Gates Shut off Public Access To Forest

By Marion Vendituoli

It came as quite a surprise to hunters, birders, hikers and campers that vehicular public access to 34,000 acres at the northern end of the San Rafael Valley and the Red Rock Canyon area has been blocked due to private landowners shutting off portions of their property.

Motorized access into Meadow Valley and Bog Hole Wildlife Area in the San Rafael Valley via FSR 765 was blocked in July 2018 by the owners of the Vaca Ranch. They are within their legal rights to lock the gate across the Forest Service Road. Issues such as gates left open allowing cattle to get out, trash and noise have, in many cases caused landowners to exercise their right to limit public access across private property.

The former owners of the ranch, the Timkin family, had allowed public use of the ¾ mile portion of the road that dips just inside the fence line on the western side of the ranch before cutting across a section of the private property and reentering public land.

This closure prevents access to other forest service roads on approximately 14 square miles of public land, an area popular with hunters and birders. The only way to reach the Bog Hole Wildlife Area is by parking on the side of the Patagonia San Rafael Road (FSR 58) and walking 1.5 miles across the grasslands. Not only does this limit access, Britt Oleson, AZGF Wildlife Manager for the Patagonia area, is concerned that cars pulled over along FSR 58 could cause grass fires.

"AZGF reached out to the Vaca Ranch manager, Travis Nevins, to inquire about the gate," Oleson said. "They were told the closure was primarily due to the private property and reentering public land."

"The plan is to meet with the town and have a new IGA," Hochheim said. "The last conversation with the town was very positive." The existing IGA is being dismantled piece by piece in preparation for the installation of the new system, thanks to a donation from the Stark Community Foundation.

The old pool filtration system is being replaced by a new one, with the Stark Community Foundation of Canton, OH, which donated $50,000, becoming involved with the pool due to input from Henry and Louise Timken, benefactors of the foundation who have ties to the Patagonia area. The Timken family is a former owner of the Vaca Ranch in the San Rafael Valley.

John Kendall, who donated $10,000, is a grandson of John Cady, a prominent early resident of the town. He has been a generous donor to many causes in Patagonia, including the new addition to the library, the Benderly-Kendall Opera House and the building that houses the Patagonia Youth Center.

The Stark Foundation grant is being used to replace the 30-year-old filtration system, improve lighting and to purchase a portable chair lift. The Kendall donation will be used to install a new pump and for other repairs. Leslie Pools, from Tucson, will be doing the work.

The pool could reopen as early as Memorial Day. "We are going to get it up and running, so that is the main thing," Angelica Lucero, maintenance manager at the Patagonia Schools, said. "I'm very grateful. I'm glad we're going to get it running for the summer. I'm very excited about the lights, which would enable evening activities."

"This coming summer we are completely funded. We have enough money for personnel," Patagonia School Superintendent Rachell Hochheim said. "Moving forward, any unforeseen maintenance or operations expenses, we have no money."

Under the current intergovernmental agreement (IGA) with the town of Patagonia, the town contributes $10,000 annually to the pool, leaving the school district to absorb the balance of the $50,000 budget. "The community needs to realize that this can't keep falling on the back of the schools, Registrar Liz Collier said. "This is money coming out of the classroom."

The contribution from Patagonia Sue Sterling Timkin, benefactor of the foundation who has ties to the Patagonia area.

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The plan is to meet with the town and have a new IGA," Hochheim said. "The last conversation with the town was very positive." The existing IGA includes a provision for a pool committee, which Hochheim would like to see take a more active role. She would like the committee to consider hiring a pool manager, and to incorporate longer operating hours and extend the season.

Donations are needed to fund improvements, including a heater, a solar cover, better fencing and shade. For more information, to become involved or to donate, call Lucero at 394-3053.
MISSION STATEMENT

To publish a nonprofit community newspaper which serves the Mountain Empire communities of Santa Cruz County, including Canelo, Elgin, Patagonia, and Sonoita, and which is open to all views, highlighting local issues and emphasizing the contributions of local talent.

WHO WE ARE

We are a nonprofit organization, funded by paid advertising, donations and grants. PRT is a free monthly publication distributed to news stands and local merchants in The Mountain Empire.

