location of the hose bib, solar aspect, prevailing wind direction, rainwater flows, and cold air drainage. Is there a warm wall nearby for winter heat, or is there too much sun? Once you know where you want your garden, follow these steps.

1. Gather materials: cardboard, paper, straw, leaves, dried grasses, any dried or fresh plant material (except invasives); manure (no Bermuda grass and no manure from animals that eat it!), old clothing, rugs, etc. made from natural fibers (such as cotton, silk, wool, or hemp). Buttons and zippers can be removed before or afterward. Sewing thread will not break down and can be removed later.

2. Add soil microbes (52 strains are available for purchase) to enliven your soil with beneficial soil life. Biodynamic field spray or compost inoculant is a low-cost powder, mixed into water and applied to the upper layer.

3. Cut down any grasses and weeds. Bermuda grass will eventually invade, so avoid it if you can.

4. Wet ground well.

5. Layer carbon materials (cardboard, paper, dried plant materials, fiber products), overlapping to smother plants below. Presoak or wet thoroughly.

6. Add a nitrogen layer (manure, green plant material). Wet down.

7. Add another carbon layer, thicker than the manure. Wet down.

8. Repeat steps 9-11 until materials are used up.

9. Cap with 1 inch of soil. Repeat steps 9-11 until materials are used up.

10. Seed a cover crop of rye, vetch, or winter peas (cool weather). Add microbial inoculant, premixed per instructions.

11. Mulch with leaves, straw/dried grass. Water regularly germinate seeds and to keep plants growing.

12. Watch and wait.

13. Plant

Here’s what Carol and Steve Schmitt say about layering. “It made our crappy, rocky dirt into fertile, wonderful dirt that grew amazing vegetables. We would never have been able to grow what we did by just rototilling the back yard. It made us garden fans.”

Kate Tirion is a horticultural specialist committed to developing sustainable ecosystems and is the owner of Deep Dirt Farm. You can learn more about Kate’s projects by visiting www.katetirion.com.
Exploring Invasives and Non-Natives, Part 1
By Bethany Brandt

As far as I can remember, it began back in 1988 or 1989 at 411 Goltra Ave., in Jacksonville, Illinois. There were spring afternoons of playing farm in the front yard with my younger brother; there was a plastic Playskool pedal-powered tractor, a stuffed tan horse head with a brown yarn mane perched on a broom stick, some baskets, a blue calico bonnet, and a black cowboy hat. I preferred the front yard for this sort of agricultural production make-believe play, as the backyard was well sheltered by a tree canopy that offered a night haven for flocks of blackbirds but blocked the precious sun from the earth so no grass would grow. The front yard was open to the sky and to the asphalt street just beyond the drainage ditch, which doubled as a “cellar” or a “tornado shelter” or a resting place when it was necessary to imagine the night.

There were always dandelions, and they made up the bulk of the food source on our “farm.” We harvested the yellow flowers to provide nutrients for our bodies and that of our one work horse. I painted my skin with their golden pigment and inhaled the bitter scent they released when crushed against my inner forearm. The dandelions were magical to me, and I considered them as I considered the earthworms caught in puddles after rain or the blackbirds that only came to sleep in our trees as summer nights turned to autumn. These things were all parts of my life that only came to sleep in our trees.

I was seven or so, and the world of adult humans held little meaning for me. I found myself constantly taken aback, confused, and bewildered by their actions and reactions, none of which made much sense to me, but that I strove to understand, nonetheless. I would have to exist in this adult world one day. I knew the importance of learning their constructs.

My father liked his lawn clean cut and free of what he referred to as “weeds,” and dandelions fell into that category. The low-lying flower that the bees alighted from was considered to have no rights of existence in the lawn at 411 Goltra Ave. Its appearance was perceived to be obnoxious or messy—something that was infringing upon a desired sense of order. My sun-colored food crop was seen as an invader in the world of checkerboard neighborhoods of green. I was encouraged to pick as many as I could or else they would be “sprayed.” Sprayed meant killed, eliminated, gotten rid of, in order to cleanse the yard of color other than green.

