The Nature Conservancy Celebrates 50 Years
The Nature Conservancy Hosts
A 50th Birthday Party

By Lynn Davison

TNC 50th Anniversary Celebration will be held March 19, 11 a.m.-4p.m., at TNC visitor center on Blue Haven Road; parking on site, local food vendors, live music, guided hikes, displays and demonstrations, wildlife viewing, kids’ activities

The Patagonia-Sonoita Creek Preserve is having a birthday party to celebrate The Nature Conservancy’s (TNC) 50 years in Patagonia and in the State of Arizona. Luke Reese, manager of the preserve, says the party is really about thanking the local community for being the “home” of the first TNC project in the state. His goal for the afternoon of March 19 is simple, “to make sure everyone has fun.”

In February of 1966, TNC purchased 309 acres along Sonoita Creek, creating the Patagonia-Sonoita Creek Preserve. The conservancy wanted to protect the perennial stream section of Sonoita Creek and sustain its large population of birds. TNC now has helped protect over 1.5 million acres in Arizona, and Patagonia has become a hub for conservation-minded organizations looking to preserve, restore, and allow public access.

The birthday party begins at 11am. Bluegrass musician Greg Morton will provide live music. Several local vendors will supply food and drinks. The Arizona-Sonora Desert Museum will bring a live animal demonstration, featuring animals that live in or travel through our area. The Huachuca Area HERP Association will bring reptiles. Audubon representatives will lead a walk inaugurating the new trail that connects Audubon’s Paton House Hummingbird Center to TNC’s Visitor Center. Friends of Sonoita Creek will lead a demonstration on stream monitoring. The State’s Forestry Agency will be there with its Firewise Van. TNC staff and volunteers will lead walks focused on the history and critical features of the preserve property.

There will be three speakers: local ecologist Ron Pulliam, Tucson Audubon’s Les Corey, and TNC Arizona State Director Pat Graham. Remarks will be brief (as the goal, you remember, is fun). Everything is designed to be kid friendly.

Preparations for the birthday celebration began over a year ago. In addition to the new trail from Paton House, visitors will see a new information kiosk at the main entrance, new and better signage, widened trails, and new fencing. Volunteers are again leading regular Saturday bird walks and supporting native plant restoration. Reese reminds local residents that access to the preserve during regular operating hours is always free for locals. Reese also invites local organizations to contact him if they are looking for a great natural site for outdoor education programming.

As in 1966, the creek and the birds remain a centerpiece for the Patagonia Sonoita Creek Preserve, but that’s just part of the story. TNC’s total holdings in Patagonia have grown to 873 acres. Their long-term management strategies focus in three areas: water and stream restoration, fuels reduction, and grasslands restoration. To those ends, Reese is an active member of the Town’s Flood and Flow Committee. The committee’s work is to identify approaches to reduce flooding in Patagonia while maintaining the health of Sonoita Creek and its tributaries. TNC is also collaborating with the Town of Patagonia and the Patagonia Fire Department on a second fuels reduction project. The town hopes to secure funds from the Arizona State Forestry Division to remove hazardous fuels from approximately 100 acres on the southwest edge of Patag...
Your Vote Needed For Town Budget

The August primary election in Patagonia contains a measure that could cripple the town’s budget. Voters in all towns are asked periodically to extend the “alternative expenditure limitation,” which allows the town to spend above the limited budget imposed by the state. It takes a 50% majority of those voting to pass this proposition. If the extension is turned down, our town could only spend about one third of what it does now. “Patagonia would cease to exist,” says Teel. So don’t skip the primary, and cast your vote on Proposition 3301.

Illegal Dumping Affects Us All
EDITORIAL COMMENTARY
By Ann Katzenbach

There’s a word for the people hereabouts who are illegally dumping trash and grass and whatever else the town of Patagonia cannot reasonably deal with. The word is “Spoiler.” Because of these spoilers, dropping off material at the chipper site across from the high school is now only possible on the first and third Tuesday of each month. Because of them, there is the possibility that Patagonia will lose its recycling.

Patagonia Town Manager, David Teel, says that the town is currently trying to come up with ways to make sure that the recycling area is not used as a dump and also to insure that people who do recycle, follow the guidelines.

In the past few weeks, tires and other trash were left in the parking lot behind the post office. The town has to pay to dispose of these “dumps.”

At the chipper site, people have been leaving material that cannot be chipped. Town employees spend inordinate amounts of time sorting through the materials that have been dropped off, some, Teel says, coming from contractors who are trying to take advantage of the town’s chipping program.

Locally there is a real need for wood chips. Witness the many trucks and trailers that have hauled off wood chips from The Nature Conservancy’s clearance of the overgrown acres south of town. It’s also a big help to local people who have cleared brush on their land. We are all punished by thoughtless people who bring grass and leaves as well as trash to the chipping site and the recycling area.

Recycling brush and household waste makes sense. Why not work together to insure that this environmental benefit continues?

Montoy Running For County Supvr.

By Bob Brandt

For many Patagonians the name Charlie Montoy is synonymous with the Politically Incorrect Gas Station. After all, for the past 15 years, he has operated the town’s only gas station where he provides a range of services designed to keep our vehicles on the road. And if he gets his way, by this time next year, he will be providing a new type of service to his friends and neighbors – representing their interests as a Santa Cruz County Supervisor.

Montoy has declared his intention to run for the office and has been collecting signatures for a petition that will permit him to appear on the ballot next November. He needs about 500 signatures, although he will not know the exact number until March 2. He will be running as an Independent.

A lifelong resident of Patagonia, Montoy is a graduate of PUHS and worked for the U.S. Department of Agriculture as a produce inspector before buying the gas station. He believes this area of the county needs a supervisor who lives here and knows the rural lifestyle and issues that are important to residents beyond Nogales.

As strengths, he cites his independence, open-mindedness and willingness to listen to all points of view. He certainly gets the opportunity to hear what’s on the minds of lots of locals as he pumps gas for them, cleans their windshields, checks their oil and performs other vehicle-related services.

Montoy has pulled together a campaign committee and plans to go door-to-door to meet prospective voters face-to-face, distribute flyers and put up signs wherever people will agree to have them.

At least three others declared their intent to run for a seat on the Board of Supervisors. They are Lee Jones, Bruce Bracker and incumbent John Maynard, who has since withdrawn from the race.

Montoy says the county needs new people, ready to work with rural folks. If elected, he says he will “stand strong for this side of the county.”

The primary election for county offices is Tuesday, August 30. The general election is Tuesday, November 8.
Farewell To The Chief

By Ann Katzenbach

The February sun was hot on the afternoon of John Ashcraft’s funeral on Saturday, February 13. There was little shade on the football field, but friends, family, fellow workers, neighbors, and Patagonians who knew all that Ashcroft had done for the town over the years lined up to sign the guest book and pay tribute.

Under a CANOPY in the middle of the field, Ashcraft’s flag-draped coffin was surrounded by flowers. The lid was open for those who wanted to get a last glimpse of the Navy veteran, postal employee, fire chief, customs officer, scout leader, school board member, and family man.

In addition to the folks seated in the stands or in chairs on the field, there were many mourners standing in uniform: military men and women; police, fire, and customs officers; and members of the Patagonia Volunteer Fire Department, who wore white shirts and blue trousers. Sonoita and Elgin firefighters were there as well.

After an invocation, speeches, and several military formalities, Brent Bowden stood to give the eulogy just as a helicopter flew low overhead going south. A minute later, a second one followed. It seemed as if everyone wanted to say farewell.

Bowden’s heartfelt words focused on how Ashcraft helped make the fire department, formerly an old shed with one truck, into what it is today, a brick building on the corner of Third and Duquesne avenues with many bays and trucks. “John gave us a great foundation to build on,” said Bowden in summing up.

A trumpeter played Taps. A bagpiper played Amazing Grace. Pallbearers shouldered the wooden coffin and loaded it in the back of the red antique fire truck that had been standing empty in the field, a pair of boots and a fire helmet laid out on the seat.

They drove him down Naugle Ave. to the Patagonia Cemetery where, as Brent Bowden pointed out, he is now free from the suffering of declining heath. Chief Ashcraft got a great send-off from a lot of people who loved him.

Back at the fire station after the burial, friends gathered to share memories of the former fire chief and to dedicate a flagpole that was recently installed and dedicated to Ashcraft’s memory.

In Memory of John Ashcraft

When we first started work on our southern retreat we never knew royalty lived ‘cross the street. His wife had some troubles so he lived alone and he’d come out and sit on his porch on his throne.