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Molly Phinney
Saul Lieberman

Thanks to these talented local artists who have volunteered their time and efforts, freshly painted PRT news boxes celebrating the natural beauty of our area have now been set up in Sonoita and Patagonia. These boxes not only keep the latest issue of the PRT clean and dry, they are a visual reminder of what makes our communities so unique - this incredible landscape and the generosity of our residents. Look for more boxes to show up in the near future.

Zach Farley
Denise Purvis

The PRT Wants to be YOUR SOURCE for Local News Throughout the Month!

Visit www.patagoniaregionaltimes.org and click on "What’s New?" to access our news blog titled “Late Breaking News.” Every Monday we feature an article from the current issue and we regularly update the blog with news from the community. In April we covered the South32 use permit application to the Town of Patagonia and the latest news on the secession of Sonoita, Elgin and Canelo from Santa Cruz County. You can see all our posts on the website or by clicking on Patagonia Regional Times on Facebook. Remember the PRT is not just a monthly event, so make it a habit to check the website.

Anything you want reported? Let us know because we want to hear from you!

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The PRT is the ONLY source of local news and we are committed to keeping it free. A monthly gift gives the PRT a predictable source of income and contributes to our sustainability.

To learn more and enroll in the PRESS CORE, visit www.patagoniaregionaltimes.org
Start the Conversation
By Lynn Davison

Patagonia is an unusual place in many ways, blessed with a rich history and many resources. Our history is shaped by ranching, mining, the railroad and by our proximity to Mexico and the social and cultural values of the Mexican people. We have an abundance of natural resources including the remarkable biodiversity of plants and animals and the scenic landscapes which draw hikers, bikers, hunters, birders, photographers, and scientists, as well as an abundance of valuable minerals deep underground which draw mining companies back to our region.

We also have a quirky town with a nationally recognized library, a health center, a live theater and movie house, an opera house, many effective non-profit organizations that support various elements of our community and the borderlands region, an underfunded but vibrant public-school system that is an important hub for kids and families. We also have 900 diverse and resourceful people who care about this place.

Patagonia is also pretty similar to other small towns in rural America. There is often a divide in the views of people who have lived in the community for a long time, often multiple generations, and those who have moved to town within the last 20 years or so. In Patagonia, the differences also have cultural, economic and political elements. A significant number of the old timers are of Mexican heritage and most of the newcomers are Anglo. Socioeconomic levels are different too, with average wealth of newcomers being greater than the old timers.

Like a lot of the west, there is a strong libertarian streak in the old timers which is balanced by progressive views common in many of the newcomers. There is a number of examples that highlight this divide. Most recently in Patagonia it is the return of mining exploration. However, that is far from the only issue.

Here are a few principles that can help us all walk the divide and start the conversation:

1. Assume good intentions by all parties. By doing so, people are better able to listen to different points of view.
2. Encourage asking questions to get new information rather than to reinforce current thinking. Look for areas of agreement versus areas of difference and build on them.
3. Respect the differences among people. They are a strength in any community. Reflect if you really think about the same, thinks the same, has the same history and experience.
4. Require civility (aka plain good manners) in all public discussions.

Difficult conversations are not easy but in times like these they are particularly important.

South32 Drops Permit Request
By Aisha Sander

South32 has withdrawn their application for a use permit to build a 3.9 acre parking lot and staging area off Harshaw Road, having requested that the Town Council table the permit decision which was to be voted on during the April 10 meeting. At that council meeting Mayor Andrea Wood recommended that the permit be denied in its current form, as it was unclear how South 32 would be revising the application. She requested that South 32 submit a new plan and start the process again with the Planning and Development Committee (P&D).

However, Greg Lucero, Vice President of Corporate Affairs at South 32, said that it is “highly unlikely that we will submit another application. We are currently considering the possibility of developing the property under its permitted use, single family residential.”

South32 had submitted a use permit application to P&D to build a 3.9 acre parking lot and staging area off Harshaw Rd. on their 29 acre property on Red Rock Avenue in March. Approximately 60 people had attended an open P & D hearing held on March 26 to discuss the permit. A second hearing was held on April 3.

The audience shared concerns about compliance with the town’s truck ordinance and the eventual need for South32 to transport ore. Lucero said that South 32 is looking for an access road in and out of town. He recently wrote that “until a bypass route is established our only viable route in and out of the site is via Harshaw Road.”