The thought of killing a living organism, if not for food, was sorrowful for me. Back then, I still cried every time I encountered roadkill. My heart still held guilt from having left earthworms in the sun, two years earlier. I did not understand why this plant must be eliminated from our yard. I did not see a danger in its existence. And so, the questions began and thus started my journey of exploring why humans would consider a plant or animal an invasive force that must be held at bay or eliminated from an environment.

This is the first of a series of explorations, informational articles, and musings on the concept of invasion. Bethany Brandt co-founder of “Revitalist Botanicals,” a cooperatively and locally owned herbal company in Patagonia. Join “Revitalist” the first Sunday of each month to learn about the medicinal uses of invasive and non-native plants, harvest these plants, and learn to make medicine.

Looking For The Desert In Bloom
By Molly McCormick

The desert floras shame us with their cheerful adaptations to the seasonal limitations. Their whole duty is to flower & fruit, and they do it... as the rain permits... One hopes the land may breed like qualities in her human offspring.

Mary Austin, The Land of Little Rain, 1903

This year, I’m on a spring wildflower hunt. I’m thinking that it has been a wet winter; the wild mustard greens have already sprouted and will soon make a lovely addition to lunchtime salads. Surely this means I’ll have a moment on flower-bedecked hills, rolling and laughing with the desert mariposa lily, getting dusted by fairy duster, bewitched by the variety of purples emitted by verbena, and sleeping with the bees inside an orange globemallow. I’m already lost in the idea of a field of spring bloomers. But will it happen this year?

Spring flowers need late fall precipitation and sunshine to sprout. Remember last year’s hurricanes Norbert and Odile? Yes, how could we forget the nearly statewide deluge, which created 100-year flooding events in places? Remember how afterward the grasslands stayed green and some grasses even started to flower a second time? Because the grasses were still in their full glory late into the season, this could have prohibited the widespread germination of some shaded spring wildflower seeds that need sunshine to burst forth.

Spring bloomers also need steady precipitation throughout the winter to stay alive. November was warm and dry. If spring wildflowers sprouted during the late monsoon deluge, they might not have made it through that drying November—or did they, protected under a blanket of thick grasses and moist soils?

Much of Arizona was blessed with moisture from December through February. This looks good for our flowering friends: seeds could have sprouted in December and really started to grow with the warmer temperatures.

Now the question is whether hot temperatures and high winds this spring will dry out our plants before they get a chance to bloom, or will we continue to receive enough rain to spur on those flowers? We won’t know until we see it, but I’m rooting for the little ones. After all, like Mary Austin said, desert plants are really good at their duty to flower and fruit. Even if we don’t see hillside bedecked with our favorite species, I bet somewhere in the grasslands and pine-oak woodlands, there will be a microhabitat in full bloom. Just follow the hummingbirds—they know the way. Happy hunting!

Learn more about climate patterns at www.climas.arizona.edu and more about wildflower blooms at www.desertmuseum.org (the Arizona-Sonoran Desert Museum).

Molly McCormick is the Restoration Project Manager/Out-reach Specialist for Borderlands Restoration.
Jorge Martinez
Moving To
The Next Chapter
By Christopher Quiroga

Seventeen-year-old senior Jorge, “Jorgie” Martinez, is moving on to the next chapter of his life. The five-year-old basketball player is no longer a little kid. He is a young man that awaits the new challenges in life. Jorge had always fantasized about being an astronaut and exploring the deep wonders of space. He would also like to live in Area 51 when he graduates from high school, Nicole will attend Fashion Institute of Design and Merchandising (F.I.D.M), get her associates degree, and make a name for herself as a fashion stylist in Los Angeles, California. She is very determined in what she believes. Throughout high school, Nicole kept an average GPA of 3.8 and always gave her all everyday to do better in school. Nicole came to PUHS from Little Red Schoolhouse in her freshmen year. Nicole has to wake up at 4:30 a.m. every morning to catch the bus in Rio Rico and come to school. Nicole says “I went to a small middle school and wanted to come to a small high school as well.” While attending PUHS, Nicole was the volleyball manager and participated in tennis. Her favorite memory from high school is going to the Grand Canyon her freshmen year with all her classmates. The things she will miss the most about high school are seeing and talking to her friends, and Mrs. Hayes. Nicole plans on coming back to visit Patagonia Union High School occasionally, to see her younger brother Andy participate in sports and watch her friends play. She is a beautiful, stylish and bold person. Being her friend for two years now has been one of the best decisions I made in high school!
Jose Vasquez
Working Towards Success
By Garrett Fish

