Public Debate on AMI’s Drilling Dominates Town Council Meeting

By Ann Katzenbach and Donna Reibslager

It seems that the town of Patagonia has agreed to disagree and move forward, knowing that exploratory drilling is taking place and that real mining may come, and that they must work together so that the town isn’t torn apart. There are certainly committed factions in town—that was clear at the last town council meeting on October 26.

Don Taylor, Chief Operating Officer for Arizona Mining Inc. (AMI) explained to a full chamber what AMI is up to. We’ve listed those facts on the next page.

Fred Sang started public comment by saying that jobs are critical to the town. He said the council needed to work with AMI. “Otherwise they’re going to go somewhere else and then we’re going to be is this little town that dies.”

Some minutes later, newly elected council member, Ron Reibslager, said that no one knows what is going on at the drilling site. He said he asked Brent Bowdon to go up and tour the site so that he could enlighten the public and stop a lot of speculation. He said Bowdon told him, “No,” because of insurance and safety concerns. Then Reibslager recounted driving up Harshaw Road and stopping where the road runs through the middle of AMI’s private property. He said a security team accosted him, told him he could not to stop on private property and “verbally accosted me.”

Taylor responded by saying the road situation “will be fixed tomorrow.” He stressed, however, the importance of both secrecy and safety at the site.

As for the water treatment plant that AMI has taken responsibility for, Taylor said that a pilot project had proven successful, was approved, and AMI was starting construction of a full-scale facility.

Fred Sang spoke again, reiterating his belief: “This town’s going to die.”

Reibslager countered by saying that most businesses in town were doing well. This was backed up by Carolyn Shafer who said sales tax revenue has increased 421% in real dollars since mining activities ceased in 1965. In addition, the town’s population has grown by 69%. Councilperson Andy Wood said that Gathering Grounds was doing well, that the café supported several families. But later, Bob Ollerton who owns the Plaza de Patagonia, backed Sang up, saying his businesses were having a hard time financially.

The issue of dark skies brought the evening’s most passionate outcry. Cliff Hirsch described how the light and noise from AMI’s drilling are impossible to shut out at night. He said it was hard to sleep. He said there were no screens on the lights. “It’s like Yankee Stadium!” he declared. Taylor responded that all regulations had been complied with.

Ron Pulliam, who heads up Borderlands, said that he hoped the discourse about mining in Patagonia would be civil. “All the truth and wisdom in not in one camp, but as much as you want this mine here, that’s how much some of us oppose it.”

Councilperson Melissa Murrietta spoke up twice in an effort to stop everyone talking at once, but it was Mayor Isakson who had the gavel, and he let most disagreements go unchecked. By and large, people seemed to agree that, despite some rough patches, the meeting had provided information and given people a chance to air their views.

As the meeting wound down, Andy Wood suggested forming a committee to talk through some of the questions and divergent points of view.

She suggested that there be meetings outside of regular scheduled council meetings—meetings that are well publicized and focused on one or two topics of concern, with viewpoints from both ends of the spectrum.

Resident Bob Brandt champions an “economic development committee,” noting that the economy is an underlying source of disagreement.

Whatever the next step may be, most people seem to agree that the town should move forward in a thoughtful way with the overarching question of mining.
The Facts As We Know Them

There has been speculation from residents as to the nature and scope of AMI’s current mining operations in the Patagonia Mountains. Here are the facts that we have been able to establish. Some we know from experience, some come from AMI’s website, and some from Don Taylor’s presentation to the council.

- Arizona Mining Inc. is a Canadian corporation that does exploratory mining. It finds underground ore deposits, maps them, and usually sells the rights and the land to a mining company.
- AMI currently owns 17,000+ acres of land that includes their original patented Hermosa Mine and the land they acquired from the state of Arizona in exchange for mitigating the leakage from the old Trench Mine.
- To date, AMI has drilled 270 holes on their property, finding where ore pockets are located. These ore samples come from 3,000 to 5,000 feet deep in the earth. AMI has referred to this as a “world-class mineral deposit.”
- Using a generator to provide electricity, AMI currently has 15 drill rigs working 24 hours a day, seven days a week with an eight-day break for drillers every three weeks. They are able to do this because mining activity in Arizona is exempt from restrictive noise and light ordinances.

- The drilling site is serviced by fuel trucks, water trucks, portable toilet trucks, heavy construction trucks, and assorted delivery trucks with water tanks, pipe, etc., which access the site by way of Harshaw Road, a narrow road with no shoulders.
- There are approximately 30 pickup trucks involved in this phase of drilling that started last spring.
- AMI has spent more than $60 million dollars so far on this project. On their website they say, “We will continue the aggressive drill program already in place at least through the end of 2016.”
- There are armed security guards on AMI’s property and cars that stop on Harshaw Road as it passes through their property, are told to “move on.” Don Taylor said at the October 26 meeting that this harassment would stop.
- According to Taylor, wells on the AMI property are providing enough water for the project. He says if mining negatively impacts Patagonia’s water supply, AMI is willing to take part in a comprehensive water study done by a third party, if necessary. He added that they also have the option of piping water to their operations from “a ranch to the east.”
- AMI employs 200 people for the Taylor Deposit project. Drillers are living in trailers and rented housing. Some have had to find accommodations in Nogales.
- AMI’s remediation work at the Trench Mine is moving ahead. Arizona Department of Environmental Quality (ADEQ) has approved plans for a passive water treatment plant on the property, which is just beginning to get underway. This construction will mean more heavy machinery going to and coming from the site.
- It will be many months before economic and engineering assessments are made. Permitting can take anywhere from two to six years.

For those who oppose the drilling, as well as those who are in favor, the next important marker is the outcome of the scoping comments. Based on this, AMI will either move forward, or be required to submit an EA or EIS to establish whether its plan of operations will adversely affect the environment.

Forest Service Issues Scoping Notice For Taylor Project

Late this summer American Mining (AMI) submitted a plan of operation to the Forest Service, proposing to extend their drilling onto public land. The Forest Service issued a Scoping Notice to the public in September asking for citizen comments. On its website, the Forest Service explains: “Citizens often have valuable information about places and resources that they value and the potential environmental, social, and economic effects that proposed federal actions may have on those places and resources. NEPA’s requirements provide you the means to work with the agencies so they can take your information into account.”

The comments had to be submitted by October 11. According to Forest Ranger, Daisy Kinsey, there are “a lot of comments” and a “decision is many months out.” If, after reading the public comments, the Forest Service decides “there are no extraordinary circumstances related to the proposed action,” they will issue a “categorical exclusion” and AMI’s proposed drilling on public land will go ahead. If, however, there are found to be significant environmental impacts, they will ask for an Environmental Assessment (EA) or an even more detailed Environmental Impact Study (EIS).

Here are some of the comments published on the Forest Service Website:

“Because of AMI’s existing drilling over the summer the main housing in town, the hotel, was filled up with mine workers. As was most of a new trailer park. Where will tourists and other visitors like hunters stay if there are even more miners in town for longer periods?"

“The sustainable tourism jobs will be lost forever if our public lands are permanently destroyed by mining. In 2008, visitor spending in Santa Cruz County, (cont. on next page)
We are fortunate to have found an excellent Editor-in-Chief whose professional skills and enthusiasm make her well suited to the job. You may have already met our energetic and optimistic new editor, Ali Morse. Her talents and curiosity have led her down interesting career paths over the years, working in various capacities for non-profits in Colorado and Alaska. This included work in an underground abandoned mine, overseeing a pilot project to mitigate acid mine drainage. She’s been a writer, a poet, an appraiser, an event coordinator, a food and wine specialist, and speaks fluent Spanish.

Ali has begun to reorganize PRT’s production system (the process whereby incoming articles are reviewed, edited, and proofed). This month she has also been editing, fundraising, and reporting. But we conceived of her position as one that is aided by an Editorial Assistant, and that’s a paid position we still need to fill (or we will find Ali some morning burnt to a crisp).

We are also in need of a bookkeeper, as Marti Chase will be leaving us (see page 18), and a Patagonia reporter. Robert David Dorney (see page 26) is taking on our Sonora area reporting.

Finally, we’re proud to announce that we’ve designed an easy way for you to help keep the presses rolling. Go to our website, www.patagoniaregionaltimes.org, and you will see the yellow “Donate Now” button. Click on this and your transaction will be astonishingly simple. You can make a one-time donation or easily set up an account that will charge your credit card each month. With a sustaining donation, you help us to see far into our financial future. Together we can keep this vital community resource alive and well, for many years to come. As always, we greatly appreciate your support.
Bob Tollefson, who is currently filling in for Denise Blake while she is on medical leave, is no stranger to the Patagonia schools. He was superintendent here from 2008-2011 and also principal of the elementary school when it was still at Old Main. He left to return to his roots and family in North Dakota.

When Blake announced that she would be taking medical leave, Tollefson had just retired from two educational jobs he held in North Dakota. He was planning to move to Mesa, Arizona. When he was approached to fill in for Blake, he was pleased to return to Patagonia, a familiar place where he still has friends.