At both open hearings Council member Michael Stabile asked South32 to submit a weekly truck manifest to ensure good faith with the Truck Ordinance. Both times his request was not addressed by mine representatives.

On April 3 the P&D Committee shared their recommendations but were not able to reach a consensus.

David Budd, chairman of P&D, said that the town is at a “tipping point.” “Patagonia is an extra special town, well-known and relatively stable with its green economy, small-town flavor, eco-tourism industry, and a growing restoration industry,” said Budd, and the use permit from South 32 does not fit with the town plan. Committee member Susan Lange concurred with Budd’s statement.

P&D committee member Todd Norton favored the use permit. The parking lot would push traffic out of town without straining the town infrastructure, Norton said.

Committee member Gary Rutherford said that a yes or no answer is too simple and asked South 32 to propose a plan that would bring more benefits to the town. Melissa Munietta abstained from voting.

A majority of the attendees at the hearings did not approve of the mine having an industrial presence within town limits.

This is the first time the town of Patagonia has had to deliberate over a use permit application of this scale. The Town General Plan, which was renewed for another 10 years in April 2019, was often quoted and referred to throughout this process, demonstrating the importance of the Town Plan.
Casting Light on Light Pollution

By Robert Gay

Light pollution, which has joined air, water, and soil pollution as a major environmental concern, occurs by direct transmission of light which we experience as “skyglow.” The skyglow from Las Vegas can now be seen from the South rim of the Grand Canyon, about 250 miles away. In Southern Arizona, skyglow from Phoenix troubles astronomers at Mt. Graham, Mt. Lemmon, Kitt Peak and Mt. Hopkins, and sky-watchers from Patagonia, Sonoita and Elgin can see skyglow from Tucson, Nogales or Sierra Vista. Light pollution is slowly eroding access to the skies.

It can be caused by many sources including homes, businesses, signs, parks, roadway lighting, sports events, vehicles, construction, airports and military bases. In Santa Cruz County, added sources include mining exploration and border illumination. Dr. Emilio Falco, astronomer at the Fred L. Whipple Observatory, has found that “huge, barely shielded lights at the Border Patrol check points add to our local light pollution at the Observatory, especially the I-19 one near Amado.”

Even if there are local decreases in light pollution there has been significant development-related increases, reports NASA-funded astronomer Michael Schwartz, who recently closed his home observatory near Patagonia Lake. “One of the factors in the closing of Tenagara Observatories is the lack of enforcement for residents,” he said. “When I set up the observatories in 2000, Rio Rico was a hamlet. Its immense growth has caused severe sky glow of the worst kind. Additionally, unenforced commercial and residential lighting in Nogales, Tucson and Phoenix make the stars inaccessible. I don’t expect this to ever improve.”

Dark Skies in Arizona

From a regional map of light pollution, it’s easy to see that Southern Arizona skies are troubled. Still, one of Arizona’s 14 designated “Dark Sky Places” is the Tumacacori National Historic Park. Communities can become designated dark-sky places also, as did Flagstaff in 2001. In 2016, the town of Patagonia had some interest in becoming a dark-sky community, but the idea did not get enough momentum. With enough citizen interest, notes Harold Meckler, an amateur Patagonia astronomer, “Patagonia may yet become a recognized dark-sky village.”

If Patagonia obtains dark-sky designation in the future, it would join a worldwide movement now including over a hundred dark sky locations and communities in the U.S. alone.

The designation program originated with the International Dark Skies Association (IDSA), formed 30 years ago in Tucson. IDSA’s Director or Public Policy, John Barentine, explained in an interview that the group is rooted in the growing awareness that darkness is a vital diminishing resource.

Astronomers Without Borders (AWB) does related work internationally, under the banner “One person, one sky.” Dark-sky activists encourage us to see that light pollution is much more reversible than other kinds of pollution — often with just the flick of a switch or the change of a fixture.

Dark-sky enhancement benefits humans and many other species. The Center for Biological Diversity elaborates: “Species known to be impacted by [excess artificial light] include mammals, birds, reptiles, amphibians, invertebrates, fishes and plants.” Migratory birds, for instance, navigate by stars and have been known to become disoriented and crash into illuminated structures. An estimated 100 million to 1 billion birds die each year in North America in these collisions, according to the Cornell Lab of Ornithology.