One day we went over and had a nice chat and somehow we seemed to be friends after that so when he came out to his porch to preside we’d sometimes go over and sit by his side and we’d bring out dog, that strange fellow, Red, who was the King’s favorite; at least so he said, and we’d throw the frisbee or maybe the ball and talk about something or nothing at all and maybe our politics weren’t to his taste but that’s not the way that his friendships were based.

Once when we drifted and needed safe berth he gave us his rental for half what it’s worth and he always like it when he’d turn the talk to speak of his son who’s a chip off the block and talk of his granddaughter filled him with pride but when he went two blocks to breakfast he’d ride ‘cause life started doing the cruel things it does and brought us the sad day when is turned to was and the whole town turned out and agreed on one thing the worlds a worse place now that we’ve lost the king.

— By Tom Ballard
John MacDonald Ashcraft, 76, of Patagonia passed away on January 26, 2016 at Health South Rehabilitation Hospital in Tucson, Arizona. John was born in Sacramento, California to Clifford Ashcraft and Jeanne Leisering on August 31, 1939. He lived most of his young childhood near Cliff, New Mexico. He graduated from Nogales High School and then served 3 years in the U.S. Navy. He worked for the U.S. Forest Service, U.S. Postal Service, followed by 25 years with the U.S. Customs service.

John continued his public service as a member of the Patagonia Elementary School Board, as a Cub and Boy Scout leader, and was with Patagonia Volunteer Fire and Rescue for 43 years. John was the Patagonia Fire Chief for the last 27 years of his life. He also enjoyed fishing and woodworking.

He is preceded in death by his wife of 53 years, Jennie Walsh Ashcraft, a sister, Jackie Ashcraft, and stepsons, Darrell Hatfield and Bradley Hatfield.

John is survived by his brothers, James Ashcraft (Juanita) of Silver City, New Mexico and Peter Ashcraft (Tichi) of Rio Rico; son, Jerry Ashcraft (Audrey) of Tucson; daughter, Annette Smith (William) of Okeechobee, Florida; stepson, Garland Hatfield of Tucson, and eleven grandchildren and nine great grandchildren.

The family wishes to extend their gratitude to Patagonia Volunteer Fire and Rescue and U. S. Customs and Border Protection.

The afternoon of February 27, a line of emergency vehicles parked along the side of highway 83 bore witness to Jim Coleman’s life. Across the field, in the Patagonia high school gym, fire fighters and forest service personnel joined Coleman’s friends and family to pay tribute to his memory.

Coleman, who died earlier this year, was a rock in the Patagonia community, serving on the town council, volunteering as an EMT and firefighter, and giving of himself in ways that don’t necessarily have labels.

At the start of the service, two soldiers played taps in honor of Coleman’s years of service as a naval pilot. Following the invocation, Patagonia Fire Captain, Ike Isaacson gave the eulogy, telling the story of how Jim’s dogs attacked him when he was trying to get into Jim’s house to answer an emergency call shortly after the Colemans had moved to town. Ike said, with some irony that the incident was the beginning of a long friendship.

A representative from the Forest Service listed Coleman’s many skills and talents. He was a radio tech, understood mapping, knew all about minerals and was “passionate about protecting our resources.” He was also passionate about football and NASCAR, flying, and motorcycles.

The men who worked with Coleman described him as “cool under fire” and “the voice of reason.” He was a teacher and a mentor to school students and many young fire fighters. He was steady and “his voice was calming,” recalled Michael Lewton, who valued Coleman’s guidance and friendship.

Over and over, people mentioned how much Jim Coleman loved Patagonia. As a member of the town council, and in his life, said Cynthia Morgan, “He never strayed from his own beliefs.”

Charlie Montoy, a close friend of Coleman’s, told the story of calling Jim to deal with a snake that had gotten into the house. Charlie was afraid it was a rattlesnake, and asked Jim if he shouldn’t have some tools to help with the situation. Coleman’s reply was that he had two tools, a left hand and a right hand. Happily, when they found the culprit, Coleman identified it as a king snake.

Shorty Schmitt, a friend from years ago who was in flight training with Coleman spoke briefly en route from Hawaii to Alaska. He said that when you saw Jim coming, you smiled because you knew whatever might happen would be slightly out of the box, you’d learn something, and it would probably be a little bit dangerous.

Zach Farley topped off the service, playing “Amazing Grace” on his flute.
Rotary Club’s Hermosillo Project Is Making A Difference

By Lynn Davison

Our local Mountain Empire Rotary Club—that provides scholarships to local high school graduates—is also supporting a microcredit program for small business owners in Hermosillo, Sonora. The project provides very small loans to people who want to improve their business. It’s a nifty model that begins with a loan of about $500 made to a group of 4-12 individual business owners. Once the borrowing group repays the initial loan, they can get a slightly larger one, about $1,500, and in some cases a third and a fourth loan. Ninety eight percent of businesses succeed and all their loans are repaid. Peer pressure is a powerful incentive.

Can a tiny infusion of capital, maybe $60 per business owner for the initial loan, really make a difference? Apparently, yes. Microcredit is a tried and true method of investing and is an especially effective tool to address poverty in the poorest of communities. In Hermosillo, the small business might be making and selling tamales, repairing small equipment, dressmaking, growing and selling vegetables, or construction.

Borrowers, mostly women, contribute $5,400 so far to the Hermosillo project. The national Rotary Foundation matches each loan and because loans are repaid by the borrowers, the funds can be re-loaned over and over again.

Three local Rotarians, Inge Meyer, Gama Leyva, and Sue Archibald, recently made a trip to Hermosillo to visit recipients of the microcredit program. They were inspired by their stories and impressed by the professionalism of the Mexican financial institution managing the loan program. Leyva points out that this program is a wonderful example of Rotary’s ability to do good at home and around the world.

Murrietta Joins Town Council

By Bob Brandt

Newly-elected Patagonia Town Councilwoman, Melissa Murrietta, began her service with a little more fanfare than she might have imagined at the council meeting on January 27. Upon unanimous approval of a motion to select her to fill the seat that became available following her election, Mayor Isacacon dispatched Marshall Patterson to Murrietta’s home to bring her to the meeting where she was immediately sworn in by Judge Bracamonte and took her seat just in time to, at the mayor’s urging, make a motion to adjourn the meeting.

While this surprising start to her career on the council may not have been routine, what is likely to be routine while she serves in this role is her deliberate style when it comes to addressing problems that come before the council. No matter the issue, she believes in weighing all the facts at her disposal and respectfully listening to all points of view before taking a position herself. She recognizes that some will not be happy with her decisions but, as she puts it, “I have a thick skin.”

Murrietta brings some important experience to the council, having spent nearly six years on the Planning and Zoning Committee on which she hopes to continue serving. More importantly, she is a lifelong resident of Patagonia and intends to stay here throughout her lifetime. She sees the town as open-minded, welcoming and safe and is committed to making the town the best it can be.

Murrietta successfully negotiated the demands of the academic and sports worlds, graduating from Patagonia High in 1997 after participating on the school’s girls’ volleyball, basketball and softball teams. She and her partner of some 19 years, Rudy Soto, have a ten-year old daughter, Abelina, (Aby, for short) who is already following her mother’s lead by successfully juggling homework, basketball and home responsibilities.

While Aby is in school, mom is hard at work at Tiffin Aviation Services where she is Office Manager for Student Relations. In that role, Murrietta supports Tiffin’s Flight Academy that trains students from around the world to become pilots.

Born in Doc Mock’s former office across from the fire station, and having lived her entire life here, Murrietta believes Patagonia is a great place in which to raise her daughter. As for her work on the council, she puts it this way: “This is my home town. This is where my heart is and I only want what is best for all of us who reside here.” With that kind of motivation, the town, and its citizens, will undoubtedly be the beneficiaries of her dedication, determination and openmindedness.
Let There Be Music

By Donna Reibslager

Christina Wilhelm is an accomplished pianist and musical director who is passionate about music. Her husband, Fred Wilhelm, is a retired fund manager with a lifetime of investing skills. Those talents have proved to be well suited to the endeavor they set out on back in 2005, to create a venue for performing arts in east Santa Cruz County with the help of a substantial endowment from Virginia Benderly, beloved Santa Cruz County friend, philanthropist and patron of the arts graciously supported SCFPA including providing initial seed money toward the creation of a performing arts venue. They have slowly built up a local presence, and Fred’s investment skills have nurtured and expanded that endowment—allowing them the resources to make the Santa Cruz Center For the Performing Arts (SCFPA) more visible and accessible.

Fred and Christina say that the biggest factor in SCFPA becoming known in the community has been their purchase of the property at 348 Naugle Avenue, where they now have an office. It has given them a place, an identity, and has boosted the community’s awareness of the organization. Then, two years ago, they purchased the ConcertHaul, allowing them to take music into the streets, and to travel to events and benefits to provide free concerts.