He noted positive physical improvements in the schools, and found that his elementary students were six years older. He says he had trouble recognizing some of them.

One of the most interesting and positive parts of his job at the moment is making plans for the Old Main campus. He’s negotiated a contract with Borderlands Restoration to lease three areas. Tollefson says that it’s great to have two organizations, the Patagonia Museum and Borderlands, that fit so well with the concept of education. The museum has been a wonderful tenant, and he knows Borderlands will be as well.

The school’s maintenance department has cleaned out the buildings on the north side of the campus – space that had been used for storage over the years. Tollefson said the contents of two rooms had filled a dumpster. In the future, the school hopes to make these spaces into housing for teachers.

No stranger to school buildings, Tollefson oversaw the repair of the new campus on route 82 when he was here before. The sloppy construction had resulted in leaky roofs, bad drainage and a host of problems that needed remediation. It took over $700,000 to correct the errors. He says Blake has done an outstanding job of continually upgrading the school buildings.

Small, rural schools are something of specialty with the current superintendent. He sees many advantages in small classes – building a sense of community is easier when everyone knows everyone.

According to Charlie Montoy, the end of his campaign is in sight. No, not that campaign...the campaign to raise funds for the Town of Patagonia to build a shelter to house stray dogs and cats. Three years in the making, Montoy’s dream will become reality within 30 days of his committee’s collecting the remaining $1,600 needed to finish the building. This is the amount still needed to be able to collect a $5,000 matching contribution from Arizona Mining.

The Kennel Committee, headed by Montoy, has collected over $46,000 thus far in cash contributions and has received thousands more from in-kind donations to help build the structure. The shelter is located adjacent to the town’s waste water treatment plant. Once operational, it will be staffed by the Town of Patagonia and will have four regular kennels plus one isolation kennel. Only the stucco and interior partitions remain to finish the building.

Montoy says thanks to all who have supported the project and recognizes the exceptional generosity of several major benefactors including Fred Sang, Brent Bowden, Soto Brothers, Anu Krzys and Rhonda Brew, all of whom made substantial contributions of labor, services or materials without which the project would not have been possible.

Anyone interested in making a donation to help finish the project should stop in at Montoy’s gas station or call him at 520-394-2363. You can also make out a check to TOP/PALS and deliver it or mail it to the town hall.
The Price of A Pear Pie

By Ali Morse

This year’s fundraiser for the Patagonia Community Garden proved to be more than a pie in the sky—it experienced a windfall. Pam Waters’ home-baked pear pie, presented in a box handcrafted by Lee Katzenbach, reaped $325 for the garden. Though the total count for meals came in at 132 (down about 33 from last year), the event yielded a fruitful outcome—$5,000—significantly higher than last year’s auction results.

Money raised at the Pie Auction will fund new raised beds, a larger shed for storing equipment and supplies, and a scholarship in partnership with Borderlands Restoration. Thanks to all who helped make this event a success—the attendees, the Town of Patagonia, the Patagonia Fire Department, and especially the hardworking volunteers who helped with the lighting, setup, and teardown of this annual event.

Pam Waters shows off her very pricey pear pie.

Michael Schwartz shows off his very pricey pear pie.

Photo by Michael Schwartz

Don and Doris Wenig enjoy the auctioneering banter of Lars Marshal and Ben Shonkwiler

Red Mountain Foods Celebrates 35th
By Donna Reibslager

Annie Sager says it all started for her in 1973, when she was traveling the world for eight months and found herself in Kabul, Afghanistan. She says, “I was appalled at the poverty. Bread was only 10 cents a loaf and still there were beggars everywhere. I began passing out bread and quickly found myself surrounded by a mob of open hands. I soon realized I’d spend all my money feeding them, and then I’d have MY hands out. I believe this is where my desire to feed people truly began.”

Barry Muehe and Annie Sager came to Patagonia almost 36 years ago to visit some friends who were moving here. The friends had a food co-op in Tempe that Barry had helped to manage, and had decided to start another co-op here. Annie says she and Barry fell in “love-at-first-sight” with Patagonia. Six months later, their friends’ business folded, and Annie and Barry borrowed $3,000 from her mother and bought the business, which was then located on Naugle Avenue.

At first, Annie continued to work as an artist, and traveled to craft fairs while Barry managed the store. But she soon began to enjoy participating in the business. She recalls that their cash register was an adding machine for many years, and they had to do $175 a day to pay their bills. Despite this, the loan was repaid 2-1/2 years later.

Neighboring children Misha and Angie, age eight at that time, stood on milk crates calling for passing cars to come shop. They had no freezer and very little refrigerated space. For many years Barry and Frank Pole grew organic produce in a large garden at the Circle Z.

On October 23, Red Mountain Foods celebrated its 35th anniversary at the new store they built on Mckeown Avenue. Hog Canyon Band, with guest musician Jim Koweek, provided live music. They offered lots of free samples of some of their store’s goodies. Employee Anita Clovesco-Wharton made a cake and there were also two raffles. About 150 people stopped by to join in the festivities and to thank Barry and Annie—for their dedication to providing fresh and organic food for their community and for a job well done.
Meet The Senior Center’s New Director
By Donna Reibslager

I arrived at the Patagonia Senior Citizen’s Center just 30 minutes after the lunch hour had ended. The spacious room smelled fresh and clean, tables and floor were already wiped down, and Heather Dodge, the new Executive Director, was refilling the napkin dispensers. Dodge, who took over as director in June, wants the Senior Center to have a more welcoming atmosphere, and she’s been working hard to achieve it.

She says that the biggest challenge has been trying to meet all the demands of the job with a staff of one—the food program’s cook. However, Dodge has run her own business and managed or organized others, and is well suited to her new position.

Her responsibilities include planning the month’s menu, purchasing the groceries, providing cleanup and maintenance (of the kitchen, the facilities, and the program’s vehicles) and complying with the extensive record keeping required by SouthEastern Arizona Governments Organization (SEAGO) and Arizona Dept. of Transportation (ADOT), which partially fund the lunch programs.

One of Dodge’s goals is to improve the quality of the food that is served. She feels that the extra time required to prepare fresh vegetables—versus canned—is well worth it, and she is scheduled to meet with a representative from the Nogales Food Bank to see how they might be able to provide produce for her program. She has also arranged the purchase of large quantities of seasonal vegetables from Red Mountain Foods and Dirty Girl Farmette when available.

Developing a menu for a month’s worth of meals has been a new and somewhat daunting task. Dodge sits down once a month with her cook, Deana Olivas, who has experience in large-scale meal planning, and together they figure out a menu. She notes that sometimes meals need to be changed due to unexpected donations or surplus goods, and she and Deana must come up with creative ways to use surplus ingredients on hand.

In an effort to cut down on the time-consuming job of dishwashing by hand, Dodge has received approval to use paper plates a few days a week. Deana’s twin sister, Diana, helps with cleanup. Dodge has also just received a $5,000 grant to replace the center’s old stove, which had become almost unusable for baking due to a faulty thermostat. She hopes to expand the center’s use for local events, and utilize rental fees for needed projects or repairs.

Dodge says that she really enjoys being a part of the lunch hour, talking with regulars and seeing people sharing a good meal and some conversation. For some of the regulars, the center is providing their only substantial meal of the day, and for others, it simply offers time to share the company of others. She notes that attendance was averaging 20-25 people when she began, and has grown to 30-35 or more since then. Those numbers suggest that the center’s new director is on the right track towards her goal of helping the Senior Center expand its role as a vital resource for this community.

The Senior Lunch Program provides a substantial, healthy meal at no cost to seniors (age 65 and older), Monday through Friday, from noon till 1 p.m. Donations are encouraged but not required, and those who don’t qualify can pay $9 and be served as well. You can find the month’s menu on the center’s website: senior-citizensofpatagonia.org.
O.M.G!

By third or fourth grade we've all learned that somebody who boasts too much has meager self-esteem. The flimsy ego reasons thus: "Perhaps, if I act GRANDIOSE, no one will notice my small dick." A psychopath thinks that he's smarter than everyone else. The normal rules do not apply to him. Unlimited by decency, or even empathy—alone within his narcissism, like a cockroach in a lump of dung—he'll pander to, with scary skill, the thoughts and sentiments of those whose vote he hopes to gain.

Among the working poor and middle class, the rancor mounts and seeming thirst for revolution grows. They've been neglected far too long in favor of the ruling class. It's easy for a candidate to gripe and dish out blame, appealing to the hates and fears of angry citizens. But does he make intelligent, realistic proposals for solving problems, or just offer vengeful, satisfying fantasies?