From his roots on his family’s ranch, to Patagonia Union High School’s campus, Jose Vasquez is always looking to apply his hard work ethic to everything he does. Growing up on a ranch has had a powerful impact on Vasquez, who works there with his role model, his father, who has taught him the value of hard work and respect. Ranch life has also given him a strong love for riding horses and agriculture.

In the classroom setting, Jose has found success in math class where he is taking Pre-Calculus. In the future, Jose hopes to combine both his talent and passion in order to achieve a career as an Agricultural Engineer. His coach and history teacher, Mr. Hayes, has influenced Vasquez tremendously these past two years. One of the most important values that Hayes taught Vasquez was to “never give up, especially when things are going against you.” Vasquez also distributed words of wisdom for underclassman, which included, “Don’t be lazy. Do the best you can in school or anything you do and make sure you have no regrets or remorse. If you are struggling, make sure to reach out for a teacher’s guidance, because they truly do care. But most importantly, don’t be afraid to fail.”

In his high school years, Vasquez has played on the football, basketball, and baseball teams. He especially likes basketball, where he showed great improvement over the years. He has also done acting at PUHS, including roles in “The Nutcracker,” “Our Town,” and “Superhero Sanitarium.” Rodeo events are another strong area. He won his first award at the age of six.

When he is not participating in school activities, Vasquez enjoys giving back to the community. As a member of the Teen Outreach Program he has contributed to several different projects, such as a warm clothes drive to benefit the less fortunate. Vasquez cares about school, students, and the community. He says, “Patagonia is a caring community and nurtures individual academic excellence and excellence as an individual.”

It Lives Among Us
By Calvin Whitcoe

Hate is everywhere. It is hard to find a single race or religion that has never been persecuted. Hate can walk invisibly in the shadows, slowly gathering strength until it erupts like a volcano. Prejudice comes from every corner of the globe and is directed to every other corner of the globe. People hate their fellow man because they can’t accept something that they consider abnormal.

Sometimes, people’s anger at others can be so strong that they can’t see the same demon within themselves. During World War II, Americans went against the Axis Powers and their terrible regime, but yet failed to see that they were “relocating” over 127,000 Japanese-Americans to concentration camps and for no reason other than ancestral heritage.

Everyone is fine with having their back scratched, but rarely do they return the favor. Chinese began to trickle into the US in the 1850s during the California gold rush and were a major work force in building the Transcontinental Railroad. Without Chinese workers, the task would have taken far longer. When it comes to almost free help (Chinese workers demanded fewer wages than Americans) nobody complains until the work is over.

In 1882, congress passed the Chinese Exclusion Act which suspended the immigration of Chinese workers for ten years. This act was not repealed until 1943.

If Americans had sucked up their own pride, there would have never been the slaughter of Native Americans, riots against Irish Catholics, denial of veteran funeral services to Mexican-Americans, lynching of African-Americans, and so much more. Prejudice creates a never-ending cycle of hate against your neighbors and peers. It’s time to accept people for who they are inside and not by the color of their skin or where they go to pray.

Use today like it is the first day for the rest of your life and smile, compliment people, and truly do the best of your ability to make someone’s day. As Oscar Wilde once said “Keep love in your heart. A life without love is like a sunless garden where the flowers are dead.”