Now, with the help of the endowment and some careful investing, they have set aside $178,000 toward the building Kneisel, and Lou Schatz will include events such as the open house held on February 19. Already, say the Wilhelms, they have received about $50,000 in donations.

Christina says the name they chose—the Benderly Opera House—is not a reference to classical opera performances—but rather, is informed by the tradition of establishments in the old west, called opera houses, that hosted all manner of entertainment, from burlesque to programming that will draw attendance and participation from a wider cross-section of cultures in the community.

The SCFPA now has four musical groups: Ensemble Melodica, the Santa Cruz Singers, Tapestry Chamber Music, and Vox Kino Acappella. Made up of community members, these groups meet regularly to practice and perform, and anyone can join. With the creation of the Opera House, the foundation will be able to host not only musical events, but also classes and seminars.

As Christina said, “when you come to a special place like Patagonia, you are receiving the benefits of living here, and you need to give back to the community.” Making the pleasures of music more accessible in this community is the Wilhelms’ goal, and they are pursuing it with dedication and enthusiasm. If you’d like more information about SCFPA or how to donate, go to www.scfpapresents.org, or call 520 394-0129.
I have been thinking a lot about fences since I read that Europe is on the verge of having as many security fences and border walls as it did during the days of the Iron Curtain. Robert Frost, in his poem "Mending Wall," uses the oft-quoted phrase "good fences make good neighbors." Many people say this when they are erecting fences. I recently reread "Mending Wall" and found that Frost does not share this idea, but puts the words in the mouth of a neighbor with whom he works each year to mend the wall that separates their properties. Frost’s response to this statement by his neighbor is this: "Before I built a wall I’d ask to know/What I was walling in or walling out,/And to whom I was like to give offense./Something there is that does not love a wall."

Historically, the most famous walls are the Great Wall of China and the Berlin Wall. The Chinese started their wall over 2,000 years with the idea of keeping raiding hordes of barbarians at bay. As it lengthened and strengthened, it became a way of isolating the vast country from western culture. Most of the wall was made of rammed earth and has long since dissolved. The stronger, grander sections, built of stone, still stand and are an attraction for, of all people, western tourists.

The Berlin Wall and its cousin, the Iron Curtain, a physical and political barrier, were built not so much to keep people out, but to prevent them from leaving Eastern Europe and East Berlin. They created what were essentially communist prisons where life went on with some sense of the ordinary until you came across a physical barrier or tried to get a visa or wanted to speak or write or paint something the government feared would stir people up. The Iron Curtain was built in 1945 and was finally razed in 1991.

I lived in West Berlin briefly in 1966. The city was an island surrounded by a high wall in the communist-controlled country of East Germany. Foreigners were allowed to visit East Berlin, so I got my passport and walked to Checkpoint Charlie. I remember I was searched and detained because I had a novel in my pack (nothing serious or seditious as I recall). When I was allowed to go, I walked from a vibrant, modern city into a desolate, grey place that seemed to have had its soul sucked away. There were still bombed-out buildings and almost no cars. The market had little to offer, and Russian soldiers walked about wearing red overcoats while citizens hurried to get out of their way.

The joy that accompanied the tearing down of the Berlin Wall is not likely to be equaled again in the world. In fact, things are bleak right now in Europe as people who used to live behind the Iron Curtain erect new walls to keep out refugees from Arab countries.

The border fence between the United States and Mexico is a contemporary example of a wall built to keep people out. Time Magazine calls it "The Great Wall Of America." We are all familiar with the ugly steel structure that has sliced through the city of Nogales. There are no soldiers sitting in watchtowers to shoot people as they were in East Germany, but the fence, the desert beyond, and the Border Patrol add up to a fairly effective deterrent. Still, desperate people who want to cross the border illegally find ways, although it is dangerous and even deadly.

Here in Patagonia, U.S.A., we have our own boundary markers: walls or makeshift fences or snarling dogs. We also have gated communities, but none of these barriers mark national borders; they are personal and mostly meant to provide privacy and safety. They are also a legacy of western history, starting with keeping livestock in and Apache Indians out. Today we hardly think about these demarcations, and for the most part, despite our fences and small fears and differences, we are almost all good neighbors.

This is a friendly town. We are so lucky not to be trapped or threatened or fearful, but it’s always good to remember Robert Frost, who asks us to think about who we are walling in or walling out. And then there’s another American poet, Carl Sandburg, who wrote, "Love your neighbor as yourself; but don’t take down the fence."
Little Bob Rides Again by Cassina Farley

My dad bought me an Isuzu pickup truck when I left home. It was silver with shiny chrome wheels and came with lots of instructions from my dad.

"You'll need to keep the oil clean. Make sure you change the oil every 3000 miles."

"Don't let the tire pressure get too low you'll ruin your gas mileage." I left my parents' home in Tucson and drove right to Patagonia. Zach jumped in, and the rest is history.

Dad would make his appearance every time my little truck fell on hard times and so it kept on running, driving us around while we fell in love, and eventually it drove us away on our wedding night. We were two kids with nothing but a little silver truck and at the time I couldn't ask for more.

Soon my little truck became our primary vehicle, taking us to and from work, doing what little trucks do. He never complained, just kept going and going. When he finally died (timing chain, blown motor), some eight years later, I didn't have time to mourn; I had to be at work and needed a ride. We settled on some soulless Buick and moved on, leaving the Isuzu in my parents' back yard- a disgraceful end for a truck that had served us so well.

Many cars have come and gone in our lives since then, none with as much soul as my little truck. Our happiest times were spent driving the back roads of Patagonia sipping beer (shhhhhhhhh!) and singing songs. I never thought I'd feel that way again. And then it happened. A few years ago, a dear friend gifted me Little Bob, a '95 Nissan pickup truck with shiny chrome wheels and room for my dog. This truck is not silver but in just the right light the teal paint almost glimmers. He drives smooth, has plenty of space in the bed for chicken food, and when his door is open he makes the sweetest "ding-dong" noise I have ever heard. I was given a second chance with Little Bob and I wasn't going to let him down.

Little Bob got sick on a Wednesday almost four weeks ago. I wasn't worried at first. I have mechanic friends. He would bounce back. I had to drive my newer car, and I could feel my soul starting to leak out the exhaust. I'd wave to people and they wouldn't know who I was. Someone asked if I had gotten a new car. "NO!" Was it happening again? Dear God, not Little Bob too! Then there was the two hour crying jag. I'm not sure exactly what it was. Was I retroactively mourning my little truck? Was I missing my dad, the guy who would always save the day with his tools and his trailers and his work gloves?

Little Bob eventually got the care he needed and I drove him home just yesterday. I took him to a car wash and gave him the royal treatment, checked his bumper stickers, vacuumed his rugs and washed his windows. As we drove away I whispered into his air vent, “Let’s never be apart again.” Little Bob rides again, this time with the understanding of how much he means to me.
IV. The “Art” of Eavesdropping At The Museum

By Stuart Brody

Let’s just say...
You are away from Patagonia on vacation, visiting a son or daughter in a big city and you decide to take in a famous art museum. As you amble through a stately hall, marveling at the priceless works, you can’t help wondering how much your enjoyment would be enhanced if you knew more about art: what makes artists great and their work so enduring.

Just then, a guide leads a group of twenty tourists toward you and starts explaining the painting you were just admiring, addressing the very questions you were just contemplating. Fascinated by the guide’s insights and eager to hear more, you drift along with the group listening intently but pretending not to.

So, what’s the integrity dilemma in this scenario?
Is it a breach of integrity to eavesdrop on a guided group at an art museum?
What can we learn about practicing integrity from this scenario?

If you have ever spoken before a group of people, you know that even the slightest movements of audience members are obvious to the speaker. Try making a presentation and not noticing the guy yawning six rows back. Guides at museums are experienced public speakers, so it is unlikely you have escaped detection. She knows her group and you’re not part of it. Besides, she’s seen people do this before, many times. So much for the illusion that you won’t be noticed as you shuffle along with the group.

Perhaps less obvious to you than your illicit entry into the group is the fact that someone is paying her to lead it. And whoever that is, they didn’t invite you. Of course, you can try to convince yourself that a museum is a public place, and you’re just listening to what’s being said in public. But, you also know that expertise is not freely given. It is a commodity for sale and that’s why people pay money to rent those taped tours.