TV and the e-media have transformed politics. American audiences have been steeped for so long in silly, distracting crap that they've entered a state of semi-permanent hypnosis. Reality and fantasy are hopelessly confused. Which world is which? A mediocre actor is elected president. How Hollywood! A good-looking bimbo is pictured with guns and chosen as vice president to run with John McCain. Hello, is anybody home? The USA TODAY McNews adapts the news to short attention spans, eschewing long, straight paragraphs in favor of more varied layouts: inset boxes, changing fonts. Our lives are stimulation and distraction all the time. You watch a ball game on TV (brought to you by Red Bull). Between the plays, if there's a lull, along with fusillades of ads, every free moment is filled with instant replays, one after another, from three or four different camera angles. No time to think. This constant blitz of stimuli reduces half the populace to clueless, brain-dead sheep. Each gets one vote.

The Donald has a brutish charm that makes him more amusing than the other candidate. I look forward every day to hearing what he's said or done. He gives new meaning to the term "Reality TV." The guy's a hoot! No one with more than half a brain would vote for him, of course. While sane and decent people cringe over Trump's misbehaviors or his latest front-page gaffe, it merely makes his hostile boosters sign "Thumbs Up! “ and laugh. The fact that he abhors P/C and won't play by the rules makes him seem like The Savior to such antisocial fools. Trump once boasted—while on camera, in an interview—that if he felt like it, he could walk out into the middle of Fifth Avenue and shoot some fools. Trump once boasted—while on camera, in an interview—that if he felt like it, he could walk out into the middle of Fifth Avenue and shoot some random passersby "without losing one vote." And that, Dios mio, may not be too far from the truth.
Summer Dramas

By Cassina Farley

It was one heck of a summer. Hot, as it should be. Rainy as we hoped it would be, and about as wonderful as we would all want it to be. Since it’s been awhile, let’s catch up.

For starters, I spent my Fourth of July dodging water balloons in a parade that has become a full on combat zone. I walked in the hot July sun with 23 kids and a makeshift boat dressed like a parrot in Converse tennis shoes. To thank us for our colorful display and talented craftsmanship, the parade onlookers pelted us in the face and body with overfilled water balloons, soaking us and melting our costumes. (I may have an opinion on this subject but for now I’ll continue on with my story.)

This summer in particular was a rainy one, filled with all the drama of a good monsoon season. We were evacuated for fear of flooding. We were told to take important possessions to higher ground and to secure things at home in case the creek jumped its banks. I, of course, gathered important papers, clothing and personal necessities. Zach, on the other hand, made sure all of his ukuleles were on higher ground. Priorities!

We both agreed the chickens would have to figure it out. We were lucky and didn’t get flooded out. We returned home and resettled the ukuleles.

Of all of the exciting events that went on this summer one event stands out brighter than all the rest. Zach cut his hair. Why is this momentous? Zach had a ponytail for 29 years, more than half his life. I’m pretty sure he believed he derived his power from that ponytail and how it came to be that he’d part with it is somewhat of a mystery. He just woke up one day like Forrest Gump and said “Gonna cut my ponytail now.” No- Just kidding, it was far more painstaking than that. He began coming out from under his comfort zone a little at a time, which was fine until he reached “Bob haircut” status and I couldn’t stop laughing. Then there was “drives an 84’ Camaro guy” when he cut off the front and left it too long in the rear. Then followed, “not enough hair on top to achieve haircut we saw on Pinterest guy.” Then one day he finally went for it and cut it all off and it was good.

According to Zach, that’s when everything changed. Apparently there is a secret society of men not unlike the Illuminati, where possessing a ponytail is all the admission you need. According to him, they stopped waving. They stopped nodding. They stopped knowing he was alive. He was sure of it. He was no longer a Longhair of the Illuminati. He was a shorthair like the rest of us. If you’ve seen him around lately, he’s traded the ponytail for a beard that in the right conditions looks like a sleeping kitten on his face. He’s back in his comfort zone, buried in hair. The other day he was happy to tell me that he has found a new group of secret underground wavers -- men with beards. They nod, wink and wave just like they did when he was part of the Longhair Illuminati. He belongs again. I just wonder what will happen when he happens upon a man with a beard and a ponytail. Will he wave? (Hope you all had a great summer. I’m glad to be back.)
The Law of Small Things

By Stuart Brody

IX. The Donation Dilemma

If you are a listener of AZPM radio, as I am, you may wonder why there are so many fundraising drives. Well, the answer is simple. Most people who listen to public radio, and for that matter, watch public TV, do not contribute to it, reducing the station to a condition of perpetual vulnerability. So, here’s the question: Is the failure to contribute to a public radio station that you listen to a breach of integrity? If you’re one of the few listeners of public radio—the ten percent—that actually contributes to the station you listen to, congratulations. You can skip reading this article. Or, you may want to keep reading to find out what goes on in the minds of the nine out of ten listeners who don’t contribute.

That’s right. Despite incessant pleas and appeals, ninety percent of public radio listeners do not financially support the station they routinely listen to. And for the ten percent that do contribute? Many of these procrastinate before they make their contributions. I know something about this because I was one of them. So let’s look at how this process unfolds.

Whether you pay promptly, procrastinate, or don’t contribute at all, you are probably less than thrilled with the undignified spectacle of grown men and women engaged in endless on-air begging. Rarely do the announcers come right out and place responsibility squarely on the listener to pay rather than on the station to beg.

Why don’t they just come right out and say: “Look, if you listen, it’s your duty to pay,” and call us out on our breach of integrity for not paying? They don’t because the people who run these fundraisers are afraid that if you tell people they are failing to fulfill their duty, they will feel scolded, resent the reproach, and find a justification for not contributing. So, begging, rather than asserting the duty of truthfulness, is the order of the day.

But let’s say you are someone who sees your duty, doesn’t really need to be reminded, scolded or admonished, but simply procrastinates, like me. Are we any different than those who don’t even think about it and just don’t pay? We both don’t like to part with money when we don’t have to, and since no one is really watching, well, we don’t have to. But there is a difference. We procrastinators, after wracking ourselves with guilt, eventually do contribute.

And those who don’t? The remaining 90 percent? Well, they adhere to the “no harm, no foul” school of thought that holds it unnecessary to pay without a clear penalty for not doing so. We shouldn’t really call it a “school of thought” because no one would actually profess such a thing. Of course, no one has to. The dispiriting reality is that we tend to measure integrity by the likelihood of being caught. Embarrassment, not duty, is the third rail of integrity in our culture.

So, how can the managers of public radio stations get people who don’t want to pay—which is nearly all of us—to change the question from: “do I want to pay?” to: “do I have a duty to pay?”

The answer is: if you want people to practice integrity, then speak the language of integrity. This means letting people know in precise, firm, and tactful language that you have an expectation of them. This applies whether it’s a public radio station’s reasonable expectation of a contribution from its patrons, or your reasonable expectation of the support of a friend when you need it. In other words, lay it out. Be respectful but forthright and without confrontation or condemnation.

It’s harder than we think, as the sheepish dance of evasion and begging of these fundraisers demonstrate. I’ll bet, though, if they were honest and direct, more people would contribute. And for us, too, even if we are not seeking funds, but other forms of contribution from people, we might be more successful by speaking truthfully about the fulfillment of duty.

And for the procrastinators like me, here’s some advice: go online and sign up as a sustaining member. They just deduct your contribution every month. You never have to write a check, make a call or battle the guilt of procrastination. That’s what I did. Now I endure the on-air begging free from the promptings of my own guilt. Sometimes we need a little crutch to practice integrity, but when we do it, it feels good. Try it. And remember the law of small things.
Vehicle Weight Limit Reviewed By Town Council
By Donna Reibslager

At a council meeting in June, Patagonia’s Town Council voided the ordinance (Sec. 11-4-4) created in 2011, which imposed weight limits for use of town roads by double axle vehicles. The ordinance, which limited vehicle weight on town roads to 17,500 lbs., had not been enforced and was determined to be problematic. Mayor Ike Isaksen stated that enforcement would require that every street in town display signs stating the restriction, and it was noted that the town would have to purchase a weight scale to check incoming truck traffic. Both measures were said to be beyond the town's budget.

After reviewing the issue, the town’s attorney, Mike Massee, introduced a draft for a new ordinance pertaining to overweight vehicles at the town council meeting on September 28. His recommendation was that the town’s vehicle weight limits conform to federal regulations, which limit gross vehicle weight to 80,000 lbs. That limit is 4.5 times the limit imposed by the 2011 ordinance. There were questions from the audience as to the weight-bearing standards for Patagonia's town roads as compared to those of state and county roads and highways, and the concern as to who would pay for town road repairs that might be needed due to heavier traffic. After further discussion, the council asked Massee to continue his review of state and federal regulations and how they need to apply to any town regulations. He was asked to present an updated draft for consideration in 2-4 weeks.

SITA To Manage Visitors Center
By Ann Katzenbach

Back in the spring, the Patagonia Area Business Association (PABA) changed its name to Sky Islands Tourist Association (SITA) because there was a general feeling on the board of directors that the organization needed to make a fresh start.

Since the launch of the Regional Visitor Center at the corner of McKeown and Third Ave., the Patagonia Regional Times has shared the rent and management of the Visitor Center with PABA (now SITA). In recent months the newspaper’s financial priorities have changed and it can no longer afford to share the Visitor Center rent. Thus, full responsibility for the center has shifted to SITA. The newly-hatched tourist association is determined to keep the center open as its volunteers have given out information and assistance to thousands of visitors since it opened in March of 2015.