Excessive artificial light can cause sleep disorders, disrupted circadian rhythms, eyesight difficulties for the elderly, melatonin deficiency, and potentially increased cancer risk in humans. In 2009, the American Medical Association (AMA) adopted a resolution urging reduction of light pollution and use of shielded light fixtures.

Saving the Night

Voluntary reduction of excess light by individuals and communities has become a first route to helping “save the night,” by selecting shielded fixtures and minimizing lighting. The IDSA helps cut over-illumination via a light-feature-certification program that extends to Home Depot, where consumers seeking outdoor light fixtures can look for the DARK SKY APPROVED labeling. Another key light-reduction strategy is the use of LED bulbs — except for the low-wavelength blue ones, which are harmful.

Light pollution regulations are in place in some jurisdictions. At the Federal level, IDSA’s Berentine suggests that Environmental Impact Statements should include assessment of a proposed project’s light emissions, and that, in parallel with the Clean Air and Clean Water Acts, EPA regulation should include a Dark Sky Preservation Act. This will require new legislation.

At the State level, the Arizona Revised Statutes Title 49, “The Environment,” devotes Chapter 7 to “Light Pollution,” a brief regulation of light emissions. And at the county level, Pima and Santa Cruz Counties have both adopted Light Pollution Ordinances. Pima County’s ordinance creates its most restrictive zone, emission-wise, in a 25-mile radius around Mt. Hopkins, home to the Fred L. Whipple Observatory. Santa Cruz’s ordinance, however, describes the whole county as a unified “County Lighting Area,” without defining regions of special concern, even though approximately 60% of the Mt. Hopkins light regulation zone lies within Santa Cruz County. This 50-mile diameter critical light circle skims a part of Nogales and northern Sonora at the border, then swings east to include the Patagonia and Santa Rita Mountains, as well as Canelo Hills and Empire Mountain Ranges. This critical zone includes the Fairborn Observatory and the entire sites of the Hermosa and Rosemont mining projects. Hudbay was made to negotiate light pollution limitations in its permitting process for Rosemont mine construction, but compliance has not yet been required of the Hermosa Project in the Patagonia Mountains.

The loss of the experience of the night sky is a cultural and personal loss as well. “80 % of Americans Can’t See the Milky Way Any More” was the title of a June 2016 National Geographic article. The over-bright sky is a barrier to the nourishing sense of wonder and cosmic curiosity, which has always marked the human relationship to the darkness that endlessly chases the light around the planet in 24-hour laps.

Clearly, light pollution and night-sky consciousness is spreading. Will it spread quickly enough to rein in the excess lumens and give us back the night? If the skies can be darkened again — even in small corners — we stand to get reconnected with that dynamic and fascinating profundity that lives and swirls overhead every night.
Carlos Soto Rivera, 97, passed away Tuesday March 19, 2019. He served in the U.S. Army in WWII. He received decorations and citations including two Bronze Stars associated within the Asiatic Pacific Theater Campaign.

In his youth, he was a farm hand. He finished his working life as an Open Pit Mining Surveyor in the AZ Mining Industry. He worked at the AZ State Highway Dept., ASARCO Mining at Trench Mine, Sahuarita Site and Silver Bell Mine. He ultimately retired from Cyprus Pima Mining Company.

Carlos was born in Benson, AZ and raised in Duquesne AZ. He went to school in Washington Camp, AZ. He also lived in Nogales and Patagonia at various times. During his early 90s, he returned to Patagonia for a several years. His favorite hangouts were the Patagonia Public Library and the Patagonia Senior Center.

He was the ninth in birth order of 12 children. He predeceased in death by his father, Jose Jimenez and the Patagonia Senior Center. He was the Patagonia Public Library and the Patagonia Public Library. He was the Patagonia Senior Center.

Some of his favorite things were hiking in his youth, family gatherings, sharing childhood stories, tales of folklore and legends, Arizona Diamondbacks, reading and dining outdoors. He was known for his sense of humor and easy-going personality.

Special thanks for the loving support of Sacred Heart Home Health Care and Valor Hospice Care. A graveside service was held on April 12, 2019, 9:30am, Funeraria Del Angel South Lawn, Tucson.

Larry Allen Peterson of Patagonia, AZ, died on February 10, 2019 after a brief illness. He was 75.