So, until such time as experts spontaneously show up at art exhibitions and invite observers to partake in the free dispersion of knowledge, you must accept the fact that you do not belong in that group, nor are you welcome. You’re sneaking in. As fondly as we might recollect those youthful rights of passage when we snuck into movie theatres or ball games or weddings, the fact is that sneaking in is a breach of an implied promise not to take what doesn’t belong to you, in this case, the expert services of a guide. The theft of these services is a breach of the duty of truthfulness.

Even assuming you could be more subtle than staring vacantly at the ceiling, pretending not to listen, why bother? As is so often the case with breaches of integrity, so much exertion to avoid detection will surely rob the effort of its satisfaction.

What do we learn about the practice of integrity from this scenario?
It is a breach of integrity—the duty of truthfulness—to attach yourself uninvited to a contingent of art observers led by an expert.

So, the next time you’re tempted to attach yourself to a guided group at an art museum try this:
Ask the guide if you may participate. It may not be the guide’s call—after all, she is hired by someone else—but at least you’ve shown respect for the group and her status as its leader. Then you know where you stand rather than floating aimlessly between the poles of secrecy and self-deception.

And, remember the law of small things:
Construing duty in small things is the foundation of integrity.

Stu Brody is a student and teacher of philosophy, law, politics, and other fields related to personal decision-making. He is nearing completion on a book entitled: “The Law of Small Things: Integrity, Authenticity and Freedom in American Life” which examines misconceptions about the meaning of integrity and outlines how we can maintain a more consistent practice by focusing on small things.

Thanks To Our Fire Department

By Gilbert Quiroga

The recent loss of two great firefighters, Jim Coleman and John Ashcraft, is a reminder that it’s time to give credit to our volunteer fire department—men and women who do their jobs without blinking and drop whatever they are doing when they get an emergency call.

Emergency medical responders are the busiest fire department volunteers. They are trained in basic medicine and work together like clockwork, answering a call within minutes. They are professional, kind, polite, and reassuring to patients and their families, staying until the paramedics leave in the ambulance with the patient and always asking if patients or families need anything else. If a helicopter is required, EMRs stand the departure site to be sure the patient gets away safely.

Patagonia’s volunteer firefighters also deserve credit. They can be called at any hour and have to get to the firehouse as quickly as possible. They’re called not only for house fires, but also for brush fires and forest fires in the dry seasons. Some of them travel to fight fires in other parts of the West.

All these volunteers put in hours of training and keep the firehouse well maintained and running efficiently. So next time you get a chance, give thanks to them; they’re the people who make this town go and keep us safe. Here are their names:

Fire Captain Ike Isakson, Les Babnew, Brent Bowdon, Denise Bowden, Keith Caseaghi, Richard Connolly, Jake Deforest, Marisela De La Ossa, Lee Gordon, Zay Hartigan, Patrick Hatfield, John Haviland, Harry Hower, Diane Isakson, Thomas Jonsson, Laura Mattox, Justin McEldowney, Kevin McKay, Mark Meredith, Nathaniel Mershon, Ivan Miniguara, Todd Norton, Tim Purvis, Michael Quiroga, Anthony Segebartt, Michael Wales, Keith Weidemann, Michael Young, Zack Yourgules.
How did the phrase “Mountain Empire” come to identify the communities of Patagonia, Sonoita and Elgin? Well, it began a very long time ago.

In the 1860s, the Fish family built a four-room ranch house on their 160-acre homestead in Empire Gulch. The family referred to their homestead as “Empire Ranch.” In 1876, the “Empire Ranch” sold to two Englishmen and over the next 20 years the land holdings were expanded to over 100,000 acres. Today the Empire Ranch Foundation works with the Bureau of Land Management to preserve the ranch buildings and to enhance education and recreational opportunities.

The communities now known as Patagonia, Sonoita and Elgin were united by the railroad from 1882 to 1962 (as the Arizona-New Mexico Railway from 1882-1933; as the Southern Pacific Railroad from 1933-1962). Following the departure of the railroad and the shutdown of area mining operations, this region’s businesses struggled to establish a reliable economic prosperity. Late in the 1960s, several key events (the 1968 damming of Sonoita Creek which created Lake Patagonia and the 1969 Nature Conservancy purchase of 312 acres known by locals as “the grove,” now an 873 acre riparian habitat known as The Patagonia-Sonoita Creek Preserve) helped establish the region as a destination for natural outdoor activities.

Through the 1970s and the 1980s, the struggle continued to establish a thriving economic base. In the early 1990s, a group of individuals formed the Patagonia Community Association to encourage new businesses and support existing ones. Patagonia Community Association continues to exist as a legal entity, although today that association is officially doing business as Patagonia Area Business Association (PABA).

Around the mid-1990s, a number of active community members from Patagonia, Sonoita, Elgin and Canelo came together to determine how to represent this region to Tucson and other communities in Southern Arizona. The group was guided by then Executive Director of Native Seeds/SEARCH, Michael McDonald, through a process of “branding” this area and imagining a number of possible regional designations. “Mountain Empire” achieved consensus and there followed a series of meetings with other local stakeholders such as businesses, church groups, fire departments, etc. for buy-in of the new branding. And so many began to use “Mountain Empire” in promoting this region.

While no one has the definitive memory, many of those involved in the branding process agree that it is likely accurate that the “Mountain Empire” decision was the combined use of “Empire” to honor the long-standing cowboy tradition of Sonoita’s ranching history and the use of “Mountain” to honor the mountains around us.

The first edition of the Country Connection was published by The Woman’s Club in 1995. The term “Mountain Empire” was used in that first edition in an historical narrative (authored by Bob Lenon and Bill Cook with contributions from Susan McDonald) and all subsequent Country Connection editions (now published by Patagonia Area Business Association) continue to use the Bob Lenon and Bill Cook article “An Historical Perspective of the Region” which refers to the communities of Patagonia, Sonoita and Elgin as the “Mountain Empire.”

In 2006, PABA received a large grant from the US Department of Agriculture and those proceeds were used by PABA to promote the “Mountain Empire” in state-wide and nation-wide marketing campaigns.

And was the branding successful? While it is challenging to measure, there is data available from the Town of Patagonia’s financial records and population census. The Town’s financial audits quantify a half century of economic transformation. In 1963, the Town’s sales tax revenues in comparable 2013 dollar value was $54,311 (actual revenue was $7,191). In 2013, the Town’s sales tax revenue was $197,540. That is 364% more sales tax revenue in 2013 than in 1963. Another measure of the town’s health is population which grew from 540 in 1960 to 913 in 2013 - a 69% growth.

Today’s primary economic contributors include ranching, vineyards, local food production, activities for outdoor enthusiasts (such as birdwatching, hiking, bicycling, camping, fishing, hunting, etc), restoration of ecosystem processes and native habitat, and conservation of the region’s unique bio-systems and cultural heritage. All of these activities are supported by numerous businesses (such as retail stores, restaurants, lodging, health services, food markets, construction, etc). The full fabric of services include our schools, emergency services, etc.

The people, businesses and organizations of our “Mountain Empire” continue to foster a reliable prosperity that contributes to an ever-improving quality of life for each of us with no negative impact on our community and our natural resources (air, water, soil, plants and wildlife).

Written by Carolyn Shafer based on her research and the memories and information shared by Bob Lenon, Jr., Nancy Cook, Susan McDonald, Connie Alford, Nancy McCoy, German Quiroga, Adrienne Halpert, Allison Bunting, Lisa Waite Bunker, and Betty Barr.
PABA Completes Membership Drive, Adds New Members

The Patagonia Area Business Association (PABA) just finished its successful 2016 membership drive. With over 100 business, non-profit and personal members from Patagonia, Sonoita and Elgin, and even some members from Nogales, PABA is moving forward with two new board members, an official Arizona Office of Tourism visitor center, and an comprehensive web site that's attractive and full of information.

New board members, Gerry Isaacs of the Stage Stop Hotel and Wildhorse Restaurant, and Christina Wilhelm CEO of Santa Cruz Foundation for the Performing Arts join Bonnie Maclean (Ovens of Patagonia) Cecilia San Miguel (Velvet Elvis) and president, Renate Klopinger (Rancho Milagro Bed & Breakfast) as current board members. Adrienne Halpert (Global Arts), Regina Medley (Mesquite Gallery) and Jean Miller (Long & Foster Realty) are emeritus members and have agreed to continue to share their experience and knowledge.

There are still two vacancies on the board and PABA members are encouraged to indicate their interest to serve on the board or on a PABA committee. Interested members should contact Renate Klopfinger at 202-494-3846.

Open Call For Auditions

At 6:30 p.m. on Thursday, March 10 at the Tin Shed Theater, the Patagonia Players will hold open auditions for “Noises Off,” a zany slapstick comedy written by Michael Frayn, which will be directed by Bob Misiorsowski.