The dedicated volunteers who run the center met with SITA board member Rita Johnson in October and shared ideas about how to move forward. Most of the volunteers spend two hours a week keeping the center open. They get training, hand out information and make visitors feel welcome. All kinds of expected and unexpected things can happen at this busy corner of town.

Volunteers without regular hours fill in when regulars can’t be there. They all agree that it’s fun and fascinating to chat with people who come from all over the country and the world.

The Regional Visitor Center is open seven days a week from 10 a.m. – 4 p.m. at this time of year. If you would like a small, interesting, volunteer job, call Ann Katzenbach at 360-385-9771. If you would like a larger, more challenging job, there is an opening as Volunteer Coordinator.
NOVEMBER CALENDAR

MEETINGS

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

The Woman’s Club - January 14 at 1 p.m. Talk by Herman Quiroga at 2 p.m. Cady Hall

COMMUNITY SERVICES

Lunch for Seniors - Fresh-cooked meals, Mon. thru Fri. at the Patagonia Community Center. Noon - 1 p.m.

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

Patagonia Food Bank, Community Center; 2nd 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.  50% off sale 11/3–11/5.

EVENTS

Nov. 1–30: An exhibit of paintings by Helen Chester, Cornelia O’Connor, and Donna Reibslager, at the Gathering Grounds. Reception for the artists Nov. 3, from 5 - 7 p.m.

Nov. 2-6: Voces & Visiones Festival of the Arts, History and Culture, at Cochise College, Santa Cruz Center and at other public venues in Nogales, Tubac and Patagonia. Visiting & local artists, authors, historians, elders and educators will take part in 5 days of exhibits, interactive forums & events, & concerts. Free. Call 520-287-5583 for info.

Nov 4: Steak Fry and Barn Dance, 4 - 8 p.m. at the Empire Ranch Chicken scratch dance music by The Lopez Band. $40/person or $70/couple. Proceeds benefit the Empire Ranch Foundation. For tickets call Bobbie at 831-809-4328

Nov 5: Rabies Clinic in the Patagonia Park 9 - 11 a.m. $10

Nov. 5: "Rabies Clinic" in the Patagonia Park 9 - 11 a.m. $10

Nov 5: "Murder at the Deadwood Saloon," See p. 23 for details

Nov. 5: 16th Annual Roundup and Open House at The Empire Ranch from 10 a.m. – 4 p.m. See p. 18 for more info.

Nov 5: Flea Market in front of Heart of Gold Antiques on Hwy 82 in Sonoita. 8 a.m. - 2 p.m.

Nov. 7: "Goldilocks and the Three Bears" film presentation, in the Tin Shed. Showings at 10 a.m. and 7 p.m.

Nov 10: Veterans Day Celebration at Elgin School. Call 455-5514 for more info.

Nov 10: Groundbreaking for Rotary Park at SCC Fairgrounds, 4 p.m.

Nov. 12: Book Signing by author Barbara Neville at Desert Legacy Gallery in Sonoita for her new book, "Tomahawk Trail," set in Santa Cruz County and Sonora, Mexico in 1885. 11 a.m.-2 p.m.

Nov. 16: No Chicken Wire Bluegrass Band at the Steak Out in Sonoita, 6ish – 8 p.m.

Nov 19: Swap Meet at High Noon Feeds in Sonoita.

Nov. 20: Violinist Yuri Namkung and Pianist Evan Kory perform Beethoven, Cesar Franck, Arvo Part and others. SCFPA concert. 3:00 p.m. at a private residence in Nogales, AZ. For info/tickets call 888-202-1942 or 394-0129, or go to scfpapresents.org

Nov 24: Thanksgiving

Nov 25 & 26: Annual Holiday Art Walk in Patagonia. 11 a.m. – 4 p.m. Friday and Saturday. See p. 23 for info.

SPECIAL INTERESTS

Printmaking with Helen Chester: Nov. 10 & 17 , 9 a.m. – noon at the Art Center

Corn Husk Dolls workshop for families, Nov. 12. Contact Susan Corl to register: 520-394-2926

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

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

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

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

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

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

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


Send your info about a meeting, class, or event to prtevents.com by the 20th

Full moon Nov. 14

prtevents@gmail.com

PAGE 12 PATAGONIA REGIONAL TIMES NOVEMBER 2016
LOST: Blind Black Lab
“Beemer” is a blind 12-year-old black lab with gray on his face and paws. He is missing from the Crown C Ranch, milepost 29.5 on Highway 82. He was last seen 8 a.m. Friday, October 14 and was wearing a blue and black collar with license attached. Beemer will come if called and is very friendly. Please call Phil or LuAnn at 520-604-2303 if you see him. Thank you!

Patagonia Schools VETERANS DAY PROGRAM
Thursday, Nov. 10
At 12:45 p.m.
In the multi-purpose room at PUHS
A program to introduce local veterans and to honor their service

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

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

Sonoita Hills Community Church
52 Elgin Rd., Sonoita
455-172 Sunday Service: 10 a.m.

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

Sonoita Bible Church
3174 N. Highway 83, Sonoita
455-779 Sunday Service: 10:30 a.m.

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

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

TO PLACE AN AD, CONTACT OUR AD MANAGER, JANIE TRAFTON:
(520) 604-7390 OR prtads@gmail.com
Ad for next issue must be submitted by the 20th
Singing Pastor Tom
By Linda Jade Fong

It’s the start of Vacation Bible School week, and the newly appointed pastor stands in the pulpit. A 6’ inflatable dolphin, suspended on a string, is floating toward his head. He reaches up and points to the object swinging in the breeze. He says, “You see, here at Patagonia Community Church, we have a porpoise!” The congregation groans.

This is the Reverend Tom Jelinek, the new Pastor who has quickly made his mark with his easy, approachable manner and simple, clear messages. Then there are the fast puns, including those in the form of a sudden burst into a few bars of an oldies’ song if you unwittingly trigger it with a phrase in your conversation.

Singing comes with ease to Jelinek. In Sunday church services he sometimes pulls out his guitar to lead a hymn. Or after service, he might, guitar again in hand, regale the organist and friends by putting the words of the hymn, “They’ll Know We Are Christians by our Love” to tune of the Beatles’ “I Want to Hold Your Hand.”

It comes as no surprise that Jelinek, who grew up in Tucson, holds a degree in music. He has a second University of Arizona undergraduate degree—in history—and two Master’s degrees, one for divinity and one for youth ministry, both from Wesley Theological Seminary in Washington, D.C.

He has served in a variety of urban and rural United Methodist churches throughout Arizona and Southern Nevada, most recently in Yuma. A special interest of his has been youth ministry, and he happily responded to church leaders asking him to start a youth group here. Open to any sixth through twelfth grade youth in the area, the weekly group has attracted a dozen members so far, and has already made a field trip to a youth event in Tucson.

Jelinek happened to arrive in Patagonia during a busy time of mid-summer potlucks. As someone who doesn’t count cooking as one of his skills, he knew he had been assigned to the right town! “It’s been wonderful to come to Patagonia,” he says. “Such a beautiful place with exceptionally friendly people. I’m enjoying getting involved in the community.”

He rolled into town in his little red Honda Fit with a missing front bumper. How could he have known that it would make him “Fit” right in with Patagonia? The bumper is still absent, which makes his car easy to spot. If you see it cruising down the street on the way to the post office or the parsonage, feel free to wave down the driver to say, “hi!” And if you happen to strike up a conversation with Pastor Tom, be prepared to wind up talking about history, music, current events, or any number of subjects in addition to the usual “pastorly” topics. He’s looking forward to meeting more of his Patagonia neighbors.
Over 13,000 Attended Fall Festival

Over 140 vendors filled Patagonia’s expansive park October 7-9, attracting over 13,000 visitors, according to the Fall Festival’s manager, Bonnie Maclean. Young and old enjoyed a variety of entertainment. El Jefe, the Jaguar, roamed through the crowd as the mascot for the Patagonia Area Resource Alliance, serving as a reminder of the unique biodiversity of our local environment and the precious natural balance of this place we call home.

Audiences listened to the Patagonia High School marching band and professional performances by the Cochise Community College Dancers and demonstrations by the Krikorian Karate students.

Far View Alpacas and Circle Z’s lovely old surrey provided photo ops. A new addition to this year’s festival was the Kid’s Corner, with children’s activities operated by the Patagonia Youth Enrichment Center.

In addition to the sales tax revenue generated by the event, the town made over $1,500 from the vendors’ special event permits. Maclean said a donation will be made to the park fund. She added that SITA (Sky Islands Tourism Association) netted more than last year and monies collected will support SITA activities. Almost $100 generated from donations at the festival’s information booth will help support the Regional Visitors’ Center, now operated by SITA (see page 11.)