Larry moved to the Patagonia / Sonoita area in 1993 with his wife Chris and their three children. A transplant from the North, it was soon as if he had been born of the region’s grasslands and red rocks. It was here he cultivated his passion for archeology and absorbed the region’s beauty during countless hours walking the land, often side-by-side with Chris.

Larry was born April 30, 1943 in Fargo, North Dakota to Harold Anthony and Edna (Zieman) Peterson. He graduated from high school in Watertown, Wisconsin and received a degree in mathematics, physics, and philosophy from Wartburg College in Iowa.

When asked what he did for a living, Larry often replied he traveled selling brooms. In fact, he was an accomplished business management consultant and entrepreneur. Larry founded his own consulting business before he was 30 and never looked back. He was coding business systems back when it was called writing software, the computers took up rooms, and the “thumb drives” were large disks of magnetic tape. The traveling part was true, however. He had clients all over the United States, Mexico, and England.

Larry’s business philosophy never lost sight that the point of business is to make money, yet he combined the art of the business plan with the values that make for a fulfilling life. He distilled his decades of experience in a volume titled “Rules for Money and Fun” and applied them in various businesses, including designing fetiching—only better—for bow hunting and raising cattle on his beloved Redrock Ranch.

Larry met Christin J. Debbink in Haiti. They both participated in volunteer service trips, sponsored by the Ventures in People Foundation in the 1980s. For over 35 years, her zest for life and capacity for kindness continued to melt his heart.

A father of seven, he was known to call his children at random intervals just to say “I love you,” and he recognized and enjoyed the unique persons that each of them are. He had four children with Joanne (Schmidt) Peterson of Oconomowoc, Wisconsin before their marriage ended in divorce.

Grandchildren added even more joy to his life. He loved playing piano and bongos with them and challenging them to math problems. He could always be counted on to meet them at the front door.

Although he eventually gave up his frequent flyer status, he still took pleasure in watching the planes come in and out of Nogales International Airport and found the time to write volumes of his own brand of cowboy poetry.

Most recently, he spent his time in the little house on Harshaw Creek, where he took delight in watching humming birds dive-bomb each other, the hopping about of a little wren, and watering his flowers. He continued to quench his thirst for knowledge and write, almost daily, about what he saw in the world.

In addition to Chris, Larry is survived by four daughters, Sarah Jo, Ingrid (Travis) Bruce, Christina (Ja-cob) Chattman, and Birgitta (Fabian) Garcia; three sons Pehr (Melissa), Leif (Kate), and Thor (Sabina); nine grandchildren; and two brothers and two sisters.
Sonoita Resident Contests Crippling Water Bill  

By Marion Vendituoli

Mary Truman checks the water meter in the back corner of her Sonoita property after being billed for using 154,000 gallons of water.

When part-time Sonoita resident Mary Truman got a water bill for $2,141 for the month of Nov. 2018, she was sure there had been some mistake. The meter reading indicated that she had used 154,430 gallons of water, even though the water had been turned off at her house since the previous May. In August 2018, a leak had been discovered, which was repaired, and at that time Truman turned the water off at the meter. According to Truman, the water shut off is located on the company’s side of the meter. Her average water bill during the past year had been between $35 and $55, with readings of zero gallons used for Sept. and Oct. when the water had been turned off at both the meter and at her house.

Truman, like many residents of Los Encinos and Papago Springs, is on a public water system owned by the estate of E.H. (Buck) Lewis. Truman’s property is part of the south system of the water company, which services approximately 75 customers. Southwestern Utility Management (SUM) in Tucson provides service and billing for the Water Company, as well as for 31 other water companies in Arizona.

When Truman contacted SUM, she was told that the company would have to pay the bill, even though she had not had her water on during that time. “Whatever goes through the meter you have to pay for,” Truman said she was told. According to Truman, they suggested that perhaps someone had come on her property and had stolen the water. The meter, however, is in the back corner of Truman’s property, and it would have been difficult and unlikely that a large truck could access the meter or cross her property without being noticed.

This is not the first time that Truman has had trouble with the water company. Her bill in Dec. 2014 was $2669. “I’ve now been charged almost $5000 when I wasn’t even here,” she said.