Everyone interested in community theater is invited to audition and, to encourage new thespians, the play will be done “on book” which means that the actors do NOT have to memorize all of their lines.

We are looking to cast: Lloyd Dallas - The director of a play-within-the-play. Temperamental. ANY AGE. Dotty Otley - A late-middle-aged actress. Forgetful. Also backing the show to make a little money for her retirement. Garry Lejeune - A stuttering young actor, easily fired up. Brooke Ashton - A young inexperienced actress who is always losing her contact lenses. Plays most of the scenes in her underwear. Freddy Fellowes - Has a serious fear of violence and blood. Gets nosebleeds easily. Lacks confidence and is rather dim-witted and pompous. Middle aged. Belinda Blair - Cheerful and sensible, a reliable actress. Middle aged. Poppy Norton-Taylor - Assistant Stage Manager. A young, emotional and over-sensitive woman. Selsdon Mowbray - Elderly. Trying without success to avoid drinking and overacting. Timothy Allgood - A young over-worked Stage Manager.

A PDF of the script can be downloaded at: Noises off.pdf - Google Drive. There are several videos of the play on youtube.com.

Any questions please contact Bob Misiorsowski at bob-misiorsowski@gmail.com

Guided Tour of Two Tucson Museums

Dr. Michael Brescia, research curator at the Arizona State Museum, has graciously offered to provide up to 18 guests with a complimentary guided tour of the current exhibit, Intimacy of Faith, at the Arizona State Museum on the University of Arizona campus. Admission to the state museum is $5 and is free to members.

I have tentatively scheduled a guided tour at the Arizona Historical Society at 10 a.m. on March 22. The fee for this 45-minute tour is $4 (free for members of AHS) which includes admission into the museum and free parking (with your validation at AHS).

For as little as $9, we get to tour two outstanding museums within a block of each other. AHS in the morning and the Arizona State Museum in the afternoon. You are on your own for lunch. We would meet at 949 East 2nd Street in Tucson at 9:30 a.m.

Please let me know if you are interested as soon as possible.

German Quiroga, President, The Patagonia Museum  520-343-5641
Thanks to Eva Wright, a key figure in Patagonia’s theater community, the town is going to be treated to a play written by a noted author, starring a professional actress, and overseen by an award-winning director.

Joan Didion’s play “The Year of Magical Thinking,” based on her best-selling memoir of the same name, is coming to town Friday and Saturday, March 18, and 19, at 7 p.m. Admission, $10 per ticket, will help pay travel expenses.

Didion, who has had a long and illustrious career as a writer of both fiction and nonfiction, was married to author John Gregory Dunne, who died suddenly one evening in 2003 while they sat at the dinner table in their New York apartment. “The Year of Magical Thinking” is her recollection of this event and the exploration of her own grieving.

Credit for the play’s arrival in Patagonia goes to Wright. Before moving here about ten years ago, she lived in Fort Collins, Colorado, where she co-founded a theater company called Bas Bleu. Bas Bleu was originally a group of intellectual French women in the 1700’s whose signature was woven blue stockings. Her partner in this endeavor was actress Wendy Ishi. Bas Bleu put on plays that were often thought-provoking, and the players invited audiences to stay after the productions and share ideas and feelings about what they’d seen.

The small theater company quickly caught on. In the years after Wright moved away, Ishi has grown Bas Bleu into a major cultural institution in Fort Collins. Bas Bleu first produced “The Year of Magical Thinking” in 2013. Since that successful run in Fort Collins, Ishi has taken the play to several regional theaters, and she is bringing it to Patagonia because of her long friendship with Wright.

The play stars Ishi in the solo role of Joan Didion and is directed by Oz Scott, a television, theatrical, and film director with “The Unit,” “CSI,” ”Just Legal,” “Dirty Dancing,” and other shows to his credit. Ishi and Oz met at Marlboro College in Vermont 43 years ago. In 2011, they reconnected and agreed that the time was right for collaboration. “The Year of Magical Thinking,” a challenging drama that requires only two people, is the result of that partnership.

Wright promises a “talk-back” after each performance, so if you want to attend the play, think about staying afterward to discuss it.

Laura Jones, who teaches Theater Art at Colorado State University and has long been friendly with Ishi and Wright, is handling the technical aspects of the production. Because she has always been intrigued by the playwright Samuel Beckett, she is looking forward to visiting one of Beckett’s cousins—Patagonia resident Jill Babcock—while she is here.

All in all, it should be a very dramatic weekend. To buy tickets in advance, call Eva Wright at 520-668-7768.

Volunteer Readers Needed

The Patagonia Woman’s Club has as its main mission the education of our community’s children. In addition to providing significant scholarships to our graduating seniors, in the past we have donated many books to the Patagonia schools and several of us have volunteered to read out loud to the younger students under the supervision of the school’s librarian. These readings are followed by allowing students to pick out from our donated books their very own books to take home, where the students can share them with relatives and siblings, thus passing on the good of reading.

Unfortunately, for many reasons, there is no PWC member right now able to read to our kids. If you would be interested in reading to our kindergarten through fifth grade students at Patagonia’s Union School, please contact Sara Cobb at 394-2721. It is lots of fun, and it is not necessary to be a PWC member. Please consider helping us out if you are able. We and the kids will appreciate it.
Will Hadley has moved from Patagonia, but his legacy lives on. It was his energy and engineering know-how that started KPUP, Patagonia’s 100-watt radio station (100.5 FM), ten years ago. Hadley and a group of supporters including Carol Soth and Bob Hutchins, reckoned that $40,000 could get one up and running. The first marketing campaign—with the slogan “adopt a watt”—pulled in $10,000. Despite the considerable deficit, Hadley managed to find and buy enough used equipment to set up a station. The town voted on the call letters from a list generated by the Federal Communications Commission.

The original KPUP was housed in a small office at the end of Red Rock Avenue where High Spirits now has its flute factory. Cassina Farley, an early KPUP supporter, recalls that Friday nights were dependably when KPUP came on the air, with recorded music and live DJs. Those Friday broadcasts were a good excuse for a party as well. Otherwise, broadcast hours varied with who wanted to show up when. DJs would play whatever they liked using their own discs and nothing was prerecorded. When a DJ finished a show, he or she would turn off the station and go home.

Since that bare-bones beginning, the dedicated volunteers who run KPUP have figured out creative ways to update equipment, pay rent, and carry on. The most noticeable upgrade was automation of the station’s programming, courtesy of Hadley and Mark Nicholson, a local software engineer and lover of music. As a result, we can hear KPUP 24/7. Nicholson automates the system to play morning music that is folky and easy to listen to. In the afternoon, there’s rock; in the evening, softer selections; and jazz plays through the late-night hours.

Nicholson looks for tunes that listeners won’t hear all the time on commercial stations. He calls this “music by the best artist you’ve never heard of.” Interspersed with recordings are live DJs, shows that KPUP gets for free from several radio nonprofits, national news, and programming that comes from students at the Montessori School and PUHS. Lars Marshal directs this program.

Over the years many DJs have come and gone with the longest reigning show belonging to current board president, Jeff Latham and his Thursday night Graves & Gregory show. The board’s newest member is Tuesday night’s Jazz and Blues show DJ, Fred Hanson.

One of KPUP’s main sources of income over the years has been its annual fundraisers – the luau in May and the Fall Festival beer booth – and Cassina has shouldered the responsibility to make these events a success along with help from fellow board members Emily Riney and Georgette Larrouy. In the last few years a considerable source of income has been the Hawaiian shirt sale done by Jan Herron, Judy Mills and Adrienne Halpert, which last year raised $3,000 for the station. Another source of income is underwriting and Red Mountain Foods is the one underwriter who has stayed constant for all ten years.

KPUP’s studio is now in Bob Ollerton’s plaza complex on McKeown Ave. It’s looking more and more professional these days, after Kevin McKay built in some desks and shelves. Ollerton, a knowledgeable and energetic member of the KPUP board and official station manager, looks forward to the day when the Federal Communications Commission, which has lots of arcane regulations, sends out notices that a limited number of stations can increase their power. Right now KPUP is officially allowed to transmit to a three-mile radius—a minuscule distance in the world of FCC-licensed radio (though a car radio might pick up a signal further out). If KPUP were to get such an expanded FCC authorization, they would install a more powerful transmitter and people in Nogales, Sonoita, and Elgin could tune in.

People who visit Patagonia are amazed to learn that we have our own community radio station. It is rare for a town this size have dedicated volunteers keeping us entertained and informed with quality programming. Congratulations to everyone who has worked to make KPUP what it is today.