Thanks to the Town of Patagonia’s Park Maintenance Crew who assisted with installing the infrastructure for Wi-Fi. With the new system in place, Wi-Fi was accessible throughout the park. A big thanks also goes out to the Santa Cruz County 4H for their help in keeping the food courts clean.

Overall, it was a very successful event and the weather cooperated beautifully, with only a light sprinkle of rain on Saturday—enough to cool us down but not enough to disrupt this fun three-day event.
Scenes from the
ILL FESTIVAL
Dine and Dance at Empire Ranch

By Ali Morse

Kicking off the 16th Annual Empire Ranch Roundup and Open House will be a steak fry and barn dance on Friday, November 4, from 4 to 8 p.m. at the Empire Ranch’s adobe hay barn. Tickets are $40/person or $70/couple and include dinner (chicken, steak, baked potato, beans, salad, and dessert) and a barn dance, with music from The Lopez Band. Call ahead for availability—tickets will not be available the day of the dance.

The Empire Ranch Foundation’s 16th Annual Roundup & Open House will be held the following day, Saturday, November 5, 2016, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. There will be all kinds of demonstrations, music, reenactors, cowboy conversations, authors, family activities, food, vendors, horse, cattle, small animals, big animals and the silent auction. The event is free to the public and a $10 parking donation is requested. Go to www.empireranchfoundation.org and click on Events to see the current schedule of activities.

PRT’s Volunteer Extraordinaire

By Lynn Davison

The PRT has always thrived on the generous hearts and sharp minds of our volunteers. No one exemplifies the volunteer spirit better than Marti Chase, who has done the newspaper’s bookkeeping for the past six years. Marti will retire from the PRT this year. She claims this is the fourth profession she has retired from! While we cannot offer a pension, as we did not offer a salary, we can offer our public thanks for a job well done.

Like many of us who work on the paper, Marti was recruited by PRT founder Walter Andrew. She attended an organizing meeting in 2008 and over a year later got a phone call from Walter who told her that the paper’s first bookkeeper had resigned and she MUST take on the job for the good of the paper and the community. Few could say no to Walter, but Marti had the gumption to suggest she would do it only if she could work at home, have the paper purchase QuickBooks for her computer, and never have to go to a meeting!

Since 2010 Marti has been invoicing advertisers, depositing checks, paying bills, recording financial transactions on QuickBooks, providing monthly financial reports to the board of directors, compiling fundraising data, and preparing financial data for our CPA (who does our tax return and annual IRS 990 report). The PRT remains a squeaky clean organization due, in significant part, to Marti’s diligence. Her past profession as a county prosecutor may explain her meticulous, law-abiding, and risk-averse approach to doing the PRT’s books.

When asked what she will miss most about her role as bookkeeper, Marti said the best thing was the fresh homemade cookies our advertising manager, Janie Trafton, brought to her house whenever they met to reconcile invoices and payments for advertising accounts. She went on to say, “The PRT is an outstanding paper and great community resource that I was proud to be a part of. I hope people in the community will continue to support the paper with their time and their donations. As bookkeeper, I can tell you that we cannot meet our expenses without private donations.”

So Marti, thanks from all of us in the PRT family for your fine work as our bookkeeper for six long years. Enjoy your retirement, again. We will miss you.

We are still looking for Marti’s replacement, so if you know of anyone who may be qualified and interested in becoming PRT’s bookkeeper, please drop a note to prteditor@gmail.com. A volunteer would be great, but we are also willing to pay a fair wage to a qualified candidate.

On October 22, friends gathered with Mike O’Halloran at La Roca, a popular restaurant just across the border in Nogales, Mexico, to celebrate his 75th birthday.
The Patagonia Youth Enrichment Center continues to be a hub of activities after school for the youth of Patagonia. All youth ages 10-20 are welcome to join. Director Anna Coleman is there from 4 to 8 p.m. on weekdays, unless she has an event in Elgin where she teaches. She will stay open later if the high schoolers need a place to do homework or projects.

Coleman reports that there are more fifth graders and middle schoolers coming to the center this year. She says this year’s students have a strong sense of community.

Several evenings a week, Anna’s husband, Steve, teaches and helps with robotics, rocketry, solar-powered machines, LEGO architecture, 3D printing, and various wood-crafting. The covered wood shop area is available for any projects. This, she says, “is a continual work in progress, depending on the kids’ availability and inspiration.”

As their final project for Borderlands’ internship, some of the older youth planted a pollinator garden over the summer. The garden is flourishing and attracts butterflies, bees, and hummingbirds.

PYEC created an activity tent at the Fall Festival that was very popular with younger children. Coleman says, “I am excited that the PYEC youth enjoy being involved with community events and giving back as a service.”

Through a collaboration with Arizona Trail Foundation (ATF), youth go on local hikes once a month. Steve Coleman and ATF’s Youth Outreach & Education Coordinator Treven Hooker share their knowledge and passion for the environment. Treven has been an asset to the group and these informative hikes have been a positive experience for all the youth.

Anna and Steve Coleman volunteer their time to make PYEC a safe, educational, fun environment for local youth. Carlos Mingura, who is now in college and one of the first wave of youth to enjoy PYEC, says that before the Center opened, he and his friends used to get into a lot of mischief after school because they were bored and did not have much to do. The Center opened in May of 2014 but has not yet received adequate funding. You can help support this amazing organization by writing a check to PYEC or by donating food or supplies.
October marks the annual start of the Patagonia Union High School recycling program. Led by the Student Council’s new Environmental Officer, Eden Lattanzio, the program promotes active environmental awareness across the entire K-12 grade range.

The program services the recycling bins, which are placed throughout the school, and gives students an opportunity to help work toward a sustainable environment. Recycling bins are strategically placed next to the main trash bins in classrooms across the campus. When a student walks over to toss something out, he or she is confronted with the opportunity to throw it in the recycling bin and help the planet, instead of being wasteful. Most students will choose the blue recycling bin, as long as the item is recyclable. The students recognize that they are making a difference, and the program facilitates this because the students don’t have to go out of their way to do so.

Each Thursday during Fifth Period, the Patagonia Middle School science class, led by Mr. Masters, goes around to each classroom and collects the contents of the bins. The recyclables are then sorted—into collections of bottles, papers, and cans—and taken down to the parking lot. The Environmental Officer then takes them to the recycling center that afternoon. This program gives at least 75 high school students and 12 instructors (as well as numerous students and teachers in the primary and middle school) the opportunity to make a difference.

Eden decided to run for Environmental Officer with the idea of preserving this program, which her predecessors had started three years ago. Eden was first introduced to the program when she became friends with Katherine Miller, the previous Environmental Officer. Eden sometimes accompanied Katherine on her trips to drop off the recyclables. When Katherine graduated, Eden hoped that the next Environmental Officer would continue this vital program.

“Till the next Environmental Officer would be someone to whom the program was important, Eden decided she herself would run. Running for Environmental Officer would be her best chance to sustain this opportunity for students and staff to take a step towards sustainability. "I knew it was important, so I wanted to make sure that the next Environmental Officer would be someone who was willing to sort and deliver the recycling. So I decided to run," Eden said.

When asked what advice she would give to any organization or community group trying to start a similar program, Eden replied, “Honestly, it just takes one person who is willing to take the recycling down to the center. Someone who is dedicated, and will sort the recycling into the different categories and take it over. Then all you have to do is put the blue bins out, and a lot of people will use them.”

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Ticked

To hear of Lyme one might suspect,

Green fruit with citrus flavor.

But margaritas not in sight,

This Lyme is not to savor.

Identified back east in town,

Whose name is just the same,

Where this disease, vector-borne,

Made history’s Hall of Fame.

A corkscrew cell (a spirochete)

Is what infects the host;

Borrelia burgdorferi

Works hard to harm the most.

Not found in hot, dry climates,

Nor in the bitter cold;

It likes the cool, moist places,

Just like our friend the mold.

The deer tick is prime carrier

Of this well-known disease.

Ixodes is the genus,

Avoid it, won’t you please.

Among the shady, wooded trails,

And open grasslands, too,

Ixodes waits so patiently,

To drop on someone’s shoe.

Flying is impossible—it crawls

On shrubs and grass,

Attaching to your skin and clothes

So swiftly as you pass.

It’s good to wear light colors,

Long-sleeves, long pants, and boots.

Do thorough tick checks every day,

Examine hair near roots.

A bull’s-eye rash is what you’ll see,

Within a week or two.

Don’t hesitate to call the doc,

It’s the prudent thing to do.

— Ali Morse

Five Steps To Winter

Health & Fire Safety

By Marc Merideth, EMS Captain,

Patagonia Fire Department

As the weather turns from the warm days of early fall to the cooler days and cold nights of winter, there are five steps you can take that will improve your health and fire safety.

Step one: Check your smoke detectors and carbon monoxide monitors to ensure that they are in good working order. The batteries on smoke detectors should be changed every six months while carbon monoxide monitors have a variable time frame for the batteries to be replaced. Also, keep in mind that regardless of how new the batteries may be, these units have a limited life span so if your smoke detector is more than 10 years old or your carbon monoxide monitor is more than seven years old, it is time to replace them! Remember you should have at least one smoke detector on each floor and in each bedroom and at least one carbon monoxide monitor on each floor. Avoid placing these units in kitchens or near furnace or fireplace openings to avoid false alarms.