In May 2017, she was charged $314 for 22,830 gallons, which was ten times her average amount of water usage, according to Truman. The company replaced her meter at that point, and the readings dropped down to zero for the rest of the summer. In January 2019, the readings spiked again, up to 12,900 gallons. Testing conducted by the AZ Corporation Commission, at Truman’s expense, showed the meter inexplicably reading below the allowable range, which should indicate that she was being undercharged. Once again, her meter was sent out for testing, it was found to be reading incorrectly, and was replaced in February.

There was a further unintended consequence of Truman involving the AZ Corporation Commission. After looking at her water system, the Commission notified SUM that Truman had to, at her own expense, install a backflow preventer because she has a horse on the property. Properties with livestock are required to have this backflow preventer. She was given 30 days from April 9 to install and get the backflow preventer certified or her water would be shut off. “This is not punitive,” Paul Juhl, office manager for SUM, said. “This was initiated by the state.”

Truman has no choice but to pay her bill or her water will be turned off by the company. In March, Truman went to the civil litigation division of the AZ Attorney General’s Office Consumer Protection Division and was granted 12 months instead of the usual 6 months to pay her bill. She is still on the hook for the late fees. “It’s just so unfair. They don’t care. I am a nervous wreck. I’m so upset.”

Truman is not the only customer to have trouble with the water company. In Nov. of last year, Lou Ann Kirby, of Sonoita, received a visit from a representative of SUM who told her she had a leak in her water line and that she needed to hire a plumber to fix it. He said I had used 62,200 gallons of water that month and had depleted the system. I hired a plumber who came with an assistant and worked most of the day trying to find the leak. They charged me $400 but did not find a leak, nor even a big enough wet spot to account for over 86,000 gallons of water,” she wrote.

“The water company charged me $1,100 and refused to compromise. If I did not pay the full amount, they would shut off the water. If I would pay $400 by Dec. 1, they would let me sign a contract to pay the balance over 6 months at $124 a month. I didn’t have my meter tested as I would have to bear the cost if it tested okay. Based on my Mary Truman’s experience, I didn’t want to risk it.” She also pointed out that the company is charging her interest, even though, according to Kirby, there was no mention of that in her contract with them.

Although he could not discuss Truman’s specific case, Juhl said that high meter readings that occur in unoccupied homes typically are due to a leak in the system or someone leaving a hose or irrigation system running. “Once water travels through the meter, it’s the customer’s responsibility,” he said. “The Company strives to accurately bill customers for their usage and will utilize all available resources to investigate and validate disputed reads or inaccuracies as appropriate,” he wrote in a follow-up email. “If the readings is ultimately found to be valid, the company will extend a payment arrangement in an effort to minimize the financial impact to the customer.”

Truman plans to file a formal complaint and go before a judge when she returns to the area next fall. This would be the first time in Juhl’s experience that a customer has asked for a formal hearing.

Access  

Cont. from Page 1  

Ironically, it is hunters, to whom these channels are targeted, who are the most vocal critics of the road closure across Kroenke’s property.

AZGF has been exploring alternatives to restore access for the public. One option would be to construct a new road that follows the west boundary of the ranch. Another option would be to do a land swap with the Vaca Ranch that would place the existing road completely on public land, and the third option would be to build a new road to the east of the ranch. The most viable solution at present seems to be the creation of a new road east of the Vaca Ranch.

Oleson has had several meetings with concerned groups who are working together to re-establish public access. “There are a lot of ‘critter groups’ who are willing to assist,” she said, including Southern Arizona Quail Forever, the Mule Deer Foundation and the National Wild Turkey Foundation. “There were many complaints about these closures and lots of public pressure. Hunters have been the most vocal group, Oleson said. “They’re the ones shouldering this. They pay lots of money to keep access to public lands open for everyone.”

Public access via Forest Service Roads at the northern end of the 34,000 acres of Forest Service land has also been cut off by private landowners. Vehicular access on FSR 138 to the public land in Red Rock Canyon, which lies to the north of Patagonia, was blocked in Sept. 2017, a legal closure where the road crosses a ranch on Red Rock Canyon road. (The owner asked not to be named in this article.) Approximately ¾ mile of road has been closed off.

“The closure prevents vehicular access to miles of USFS roads and limits foot access on approximately 36 square miles of public land, including important areas for hunting... and for birding,” Oleson said. It is now a ten-mile hike for Oleson to check one of her game cameras, as she has to come in on foot off of the Arizona Trailhead on Harshaw Rd.