KPUP’s office on McKeown, before the recent renovations

Few people realize that community radio stations serve a vital function as the source of emergency broadcasting, telling listeners what roads are open, what areas are threatened, and where to get food, water, and medical help. In such a situation, radio can still be a very effective way to share information. KPUP is prepared to do the job should it ever be necessary.
Friends of Sonoita Creek will hold their annual meeting on Saturday, March 5, at 10 a.m. at Cady Hall in Patagonia. The featured speaker will be Dr. Laura Norman. She will present preliminary results from a soils and water assessment model of the Upper Sonoita Creek to highlight areas of high runoff, erosion, and infiltration throughout the watershed. This presentation will include research describing the fate and transport of acid-mine drainage in the Patagonia Mountains and discuss how the research is being used today. The talk will conclude with a short discussion of how the Sonoita Creek watershed impacts the Santa Cruz watershed.

Dr. Norman is a Research Physical Scientist at the U.S. Geological Survey, where she has worked since 1998, studying watersheds along the Arizona-Sonora border. She received her Ph.D. and M.S. in Watershed Management from the University of Arizona with a minor in Remote Sensing and Spatial Analysis. Dr. Norman currently serves as the President for the SW Chapter of the Society for Ecological Restoration. Most recently she is using her skills to improve restoration-site selection and design, assess restoration efforts, and predict the effects of climate and land-use change.

In addition to Dr. Norman’s presentation, FOSC will explain their featured projects for 2016: monitoring Sonoita Creek using the Rapid Stream Riparian Assessment protocols, providing training for new volunteers to monitor Sonoita Creek using these protocols, participating in The Patagonia Sonoita Creek Preserve’s 50th anniversary, and participating in the fencing survey for Sonoita Creek State Natural Area. In addition, we will be planting saplings along Sonoita Creek to try to increase the number of young trees in the riparian area. Friends will also be sponsoring hikes this spring.

The public is invited to the presentations. For more information call 520-394-0173.

Free Dog Microchipping and Feral Cat Services

Thanks to several generous donations, the Santa Cruz Humane Society (SCHS) recently established two new grant programs. SCHS is an independent, non-profit, no kill shelter located in Nogales.

First, SCHS is implanting free microchips in up to 200 dogs. Having your dog chipped significantly improves the chance of finding him or her if the dog goes missing or gets lost. Implanting the chip is quick and easy. Visit SCHS any time between 8:00am - 3:30pm, EXCEPT Wednesday and Sunday, to have your dog chipped. No appointment is needed. This is a first come first serve program that will continue until all 200 chips have been distributed.

SCHS has also launched a fund to provide free spay/neuter surgeries and vaccinations for feral cats. The surgeries are performed on Wednesdays by SCHS veterinarian, Roberto Rojas, DVM. The cat will have its ear notched to indicate it is feral and has been altered. Cats dropped off for surgery must be picked up the same day. To schedule an appointment, call (520) 287-5654. SCHS is working to maintain the Feral Cat Fund for the long term, to help control the feral cat population in Santa Cruz county. If you’d like to make a donation to the Feral Cat Fund, please send it to 232 E. Patagonia Hwy., Nogales, AZ 85621 with a note indicating it’s for this fund. You can also donate online at www.santacruzhumane society.org.
Kpup broadcast schedule

Feature Story News (www.FSN.com)

Monday thru Friday: 5 min. news at 8 a.m., noon, and 6 p.m.
Saturday: 5 min. news at 8 a.m. and 6 p.m.
Sunday: 5 min. news at 8 a.m.

Monday: 7 p.m. to 8 p.m.; Beale Street Caravan (blues show)
Tuesday: 7 p.m. to 9 p.m.; Jazz and Blues with Fred Hanson
Wednesday: 11 a.m. to 12 p.m.; Lars Marshal with Patagonia Montessori School
Thursday: (Alternating Weeks) 11 a.m. to 12 p.m.; Lars Marshal with PUHS. 7 p.m. to 10 p.m. Graves and Gregory Show
Friday: 5 to 7 p.m.; Tara’s KPUP Happy Hour
7 p.m. to 9 p.m.; hook’s Sunken Roadhouse
Saturday: Noon to 1 p.m.; Etown
Sunday: 6 to 8 p.m.; Acoustic Café. 8 to 10 p.m.; Folk Alley
### MEETINGS

**Friends of Sonoita Creek** will hold their annual meeting on Saturday, March 5, at 10 a.m. at Cady Hall in Patagonia. The featured speaker will be Dr. Laura Norman.

**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., Info: 237-8091

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

**Patagonia Town Council** - 2nd and 4th Wed. at 7 p.m. in the Town Council Hall.

**Rotary Club** - 1st Thurs., 7 a.m. at Patagonia H.S.; All others at Kief Joshua Winery, 6 p.m. Call (520) 907-5829 for more info.

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

**Overeaters Anonymous** - Tue. & Thurs., 6:30 p.m. Fragrance-free meeting. Patagonia United Methodist Church. 520 404-3490

### EVENTS

**March 2 & 29:** Old Tyme Music Jam at the Patagonia library. 7 p.m.

**March 6:** SCFPA presents the Ensemble Melodica Quartet at Tumacacori Park, 3 p.m.

**March 9:** Vaudeville. 7p.m. @ The Tin Shed Theater $5. Buy tickets in advance @ PCAA 520 394-9369 or makeart@msn.com

**March 10:** Carlos Tabernabberri book signing and talk, *Through The Eyes Of The Horse*; 1 p.m. at the Vineyard Café in Sonoita. 520-455-4779

**March 13:** Benderly Salon Concert Series -- Maria Avalos, Mezzo Soprano, and Francisco Rocafuerte, Pianist. 3 p.m.in the Lobby of First Fidelity Bank, 825 N Grand Ave, Nogales. $25 Members/$30 Non-Members. scpapresents.org

**March 18 &19:** "The Year of Magical Thinking." 7pm @Live at The Tin Shed Theater . $10 per person

**March 19:** 50 Year Celebration of Patagonia-Sonoita Creek Preserve. 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the Nature Conservancy on Blue Haven Rd. Contact Deana McAleer at 602-322-6982 or deana.mcaleer@tnc.org.

**March 19:** It’s All About the Insects, 2 p.m. at Patagonia Public Library with Carl Olson, the Bugman.

**March 22:** Write-A-Will Workshop, 4 p.m. at Santa Cruz County Courthouse in Nogales. Visit cfsaz.org/santacruz for more information.

**April 1:** Suzy Bogguss Concert, 7 pm at Pioneer Hall, Sonoita Fairgrounds. See ad p. 16.

**April 3:** Spaghetti Western Dinner at Tin Shed Theater. “Fistful of Dollars”. Advance ticket sales only. 520-394-9369.

**April 15:** Music and a Movie. Buster Keaton. Reserve Seats at 520 394-9369.

### SPECIAL INTERESTS

**Ukrainian Egg Decorating Workshops** with Susan Corl. March 12, 13, 19, 20 & 26: Pre-registration required at 520-394-2926 or susanacorl@gmail.com.

**Free Qigong in the park** by the Senior Center, 1/11-1/29.

**Musical and Movement Bonding Project** for the whole family, Tin Shed Theater on February 10. 831-869 1254.

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

**Drum Circle**, Mons., 4-6 p.m. at Sonoita Crossroads building courtyard by Chuckwagon Grill, Free. No exp. reqd. 490-4991.

**Bird Walks** at The Nature Conservancy’s Patagonia-Sonoita Creek Preserve every Sat. @ 9 a.m. Meet at the visitor center. Patagonia residents Free. 520-394-2400.

**Melodica rehearsals**, every Wed., 9:30 a.m., SCFPA office, 348 Naugle, Patagonia. New members welcome!

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

**Art Makers** - After school art classes, ages 5-12; Tuesdays at the Pat. Creative Arts Ctr. Call 394-9369 for info.

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

**Bikram Yoga** - Patagonia; 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 Mon. at 9 a.m.; 520 732-0453.

**Open Tennis** - PUHS, Tues. & Thurs. at 4 p.m., Sat. at 9 a.m., Call 394-2973 for info.


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**Lunch for Seniors** - Fresh-cooked meals, Mon. thru Fri. at the Patagonia Community Center.