Step two: Ensure that your furnace registers are clean and not blocked by anything and if your heating system uses a filter, it should be no more than one year old. If your residence uses a wood burning stove for heat, keep all fittings tight and avoid build up of ashes in the stove or any of the pipes. The stove needs to be properly vented to the outside and designed for interior use. Never use a barbeque or camping stoves inside!

Step three: Make your residence visible from the road. The main entrance of your residence should be well lit and the path from the roadside to the door should be clear of obstacles. The house numbers should be displayed clearly using “green numbers” (the numbers are white on a green background), which are available from the town offices. These numbers are designed to be highly visible both day and night.

Step four: Have a plan of escape and a family meeting place. Should you need to leave your residence in an emergency, having a plan in place will help you get out quickly and safely. Gather each member of the household together and decide on how you will exit (there should be at least two options) and where you will meet after you leave the house. If anyone has mobility challenges, discuss how you will assist them. Your meeting place should be close by and close enough to the house that you can reach it quickly. Once you have a plan in place, practice during the day and again at night. Do not wait until an actual emergency to put the plan into place.

Step five: Create defensible space around your residence. Patagonia, Sonoita, Elgin, and Canelo are all surrounded by open space; risk from wildland fire is very real. The first 30 feet of distance from your residence (on all sides) should be free of firewood stacks, propane tanks and other highly flammable objects. If you have trees, they should be pruned so that the lowest branches are at least ten feet off the ground to avoid fire on the ground from “climbing” up. Thick bushes and other landscaping should be trimmed to help reduce the amount of “fuel.” Grass should be cut short.

There are other steps you can take, but these five steps are a great way to enhance your health and fire safety this winter!
Rhonda Brew, whose paintings were on exhibit through October at the Gathering Grounds, continues to expand her artistic boundaries. Rhonda has always had a talent for recreating images from photos, but a few years ago she began experimenting with compositions created from her imagination. In this last show, there were more of these adventurous paintings, together with many of her carefully rendered images.

Rhonda says that she sometimes gets her ideas from dreams, or from images she sees in the media. Sometimes, she says, an idea just pops in to her head. While her earlier work demonstrates her drafting skills, in the new work one can begin to see the artist’s energy and her sense of humor. She is experimenting with ideas and having some fun with it—such as in her eerie portrait of a zombie siren, or Einstein portrayed as a hunky construction dude.

Rhonda, who can often be seen flying around town on her bike, has also painted most of the colorful signs in town—from the Patagonia Market to the Visitors’ Center to the tasty-looking ice cream on the wall next to the Gathering Grounds. She says that she is encouraged by the response to her recent show and will continue to see “where her painting takes her.”

Photos by Donna Reibslager

Rhonda Brew at her reception on October 7
TAKE AN ART WALK
By Carolyn Shafer

The 17th Annual Patagonia Holiday Art Walk is Thanksgiving weekend (Friday, Nov 25 and Saturday, Nov 26) from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. It is a showcase for local artists, many of whom display their artwork at businesses in town that host them for the event. Some artists open up their studios, inviting the public to view the setting where they work. Visitors are treated to holiday music and treats while they stroll down the sidewalk and checked out exhibits. Last year’s Art Walk featured nearly 30 artists.

Local artist, Linda Chase, started the Holiday Art Walk in 1999. After a few seasons, the event coordination shifted to gallery owner, Regina Medley, who organized the event for the next several years. Currently, the owners of Creative Spirits Artists Gallery, Patagonia’s local artists’ gallery, volunteer their time to carry on what is now a popular holiday tradition that brings visitors from near and far.

It is a wonderful way to walk off the big holiday meal and to entertain visiting family and friends. Come out and enjoy!

At left, the studio of Judith Hinton Andrew, one of the artists who participate in Artwalk’s Open Studios each year.

MURDER AT THE DEADWOOD SALOON
By Laura Rogers

This evening of mystery and mayhem is a fundraising event for the Patagonia Library. The sold-out production will be taking place at the Deadwood Saloon (Cady Hall) on Saturday, November 5, at 5 p.m. The actors will be presenting the play interactively among the dinner guests. Harris Heritage Growers will cater the meal.

Script sponsors are Gathering Grounds, La Frontera Realty, Jean Miller (Long Realty), and the Stage Stop Inn/Wild Horse Restaurant.

Actor sponsors are Sue Archibald, Gathering Grounds, Adrienne Halpert (Global Arts & Lillian’s Closet), High Spirit Flutes, Inge Meyer, Montanez Kids, Patagonia Market/Cinnamon Hills Construction, Spirit Tree Inn Bed & Breakfast, and Wagon Wheel Saloon.

This painting by Helen Chester will be part of a group exhibit which opens November 1 at Gathering Grounds. See calendar, page12, for details.
To Vaccinate Or Not To Vaccinate?

Vaccinations have become a controversial subject in the animal world. For decades, conventional medicine has proclaimed annual vaccinations are necessary for our animal companions. Many veterinarians no longer believe this and recommend a few years between vaccinations to keep our charges in good health. They also advise less frequent doses for older animals and none at all for animals in less than optimal health.

Rabies, in particular, is recommended only every three years. “Vaccinosis,” meaning over-vaccination, is a serious topic of discussion. Research has proven there are a variety of diseases and chronic conditions, including cancer, that show up in our animals as a result of being vaccinated beyond what is deemed necessary.

To reduce possible immediate adverse side effects, there are several homeopathic remedies that can be administered orally or directly to the site of the shot. Thuja is one of these.

Many holistic veterinarians suggest the use of nosodes as an alternative to traditional vaccines and profess that these are much less harmful. An option that I sometimes use is to request blood tests for “titer” results. These tests measure the antibodies in an animal’s system and may be used to prove immunity to the disease in question.

I know many animal owners whose lives take them to show rings. These events demand that all animals brought onto the premises bring documentation of proof for their current vaccination status. Many boarding stables and kennels also demand proof of immunization. I do not know if a show of titers is acceptable at any of these competitions or facilities, but it would be worth enquiring.

There is endless information available to any of us with a computer. Perhaps this article will have introduced you to ideas you had not heard of before. You can research further or discuss options with your trusted animal care professional. Every pet owner has individual situations that will contribute to the most sensible regimen for their animal, from a cat who never goes outside to a horse who attends shows annually across the country, or even out of country. I wish the healthiest, least painful solution for each being in question.

Cate Drown is the proprietor of Beyond Reason Ranch, where she provides "specialized animal care for all beings large or small." You can contact Cate at drown_cate@hotmail.com
A Busy Season For Friends of Sonoita Creek

By Bob Brandt

As the 2016 monsoon season was winding down, the nonprofit Friends of Sonoita Creek (FOSC) was busy implementing an ambitious agenda of educational activities and hands-on field work that marked one of the busiest seasons the organization has ever experienced.

The fall activities got underway on September 24 when FOSC sponsored a public presentation by geologist Dr. Gary Hix on private wells and their relationship to our water supply. Dr. Hix, who specializes in the installation and maintenance of wells, gave his talk to an enthusiastic and inquisitive audience in Cady Hall. Supported by explanatory slides, his lecture clearly showed well owners how to properly maintain their wells and described how well water is affected by the flow of surface and subsurface water.

With a grant from the Borderlands Habitat Network, FOSC also launched a multi-year project to monitor the depth of well water throughout the watershed. Kathy Pasierb, former PUHS science teacher and FOSC board member, is spearheading the well monitoring project which is aimed at measuring the depth of water in the wells of private and public well owners. The readings will be taken at regular intervals over a period of years in an effort to build a database that will permit a study of how depth is affected by changes in rainfall, climate, water usage and other factors. Participation by well owners is voluntary. Interested individuals can reach Pasierb at 520-604-6679 to enroll their well in the study or volunteer to help collect data.

On the weekend of October 21-24, the Friends sponsored their second Riparian Stream Rapid Assessment (RSRA), under the guidance of the protocol’s developer, Dr. Peter Stacey of the University of New Mexico. Preceding the actual stream assessment, which took place Saturday, Sunday and Monday, Dr. Stacey kicked off the weekend’s activities with a Friday evening lecture in Cady Hall entitled “Assessing the Health of Sonoita Creek.” In his talk Dr. Stacey explained how his RSRA method works and how it can be employed to protect the Sonoita Creek riparian area for aquatic/riparian habitat and safeguard its water supply for human use.

Having previously trained several volunteers to conduct the assessment, Dr. Stacey was invited back to train another cadre of citizen scientists and to oversee a repeat assessment of the segment of Sonoita Creek that was assessed the first time around. That stretch of the creek lies within the Nature Conservancy’s Patagonia-Sonoita Creek Preserve. It received a 2015 score of 3.2 on a five-point scale, indicating the stream and riparian health is relatively good but not excellent. The results of the current assessment were not available in time for inclusion in this article.