“As frustrating as this closure is for me, I totally get it,” Oleson said, noting that traffic was passing by within 60 feet of the ranch headquarters. “If we could get access through the HudBay property, the roads already exist that would restore access to the northern half of the Forest Service land,” she added. HudBay owns 1580 acres on the east side of Hwy 82 north of Sonoita Springs, part of its mitigation plan to offset water usage at their proposed copper mine north of Sonoita. This is the area that is also being looked at for possible access to the Arizona Trail if plans to reroute it are successful.
Patagonia Celebrates Earthfest 2019

The planning committee of Earthfest 2019, German Quiroga, Perin McNelis, Grace Fullmer, Linda and Sam Shore, Maureen De La Ossa, Cassina Farley and Laura Wenzel, brought together numerous organizations, musicians, and individuals to create “a celebration of the natural beauty that surrounds us.”

The event, titled “Youth are our Future” showcased several local organizations, a kite giveaway and kite flying, face painting, a native plant sale, a rummage sale, music, demonstrations, a story walk, talks across town, tree planting, film presentations, tours and more.

Photos by Marion Vendituoli and Aisha Sander
LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Praise for the PRT

We would like to extend kudos to the PRT Team. Ever since the community survey last year, the content and writing have further improved and there has been stronger recognition of advertisers through better layouts. This has been wonderful to see, as the community deserves quality, thorough reporting and thoughtful (and thought-provoking) editorials and letters.

We applaud your non-profit model. We have watched our other hometown paper become consumed by advertising limiting its quality and, most importantly, its independence. Furthermore, that paper is now owned by an out-of-state corporation that is solely focused on profits (part of a national trend).

We joined the Press Core last year. Now we are even bigger supporters, and are excited for future initiatives. One hope is that your website will become more “real-time”, reporting events and news more immediately. Perhaps the PRT could be the community’s event connection by becoming the go-to calendar for activities, public meetings, presentations, etc.

The printed edition could be more in-depth and available not only for residents but for visitors. Recent houseguests from Nevada read the paper cover-to-cover and were impressed by the depth and apparent even-handedness of the news coverage.

So our heartiest congratulations to the PRT staff, board and supporters.

Chuck and Sarah Klingenstein
Patagonia

The Patagonia Regional Times encourages everyone to comment publicly on the events and times in which we live. Letters must be signed by the author and include town of residence. Letters are limited to 200 words. PRT reserves the right to edit all letters for language, length, and content. Please send your letter, in MS Word, to prteditor@gmail.com

Low Cost Cat Neutering Offered

Patagonia Animal Control is Partnering with PAWS Patrol of Green Valley to help spay and neuter cats for just $10. The team has the budget to work on 40 cats, feral, stray or owned, with an emphasis on female outdoor cats. The cats will also get a rabies vaccine.

Contact Karina Hilliard, Animal Control Officer #309 at 520-988-0837 to get a trap or to get on the list for surgery. Cats will need to be scheduled for transport to Green Valley. You can also email her at patagoniaaco309@gmail.com.

This initiative has been funded by the Arizona License Fund.

Secession Bill Moves Forward

By Kat Crockett

HB 2486, the first step towards the secession of eastern Santa Cruz County, was approved by the Arizona State Senate Committee of the Whole on April 9. State Representative Gail Griffin, who represents District 14, encompassing Cochise and Greenlee County, and part of Pima and Graham counties, authored the bill to create a joint study committee that will research and report on the fiscal and related impacts of a change in the county boundary line between Cochise County and Santa Cruz County.

This bill, which is a response to community concerns regarding high taxes and diminishing services on the east side of Santa Cruz County, is part of an attempt for Sonoita, Elgin and Canelo to join Cochise County.

HR 2468 now only needs 16 (out of 17) Republican votes to be approved by the Senate. If approved, the bill will then be sent to Governor Ducey for final approval. If approved by the Governor, a report of findings and recommendations are due to the Governor, the president of the Senate, Speaker of the House and Secretary of State on or before June 30, 2020.

The 13-person committee will consist of three members of the House, three members of the Senate, three public members appointed by the House, three public members appointed by the Senate, and one member appointed by the governor.

At this time, it is unknown what recommendations the Committee will make, whether they will be adopted, and what process may be required for implementation.

We are PATAGONIA AREA RESOURCE ALLIANCE, advocating for the protection of our community and natural resources from pollution and depletion by industrialized mining.