**Sr. Citizens of Patagonia Van Service** - Medical transportation Mon. - Fri. for seniors & disabled by appointment only. Call 394-2494

**Patagonia Food Bank** - Community Center; 2nd 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 Catholic Church, 12 Los Encinos Rd, Sonoita. Thurs-Sat. 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

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**FULL MOON**

**MARCH 23**
HOUSING RENTALS

JACK AND JILL BEDROOMS AVAILABLE w/ shared bathrm, $350/ mo. each. Seniors preferred. Short term rentals available. Call Don at 520-297-7065

BRIGHT, PRIVATE 1-BR/1-Ba VACATION RENTAL in town. Kitchenette and courtyard. Nightly or weekly. 520-904-0877 or CasitaEncanta.com

1 BR 1 BA $750 util. included; 3 BR 2 BA $1450 util. included. Call John 394-0148, or 360.317.4281

HELP WANTED

Help Wanted: Do you have a strong back and able to transfer 200 pounds? Are you an experienced caregiver or certified caregiver? Please call Patagonia assisted Care Agency: 520-604-8179

PT Operations Manager: Borderlands Restoration L3C seeks an experienced PT Operations Manager to manage financial and human resources programs. Salary neg. borderlandsrestoration@gmail.com.

PT Sales Associate - Global Arts Gallery, Patagonia. 21+/- hrs wkly, requires wknds & holidays. Email resume, w/ retail & computer exp., to Adrienne@globalartsgallery.comAdrienne 520.394.0077

PATAGONIA HOUSEKEEPING POSITION: 1-2 flexible days per week. Basic English skills, exc. work habits, references. 520-604-6762 or 394-0110

MISC.

For Rent: Unique Historic Ranch Property, Patagonia, Arizona $1050/per month plus utilities; Unfurnished; charming 100-year-old homestead ranch house; two bedroom, 1 bath, fireplace, heat pump, new refrigerator, washer/dryer, dual pane windows, large porch, outbuildings, developed chicken coop, garden beds with great soil; this unique historic property is on 135 acres of Sonoran grassland, mesquite, oak and juniper, bordering the Coronado National Forest; located three miles from Patagonia, it has spectacular views of Red Mountain and the Canelo Hills; convenient to nearby communities of Sonoita and Nogales, and a perfect spot for birders, artists, hikers, mountain bikers, horse owners or anyone who loves the peace and quiet of rural living. (Additional fee for boarding horses). Available May 1, 2016; One-year lease (seasonal rates possible).

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Kenny's Shuttle Service
Modern Motorcar Transport (520) 604-4939
March’s Manzanitas

March in our diverse Sky Islands is often a blustery affair. The winds may blow fiercely, sometimes, forcing one into imploring for a respite, however brief. I’ve had my fair share of those moments, as incessant winds can try my patience. Still, I take solace knowing that things could be worse. In the Midwest, our forty-mile-an-hour gusts often translate into tornados and other cataclysmic events.

In addition to gales, March often heralds the blooms of a variety of native trees and shrubs. Though many of these species may begin to flower in February or even late January, most continue well into the current month. Among the most obvious of our blooming shrubs is pointless manzanita. In form this species sometimes attains a stature of 12 to 15 feet. Readily distinguished by its completely red-barked branches, this form this species sometimes at-

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Typical of the Ericaceae or heath family, pointleaf manzanita bears urn-shaped flowers that often hang down. Anyone who’s encountered a wild blueberry or huckleberry will readily recognize the reproductive parts of manzanita. Given the rather austere timeframe within which it flowers, this species often attracts surprising droves of would-be pollinators seeking nectar and/or pollen. I’ve witnessed a wide range of seemingly unseasonable butterflies plying the flowers with their uncoiled proboscises.

Look closely enough and you’ll also likely see a few species of native bees (not honeybees). Some of these bypass the normal route for feeding used by pollinators, instead puncturing the base of each tiny manzanita flower that they visit. Thus, these bees are merely stealing nectar and in no way are helping the plant to reproduce. Look for the small, but distinct puncture marks left by these thieves at the base of the flowers. Regardless of which particular insects you see and hear at a flowering pointleaf manzanita it is surely a spectacular miniature show!

A large percentage of pollinated flowers are likely to produce manzanita fruits, as evidenced by the bumper crops we often see come summer. A wide range of wildlife partake of the fruits when they’re ripe. I’ve identified the distinctly corrugated seeds in the scat of black bear, coyotes, collared pec- cary, white-nosed coati, and gray fox to name a few. The rock-hard embryos have evolved to pass scarified, but otherwise unharmed through the digestive tracts of various mammals, thereby helping them to germinate. No doubt rodents relish not only the flesh, but also the hard seeds themselves. Given that many Manzanita fruits can be found on the ground well into late autumn they likely play a key dietary role during this otherwise austere time.

Its not only wildlife that call manzanita food. Many times I have enjoyed snacking on the ripe, fresh fruit. I simply pluck a nice handful and pop them in my mouth. Next I gently munch the fruit with my molars, taking great care not to bite too hard. Our teeth are not designed to deal with such hard seeds, so take heed! I do, however, swallow the seeds and have never had a bad experience with them.

I especially enjoy preparing a manzanita drink. This is as simple as crushing the ripe fruit - I achieve this via a mortar and pestle - until much of the inner flesh is revealed. I then place this mass in a vessel with cold water and agitate it periodically over the course of at least a few hours. Leaving your wild concoction overnight assures that the taste will be strong. To me, the tartness of manzanita drink is re-

freshing and not overpowering. As with all facets of this wonderful native shrub it provides a sensory experience that is uniquely manzanita.

Also keep a keen eye and ear out for flowering Fremont cottonwood, various willows, velvet ash, and the groundsel shrub that proffers its fragrant yellow flowers along Sonoita Creek. All of these winter flowering trees and shrubs may be abuzz with invertebrates. Happy hunting!

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.

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Girls Basketball Nets Winning Season

The Lobos varsity 2016 basketball season is history. The boys section record was 3 wins and 6 losses and their division record was 4 wins and 10 losses.

The girls had a winning season and made it to the state tournament where they lost to Pinon 34-61. Their section record was 7 wins, 2 losses. Their division record was an impressive 12 wins and 4 losses.

GO LOBOS!

Spring athletics won’t be as exciting as there will be no varsity baseball or softball teams. However, tennis coach, Tod Bowden has a lot of talented girls and boys trying out for the tennis team. Remember to come out and support them this spring.

Lilly Wharton, one of the team’s top scorers, in a recent game against Valley High
Cancer is the most dangerous and unrecognized threat to the health and safety of our nation's firefighters. Multiple studies have repeatedly shown evidence of higher rates of cancer in firefighters compared to the general American population. So says the Firefighter Cancer Support Network.

Annette Kelley, long-time resident of Elgin and a professional firefighter, has cancer. She began many years ago supporting the SEFD by volunteering at the station and helping with fund-raising events. Soon after 2008 she studied and was awarded certifications in wildland firefighting and EMT. By 2010 Annette became a career EMT/Firefighter. In addition to regular crew duties she developed fire prevention programs for the benefit of the local homes and businesses. Sonoita-Elgin Fire District Chief Joseph DeWolf praises her contributions to the District and says “Annette was and is very dedicated to the District and our community”.

Annette is struggling with stage 4 lymphoma and is now stationed at the Green Valley Department. Her duties with the Green Valley Fire District have been reduced while she undergoes treatments with the Arizona Banner Cancer Center. Her Fire Chief, Chuck Wunder, says “Annette is a special person and will battle through this bump in the road. Her positive attitude, strong faith and her amazing support system will carry her through this difficult time and she will be back on the truck soon.”

In typical fashion, Annette started losing her hair. To show their support for her, many firefighters at the Green Valley Station came together and had their heads shaved. A few days later firefighters and volunteers at the Sonoita-Elgin Fire District gathered together and had their heads shaved in support.

Pictured here is a group of firefighters at the SEFD who volunteered to have their heads shaved by Janna Lasher, hairdresser, from Tucson. Annette is center front in the picture and is surrounded by her former crew members.

Annette doesn’t dwell much on her current medical problems. She prefers to talk about cancer in the fire industry, to alert the public and her fellow firefighters, to the dangers that are out there everywhere.

Chief Wunder at Green Valley lauds her position on this issue. “Annette’s openness about her illness and her desire to educate others is a big benefit to our organization. Even as she battles her own illness, she is working to protect those around her from contracting this awful disease”.

What types of cancer have been shown to occur more so in firefighters than in the general public? Some are testicular cancer, myeloma, lymphoma, melanoma, leukemia and brain cancer. In 2012 the Massachusetts Coalition for Occupational Safety & Health named firefighting as the most deadly occupation in their state.

What are the dangers these professionals face each time they get a 911 call? Smoke and soot get into their lungs and eventually to other organs in the body. Toxins and carcinogens like benzene, styrene, hydrocarbons and plastics are absorbed through the skin. Today’s house fires have more in common with hazmat events than old-fashioned residential fires due to the materials now common in construction such as plastics and synthetics.