Andy Gould, FOSC Recording Secretary, is in charge of the RSRA project in Patagonia and invites anyone interested in participating in future stream assessments to Email him at gould226@hotmail.com.

Another project on the Friends’ fall agenda is the resumption of the fencing survey in the Sonoita Creek State Natural Area (SCSNA) that started last spring. With the assistance of Arizona Game and Fish representatives, State Parks personnel, and Arizona Trail section steward, Zay Hartigan, two days of surveying were undertaken on October 17 and 31. These efforts resulted in approximately half of the total SCSNA perimeter being surveyed. Patagonia Lake State Park Manager, Colt Alford, was instrumental in bringing together all the stakeholders necessary to make this survey a success. Also assisting in the survey were FOSC members Barbara Casimir, Joe Watkins, Andy Gould, Anne Townsend and Kelly Fleming. FOSC hopes that when the survey is complete the state will come up with the resources to make the fencing improvements necessary to keep the cattle from entering the natural area, home to several endangered or threatened species including the Gila top minnow.

For more information on Friends of Sonoita Creek, call President Anne Townsend at 520-394-0173.

Students in the FOSC-sponsored Riparian Stream Rapid Assessment citizen science workshop spent the day with Dr. Pete Stacey from the U of NM doing hands-on learning along the Creek at TNC. Two more days of trained followed, to ensure students could practice the protocols on their own after Dr. Stacey left.
Dollar Store’s Future Still Uncertain

On a sunny October afternoon, two bicyclists were loading up on potato chips, candy and water from the Sonoita Mercantile. “This is where we’ve always stopped for bits and bobs,” said Patrick Dean of Tucson. When asked if they would consider buying their supplies at a discount chain store that might be constructed nearby, Dean said they would remain loyal to the Mercantile. His wife, Caitlin, joined in, “I feel like this is local” she said of the rustic store adjoining the Steak Out, a popular dining destination.

Speculation about retail development on the northeast corner of the crossroads has risen in recent weeks with a derrick truck drilling for a septic tank percolation core sample. The property has a small vacant building that used to be occupied by a realty office.

Crystal Ghassemi, a spokesperson for Dollar General Corporation, communicated in an email October 3, that the company is interested in adding a new location to Santa Cruz County, but has not committed to the project yet. “At this time we are in our due diligence phase for a new location at Highways 83 and 82 in Sonoita,” Ms. Ghassemi wrote. “I anticipate a final decision to be made by the end of the year.”

According to Jose Padilla, cartographer for the Santa Cruz Assessor’s Department, there has been no recent sale of the property. The owners are still listed as JJC Properties, an Arizona General Partnership, 10000 N. 31st Avenue, Suite D-301, Phoenix, AZ 85051. Padilla said JJC Properties has owned the corner location since March 1989. Efforts to contact JJC Properties were unsuccessful. The commercial real estate office identified as handling the sale, Hussack Realty of Phoenix, was contacted on October 18. A woman answering the phone said there would be no comment on the pending sale and hung up.

However, Jesse Drake, Santa Cruz County director of community development, said Dollar General submitted plans for developing the property on September 9, and the plans are under review. No building permit has yet been issued and no hearing is scheduled before the Planning and Zoning Commission as it is already a commercially zoned property. Drake said that one of the hurdles for development includes access approval by ADOT (Arizona Department of Transportation). Vanessa Nunez, administrative assistant at the ADOT Right of Way Group, said no application has been received from Dollar General for any property in Santa Cruz County but such an application would be considered part of “due diligence” on behalf of a corporation.

Joseph M. De Wolf, chief of the Sonoita-Elgin Fire District, said that the plans under review are for a 9,100 square foot building. He said the plans are not for a strip mall as has been speculated in the past. Aside from reviewing the plans for fire suppression and fire code, Chief De Wolf said he has concerns about proposed access from Highway 83 that he intends to share with ADOT. The plan review was to be completed by the end of October, according to De Wolf.

U.S. households average more than one-and-a-half grocery store visits a week, according to the Food Marketing Institute. Dollar General stores are located mainly in rural and low-income urban areas. Shoppers visit the dollar stores (including competitors Dollar Tree and Family Dollar) for “fill-in” items between regular trips to supermarkets and big box stores. A May 2016 issue of Fortune magazine, reports that Dollar General has expanded the grocery assortment at 9,000 of its stores and the larger Dollar General Plus stores are going for a higher-end presentation and fresh food selection. A Dollar Plus store is nearly double the size of a regular Dollar General store, according to reports. A corporate communications representative responded on October 12 that the potential new store would have a traditional Dollar General format and would have six to ten employees. He wrote that the typical Dollar General store is approximately 7,300 square feet of sales floor.

Nolan Miles, internal/external communications coordinator, did not respond to a query as to whether any organized petition protesting the store has been received. A Facebook page named Sonoita Against Dollar General was created last spring. At that time, a Dollar General media representative anticipated a decision would be made by late summer.
Strong Turnout At SEFD Candidate Forum

The November 8 general election will create an entirely new five-member Sonoita Elgin Fire District Board of Supervisors. The three candidates with the most votes will serve four-year terms and the next two highest vote-getters will serve for two years. In May, 2015, the board was dissolved and John Flynn, an interim administrator, was appointed by the Santa Cruz County Board of Supervisors. This necessitated the staggered terms in this election. Terms of elected board members are ordinarily four years.

Eight of the ten candidates running for the board spoke at the October 1 forum at the Sonoita Bible Church across the street from the fire station. Citizen interest in the forum was so high that when the forum began shortly after 10 a.m. it appeared to be a standing-room-only crowd.

Candidates are in general agreement that the district is on sound financial footing and they can work together to have better transparency and communication between the board and the community. They also anticipated a smooth transition from Flynn to a new board.

Superior Court Judge Thomas Fink moderated the forum. He addressed his own questions to the candidates and took written questions from the audience.

Yvette Rehurek, a retired school district RN and former president of a fire and rescue board in Portal, Arizona, said she would be a good steward and not have any involvement in administrative functions or daily operations that are the responsibilities of the fire chief. “You don’t start the budget process by lowering the chief’s salary right off the bat. It was the wrong way to do things,” said Rehurek.

Kurt Bahti, a retired Arizona Game and Fish Department officer and former president of the North American Wildlife Enforcement Officers Association, said the past board did not have a history of doing a formal evaluation process for the chief’s position, which created tumultuous board meetings.

Reba Webber, a project management consultant, said that after the interim administrator made an appeal to the community, she considered running for the board and researched the Arizona State Statutes regarding fire district boards. She favored transparency and was the only candidate at the forum to indicate she had already met with Mr. Flynn.

Susan Archibald, a candidate with over 30 years experience in non-profit community agencies and recent past president of the local Rotary Club, said she was one to stand up at past board meetings. She cited the lack of an evaluation process. Archibald said she was trying not to go into the past but move forward with an entirely new board.

Karla Cafarelli, a former systems engineer and cattlewoman, commented that after the “implosion” of the last board, a lot of the community became disengaged. She said the turnout at the forum (estimated as high as 75 people) shows the community is ready for a fresh start and a board with “no baggage.” Her call brought a strong round of applause from the audience. Cafarelli said she was opposed to the creation of the fire district a decade ago, but “it is not going away. I believe in the fire district. I do support it.” She said Flynn has set the tone for a smooth handoff. “The budget is working. We will be in steady hands for some time,” said Cafarelli.

Barry Rorex, an attorney, said taxes should be as low as possible and complimented the fire chief for doing a good job retaining volunteers as well as being a “good grant writer.” Several candidates made reference to the $313,600 FEMA retention and recruitment grant received in September. After the forum, De Wolf confirmed that grants received this year to date have totaled $325,000.

David Aho, a law enforcement veteran with 30 years experience in public safety, saw a positive future for the fire district with this number of candidates. He said that the tax rate was below other fire districts. Noting that the majority of calls are responded to by ambulance and that a lot of calls are quite a distance from the station, “we need to open our eyes” that going back to a volunteer department will not work.

A couple of questions from the audience handled by Judge Fink were specifically directed to Peter Pototsky, a pilot and aviation instructor. Pototsky responded “absolutely not” when asked if there was a potential conflict of interest serving on the board and having filed litigation in the past. He said the lawsuit was dismissed. “Do I have an axe to grind with the chief? Yeah, I do,” Pototsky said. While he couldn’t pledge to no new taxes, Pototsky said, “I guarantee more no votes than yes votes.”
Las Cienegas Ntl Conservation Area’s 42,000ac of protected habitat encompass this gracious 158ac property. The 3,217sf Main Casa w/3Be/3Ba/GrtRm/Chef’s Kitch/Stdy/Exer-ProjectRm/AzRm/3G is a split-pln w/impeccable details. Nearby Guest Casita w/2Be/2Ba/GrtRm-Kitch/Lndry-MudRm + Barn++ TAR/MLS #21625201

1,515sf Vintage Adobe w/2Be/1Ba/GrtRm in walking distance of village amenities. Regional charm & premier upgrades t/o. An amazing value! TAR/MLS #21622826
Fall’s Foliar Fruit Flags

Autumn is a time when thoughts often turn to colorful leaves. Calendars abound with scenic shots of flaming sugar maples in New England. Locally, we generally lack such botanical exuberances but can still enjoy vignettes of the same ilk. A venture deep into a mid-elevation canyon riparian forest reveals a covert stand of cottonwood with stunning red foliage. Traversing high-elevation burned areas, entire stands of quaking aspen proffer “mountain gold.” November seems to be the epicenter of our fall colors given the cooler/drier conditions that normally prevail in this austere month.