No More Softball?
By Hector Lopez

With the end of the successful basketball season, high school students are turning their attention to spring sports. Usually this season includes baseball, softball and tennis. Unfortunately, the Dean of Students, Mr. Rhoades, has confirmed Patagonia Union High School will not be having a girls’ softball team this year because not enough players are interested -- the school’s criteria for a softball team is a minimum of thirteen players. However, the school offered the girls the option to join the baseball team.

Savannah Foster, a senior this year, was the only member of the softball team who agreed to join the boys. The other members say that they declined out of fear of injury or they just didn’t feel the need to join anymore after hearing the news.

According to Savannah, she joined because this is her last year and she “didn’t want to sit out.” Johnny Swift, a sophomore at the high school and Savannah’s new teammate, commented with brimming support for his new ally, “It’s going to be different but she’s a good player.”

There are many differences between baseball and softball, but Savannah said that she is going to do her best and train hard in order to keep up with the boys. With Savannah Foster playing this season, it is safe to say that the boys have obtained a strong new addition to the team and only time will tell if this senior can compete in unfamiliar territory.
Walter F. Weber was born on November 25, 1924, to Kathryn (nee Haag) and Karl Weber, in Milwaukee, WI. He passed away on Jan. 31, in Patagonia, at 90 years.

Wally graduated from Boys’ Technical High School, worked on farms as a young man, and retired from A.O. Smith Corporation in Milwaukee after 30 years. Throughout his life, he contributed as a volunteer fireman, a part-time police officer, and a Boy Scout leader. Many activities and interests led to a wealth of information that would surface to provide help whether during a plumbing or electrical problem, a fishing trip, a car repair, or a building project.

He loved to travel and introduced all of his children to camping at a young age. He was the first one up to cook pancakes, eggs and bacon as the family arose in the morning. He enjoyed visiting state parks and national parks and stopped at every highway marker for another piece of history.

Family was important and included the extended Weber family in the Milwaukee area, the Phelps, scattered about Wisconsin, and the Chandlers in Manitoba, Canada. Whether attending family picnics, planning camping trips, backpacking, or playing cards with his siblings and their spouses, he enjoyed the time and the stories that came thereafter.

After a second widowerhood and an early retirement, Wally took a trip to Mexico where he met his third wife, Socorro, and began a new adventure. He spent the last thirty-five years traveling between Mexico and Arizona and settled in Patagonia full time after divorcing. He came to love Patagonia, was an active member of the “boy’s club” and a recent convert to the delights at the Senior Center. Sitting on a front porch was simple entertainment. Good food and the company of others were lifelong pleasures. He was known to roast pigs, and consume great quantities of any type of sausage. He made the annual Thanksgiving cranberry-orange relish, an authentic German potato salad, and enjoyed a Sunday evening glass of wine in his later years.

He raised four children, Barbara (Jim) White, Marilyn (Alvino) Majalca, Robert (Reinette Goebel) Weber, Fred (Patrice) Weber; and two stepdaughters, Amelia (Javier) Silva, and Maria (Octavio) Vargas. He is survived by nine grandchildren, (Angie, Don, Marisa, Mirella, Jesse, Liliana, Walter, Erika and Kathy); ten great-grandchildren, (Ethan, Blake, William, Sophia, Angie, Mariana, Alexandra, Sofia, James, and Mackson); and nieces and nephews in Wisconsin and Canada. He was 'Tata Wally’ to several others.

Wally was preceded in death by his parents, Kathryn and Karl; wives, Doris Weber (Phelps) and Mary Evelyn Weber (Chandler); brothers, William, Carl, and Edward; sisters, Rose and Ruth; stepson, Juan Ramon Herrera; and several close friends. A memorial will be held in April in Patagonia.
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227 W THIRD AVENUE, PATAGONIA
TAR/MLS #21311062, $219,900
Cozy, vintage Patagonia cottage c.1915 on a central corner lot in the heart of the village~ within walking distance of EVERYTHING. 1,210sf, w/2Be, 2Ba; the 2nd Bdrm has a separate entry~ ideal for family/ friends or a rental; Master has a small Study/Office could become a walk-in Closet.

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