Annette wants the public to know about the dangers they face and the precautions they address. Firefighters can reduce exposure to cancer by properly maintaining and cleaning their personal protective equipment and breathing apparatus. No longer is the old saying “the only real firefighter is a dirty firefighter” acceptable.

Annette is staying strong and positive during this time. Her deep faith and the support system around her gives her strength to continue. Recently, with her typical broad smile beaming, she proclaimed “I’m almost to my fourth treatment!”. She will be back and thanks everyone for their support.
Learning Code For Tomorrow’s Jobs

Elgin School third graders are preparing for jobs in the future by learning code today. Currently there are 617,000 open computing jobs nationwide yet only 38,175 computer science students graduated into the workforce. In the next few years the top careers will be in video game programming and 3D imaging in the medical field. These professions need programmers to design, create and implement innovations.

To that end, Elgin School Superintendent Christopher Bonn has created an enrichment class for students in the third, fourth and fifth grades to learn beginning coding. Mrs. Daffern has received training to teach the program and is pictured here with her class of Elgin students.

Rather than beginning with Java script and programming languages, these future computer scientists are learning key concepts and computational thinking skills via visual blocks. They are learning code through angles, commands, drag and drop, repeats, move right or left, less and greater than etc.

Superintendent Bonn affirms that “We know that technology is essential in the 21st century and our students should have a solid foundation of computer programming and software development.” He would like to see a former student of Elgin Elementary School someday find a cure for cancer or control a robot that is able to remove a tumor that is too intricate for a human or develop software that protects our national security.

Their ultimate goal is teaching creativity. A sign on the classroom wall says “A computer is just a tool. Your brain is still needed.” Mrs. Daffern enjoys teaching the class and beams with joy when she hears one of her students exclaim “Yes. I did it!”

Parents who are overwhelmed with all this can go to the website, code.org and see what the kids are doing and even try to keep up with them through the lessons and challenges.

Vanity Plates Help Fight Fires

With support from the Arizona Department of Transportation and the state legislature, scholarships are now available to support life safety training to rural Arizona firefighters. You can help pay for this training. If you purchase a vanity license plate and designate it for fire training, $17 of the fee you pay goes to this scholarship fund and, along with other rural fire fighters, will help the Sonoita Elgin Fire Department.

Whether you get a personalized license plate for an annual fee of $50, or a non-personalized one for $25, $17 will go to support the project.

Vehicle owners can order the new plates online at ServiceArizona.com or at any Motor Vehicle Department office or authorized third party business. Local information is available at 520-455-5854.

Fill ‘Er Up At Stirrups

Flags are waving, cars are lining up and drive-through coffee is now available in Sonoita.

Mitch and Teresa Shade are now serving morning coffee in their new business called “Stirrups Coffee N’Such”. This couple from Elgin says whatever it takes to get started in the morning they have it.

They offer dark roasted cowboy coffee to flavored lattes, cappuccino, macchiato, frappe and even hot chocolate and teas. And better yet their coffees go perfectly with their selection of muffins, cookies, a Danish or a biscotti.

For warmer weather days they also provide Italian soda, iced tea and orange juice. Their complete menu and specials can be found on Facebook under Stirrups.
In the past 11 months, approximately 3,800 people have passed through the Regional Visitor Center. Most have come from Arizona, but some days we see people from as far away as Europe, Asia, New Zealand, Canada, or Alaska.

This month the center will celebrate its first anniversary. There have been ongoing changes and improvements, and a growing group of volunteers to keep the doors open seven days a week in the high season, three days a week in the summer.

After making the necessary accommodations (handicapped parking, drinking water, open all year, outdoor information when we’re closed) our visitor center is now a member of the Arizona Office of Tourism (AOT). This means that travel brochures from around the state are now available in our visitor center and our regional brochure (under construction) will be in most of the AOT visitor centers in the state. The Patagonia Area Business Association (PABA), who initiated the application to AOT, hopes that this affiliation will bring more visitors to the area. The most visible change, in the form of new signage on the highway, may already be in place when you read this. Please stop by the Regional Visitor Center between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m. on Sunday, March 13, have a look around the more organized space, have a glass of punch, sign the guest book and consider volunteering or becoming a PABA member if you're not already.

REMINDER: Any members of PABA are welcome to put their information in the visitor center.
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 Susan Archibald (eggsuetrev@aol.com) phone: 520-990-4648. The deadline for applications is March 31, 2016.

Danny Schrimpf plays a lead role in The Crucible, performed by PUHS Theater on February 13.

Danny Miranda controls the ball at a recent PUHS basketball game.

Rotary Scholarship Deadline

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After living in Patagonia for 18 years, Anastasia Lucero is ready to start her new journey into adulthood. Growing up here with over 30 family members has been a heartwarming, typical life for Stasi. This upcoming graduate hopes to leave her nest and transition into a bigger town. After high school, Stasi will move to Tucson to attend Pima Community College for two years, and will finish off at the U OF A. She plans on getting her basics done first, then eventually majoring in child development.

Living in the same town and attending the same school her whole life has really brought her close to many people. “Patagonia is very small, but the vibe we get off each other is family, and that’s one thing I’m going to miss,” says Stasi.

“High school holds many of my favorite memories, including going to state for basketball with the girls,” she says. She has had a very productive high school career which involved being on the volleyball team, basketball team, softball, and finally serving as a senior representative. Leaving her best friends Cokelly and Kelsey will be difficult as well as saying goodbye to her three favorite teachers, Mr. Melanson, and Mr. and Mrs. Hayes. “Words cannot describe how sad it makes me knowing that I won’t be seeing these people as often, hearing Mal Dog’s (Mr. Melanson, math teacher) life lessons and just having the Hayes’ presence is something I am truly going to miss,” says Stasi.

She says, “Patagonia has been nothing but good to me and I will definitely be visiting as much as I can. I wish nothing but the best to my former classmates. To those lower classmen, all I have to say is, “hang in there. High school goes by in a blink of an eye. Make sure to make the best of it.”

With an attitude that’s colored black, pink, and champagne you can only expect Elizabeth “Beth” Leon to have aspirations of becoming a makeup artist or fashion designer. The five-foot-two senior expressed that the reason behind her interest in fashion was because even as a youngster she has had fun dressing up and keeping up with trends. After high school, Beth anticipates attending Pima Community College in Tucson and then transferring to Arizona State University. She expects to major in business with an emphasis on fashion. With a work ethic that was instilled by her parents, the thought of “doing something bigger” is what motivates her to conquer the fashion industry.

Throughout high school, Beth has participated in basketball, volleyball, softball and tennis. One of her favorite memories was going to compete at the state basketball tournament because memories were made, she’s passionate about the sport, and “because it was fun!” Her high school experience was definitely a unique one, but can you imagine experiencing it with a twin sister? Beth said that school with her sister “has been fun, but difficult seeing her 24/7.” There have been numerous stories between the two, but she wouldn’t trade it for anything.

Overall, Beth would like to be content and worry free, as she grows older. When volunteering in Panama, she learned to not take anything for granted. Residents and children didn’t have any of the possessions she did, like clothes or phones. She says, “Material things aren’t important and happiness is what matters.”
PART 2

It’s been a really good experience to live here for a long time. My childhood was full of playing outside with friends: Stasi, Gabi, Danny and Javi. We all grew up together since we were about six. Also, just having a twin sister was one of the best things. It was like having a best friend at home I could always play with.

Going to school up on the hill was awesome when I was younger. We would always get in arguments about who used to ring the bell in the morning because it was the “cool” thing. In elementary school I played piano but throughout my high school years I’ve been really involved in sports. I used to be very shy, but because of sports I am not shy anymore.

Since I am Mexican and I have lived in Patagonia my whole life, every break we get off from school my family and I always travel to Mexico. Most people spend it here in Patagonia with their family, but some of my family is in Santa Cruz, Mexico, so that’s where we go. It’s kind of become a tradition. We usually have a big family reunion. We try to get everyone together so we can enjoy each other’s company. We always stay up until about four in the morning just talking and telling each other stories. Especially when it’s cold we sit next to the fire and drink coffee and talk for hours. If one of us has a problem and needs to talk about it we usually don’t see them as problems but something to overcome, and that’s my whole family’s mentality.

I am not too sure where I will be next year but I know that when I graduate, I will be going back to Panama. My sister and I go with a group that’s for turtle conservation, plant conservation, women’s rights, school for the children, and providing a meal for the elders and it’s really fun. When I worked with the kids over there it really helped me realize that you have to be grateful for what you have. When you are in the Panamanian school, and you teach the kids, you are surprised by how excited they are to finally learn something.

Contributed by the Patagonia Union High School Journalism Class
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