At lower elevations we can still partake of autumn’s splendors, albeit on a more meager scale. Here, too, many plants reveal their gaudy supplemental pigments as they withdraw their chlorophyll in preparation for the cold months ahead. Among my favorites is wild cotton, which can be locally abundant in grasslands, high desert scrub, and sometimes near arid woodlands. This member of the mallow family has deep sinuses in its leaves that along with their overall shape render them similar to Japanese maples.

Beyond mere visual delight and phytochemical machinations, however, could the turn in hues of various plants actually communicate something? I discovered the concept of foliar fruit flags (FFF’s) decades ago while working as a naturalist in New Jersey. There, along the Appalachian Trail, I stumbled across an impossibly crimson stand of sour gum, a large tree preferring swamps. As I marveled at its luminosity, I noticed a number of birds plying its limbs. Soon it was evident that they were eating the fruits of the gum trees.

Not long thereafter, I researched how certain plant species advertise the ripeness of their fruit to migrating birds via their vibrant leaf colors. “Foliar” refers to the leaves, “fruits” is self-evident, and “flags” is the effect of alerting passing birds to the feast. Why might certain plants have evolved to recruit these winged frugivores? The answer lies in seed dispersal.

Lacking other means by which to spread their seeds, species employing FFF’s instead use various species of birds. As they fly overhead, these plants must shine like veritable neon signs to hungry migrants needing to fuel their calorie-consuming caravans. “Eat at Joe’s!”

Eat at Joe’s! The bright leaves seem to be saying. Winged wanderers then descend to sup at the banquet.

Since birds need to fly, carrying the extra weight of food too long is a decided disadvantage. Thus, efficient digestion of food is a trait that is at a premium in the avian world. The short time spent in the alimentary canal minimizes damage to the seeds contained within the fruits. Further, species of plants that sport FFF’s tend to be rather hard-seeded, allowing them to frequently survive the gastrointestinal gauntlet after being consumed. Coming out of the other end of the bird, then, the seeds may be scarified but otherwise intact. Defecation unwittingly plants the prepared seed, enabling it to germinate, sometimes distant from the parent plant.

Look for this very intriguing coevolved system in several of our local Sky Island plants.

Believe it or not, poison ivy demonstrates the same system. Despite its loathsome reputation, this species, too, greatly benefits passing birds in need of a meal. The fruits of this well-known contact dermatitis plant are full of lipids, which render them a high quality bird food. Accordingly, as with most species exhibiting FFF’s, the leaves of poison ivy alter from green to various shades of red, orange, and yellow, seemingly overnight. In reality, it may take a week or so to “turn on the colors,” but this swift change easily catches the attention of would-be winged couriers.

Another Sky Island plant that has FFF’s is a relative of our canyon grape. Canyon creeper, as with poison ivy, turns crimson to recruit birds to its purplish fruits. I have witnessed a variety of birds feasting upon the fruits of these species, including hermit thrushes, American robins, bridled titmice, and various woodpeckers. Coming back to wild cotton, is it also recruiting birds for seed dispersal with its red leaves?

Keep your eyes open in November and you, too, might find yourself implicated in this fascinating evolutionary saga!

In our June issue, Lynn Davison introduced PRT readers to the Borderlands Restoration Leadership Institute (BRLI), the new educational initiative coming to life under the auspices of Borderlands Habitat Network (BHN) and several partner agencies including Borderlands Restoration (BR), Deep Dirt Farm Institute (DDFI), Cuenca Los Ojos (CLO), and Wildlife Corridors (WC).

Enabled by a million-dollar Biophilia Foundation grant, BHN got the BRLI ball rolling months ago by convening a work group with a diverse membership drawn from the partner organizations and other stakeholders. After a national search, Joshua Cubista, a highly recommended facilitation, strategy and leadership consultant, was engaged to facilitate the Institute’s critical initial planning process.

Working closely with Erin Blanding, BHN Interim Executive Director, Cubista has led the work group through a rigorous process of generating information, ideas and opinions from the group members focused on several areas of development. These include program/curriculum; business/organizational structure; facilities/space; partnership/community engagement; and media/art/technical development, all of which are being folded into a business plan that will guide implementation activities. Supplemented by untold hours of subgroup meetings and independent research, the work group’s twice-weekly planning sessions have yielded a veritable mother lode of information and ideas germane to the task of launching the Institute on a firm foundation.

From this wealth of information, the work group has reached consensus on several key decisions and guiding principles. As it strives to fulfill its mission of preparing people to be effective leaders in creating a restoration economy, the Institute will place high value on collaboration, diversity, inclusiveness, innovation, learning-by-doing, and modeling how we can all live in harmony with the natural world and each other.

Virtually all of the educational modules—lectures, courses, workshops, internships, etc.—will be entirely focused on a series of local projects that staff and students together will design, seek funding for, and work within. Such projects will not only allow interested students to engage in meaningful work while gaining new knowledge and skills, but will also attract new funding to help build the restoration economy by creating local jobs. Hands-on field and lab work will play a prominent role in the learning process.

The ambitious year-round schedule will offer learning opportunities ranging from one-hour lectures to a 6-8 week summer flagship course, and internships of varying lengths. The diversity of educational offerings will accommodate all levels of students, from high schoolers exploring career options to seasoned ecology professionals who want to add new skills and knowledge to their career portfolios.

One particularly noteworthy recommendation on which the planning group has reached consensus—and one that has been enthusiastically endorsed by the BHN board—is to create a multi-organizational structure that rejects a traditional top-down hierarchy with a powerful chief executive in favor of a more collaborative model. Within the proposed structure both a non-profit charity and a for-profit social enterprise will operate in tandem; program and project leaders, along with their front-line staff will become the focus of the organization. The work of all entities within the Borderlands family of organizations will be supported by shared administrative personnel, thus saving valuable human and financial resources.

At the outset of the planning process, in conformance with the terms of the grant, the work group set a schedule for completion of major milestones, the first of which was met at the end of October as the group reached consensus on an organizational structure, guiding principles, and a range of classroom and field learning experiences to be rolled out in 2017. To celebrate the successful completion of this first phase of the Institute’s development and to invite community feedback, BHN and its partners sponsored a (cont. on next page)
Borderlands Launches Restoration....cont.

Fall Mixer on October 22 at the BHN headquarters on the campus of Old Main. Despite the unexpected downpour, over 40 attendees enjoyed refreshments, received briefings by several key staff members, and took part in a collaborative brainstorming exercise.

Having skillfully facilitated completion of Phase One, Cubista credits the dedication, enthusiasm and resourcefulness of the work group members for creating a solid foundation on which the Institute will be built. Their efforts have been enhanced by the inspired guidance of several local citizens in the vanguard of borderlands ecological work such as BR Executive Director David Seibert, DDFI’s Kate Tirion, Native Seed/Search founder Gary Nabhan, and, most notably, Borderlands Restoration Board Chairman and guiding spirit, Ron Pulliam. Ron believes fervently that a restoration economy, if embraced by the entire community, will not only heal our land but bring prosperity to the community as well. The word restoration, Pulliam points out, springs from the concept of restocking which, when applied to the field of ecology, means living sustainably on the land by replenishing what we take from it.

Climbing The Yoga Ladder

Most folks in Patagonia know Donna Lee as a yoga instructor and many of us have practiced Bikram yoga in her heated studio. Others might have had the pleasure of visiting her walled garden on various house tours over the years.

Donna has written a book about her spiritual journey, “Up the Ladder: Buddhism, Bikram, Bhakti,” which refers to ascending the yoga ladder and coming to Bhakti-yoga which is considered by the yoga sutras and other Vedic literature as the highest rung on the ladder.

Determination is the most defining character trait that comes across in this spiritual autobiography. Each step of Donna’s journey involved choices that required determination and a search for spiritual fulfillment that eluded her until she walked into Govinda’s restaurant in Tucson. That’s where the spiritual match began and continued through study and travel in India.

On one level, “Up the Ladder” is like a novel and can be read for sheer plotting. It also proves to be a cultural map of modern America, from immigrants to hippies to material wealth to spiritual seeking. On a deeper level it shows how suffering, humor, and a belief in the power of the universe to heal and illuminate a path can bring peace. Donna shares her journey with humor and honesty that are both refreshing and inspiring.

“Up the Ladder: Buddhism, Bikram, Bhakti,” is available at Amazon.com.
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