SOUTH 32’s plan for the Hermosa Mine site puts endangered species at risk and threatens our regional ecotourism and nature-based economies. The Patagonia Mountains are a global biodiversity hotspot. The well-being and economic prosperity of the region is deeply tied to the health of these mountains and the Sonoita Creek, which flows into the Santa Cruz River.

GET INVOLVED AND STAY CONNECTED

As a volunteer non-profit, we advocate for the protection of our resources and of Patagonia’s way of life.

www.patagoniaalliance.org
facebook.com/patagoniaAlliance

PATAGONIA MOUNTAINS Pre-2016 HERMOSA PROJECT January 2019 THE FUTURE?

Patagonia Area Resource Alliance Watchdogs
In the March 27 Patagonia Town Council Meeting, Denise Bowden, of South32, said that the company is donating a speed sign for Harshaw Road. Marshall Patterson recognized Animal Control Officer Hilliard for service to the town with spay-neuter catch-and-release programs for cats and dogs. The Marshall explained that if it becomes necessary to kill a mountain lion, AZ Fish & Game would do it.

Manager Teel, in his last meeting, said revenues were up a little for the town and said a brief farewell to public office.

Planning & Development Committee is working on the town plan and suggested approving renewal for 2 years.

Council approved liquor licenses for the Volunteer Fire Company’s annual steak fry and for the upcoming KPUP luau.

Two representatives from Spirit World 100 cycling tour group gave a detailed report on their proposed 400-600 person event. They are working on the permit process with the Forest Service and are talking with Border Patrol and South32, the major generators of Harshaw Road traffic.

Carolyn Shafer reported on the Flood and Flow Committee’s efforts to bring together studies on water quality and flow in the Sonora Creek watershed. With funding support from Borderlands Restoration Network’s Biophilia Group the contract for the report was approved. $3,000 is needed for Phase 2. A UA graduate hydrology student is working on a groundwater study that will include effects of drought and demand on water movements, including the age and origins of groundwater.

SCC District 3 Supervisor Bruce Bracker explained the slump in recycling markets and reiterated the problems of food waste and mixed trash, as well as the spotty effectiveness of the town’s recycling program, peoples’ misuse of the dumpsters for garbage disposal, and the declining number of recycling markets, nationally. A resident education program will be organized by the town in coordination with the County.

Close to 60 people attended the April 10 Town Council. In the Call to Public, Bob Misirowski suggested with the Town not taking any action. The recent presence of a food truck in town was noted, with the Town not taking any action.

The Town Marshal reported that there are four rabid skunks in town.

The Town Council approved to renew the current town plan for another 10 years.

Saul Lieberman testified on the proposed use permit by South32 to build a parking lot off Harshaw Road, highlighting the town plan which prohibits any development of extraction industries.

The council did not approve a request for variance on setback by resident David Goggs and approved a request for variance on setback for Tempest Smith.

There was lengthy discussion on the options available to fix the current sinkhole on 3rd avenue. The town tabled the issue and will pursue the contractor who fixed the road last year.

The Town accepted South32’s donation of an electronic speed sign. The Town approved giving Borderlands Restoration recognition for their donation to the Dr. Mock Park.

The Town Council has applications for Town Manager and is moving forward with the process.

At the April 24 meeting, Marshall Patterson reported that the feral cat population in town was somewhat decreasing. He also reported that there was some bike safety teaching and helmets offered to kids at the recent BikeFest event. The Marshall’s office, Walmart & South 32 had donated about 25 bikes.

In other business, Martin Short, of Coronado Homes, had requested the town vacate a portion of North Avenue. The request was tabled, to ask him to appear and explain the proposal further. A request for waiving fees and permits for renovation of the Lenon Building, on McKeown Ave. was tabled.

The town will have a letter delivered to the owner of 262 North Ave. requesting removal of trash, with a time limit after which the Town will clear the trash at owner’s expense.

Approval was given for the town’s resolution urging the State’s legislators to approve a US Constitutional Amendment ratifying equal rights for men and women, making AZ the 38th & final state needed for completing the Amendment.

Contract renewal was approved for Marcela De La Ossa to continue roadside area cleaning.

The issue of the use of John Shelton’s lot next to Red Mt. Foods was discussed in relation to business licenses and payment of retail tax to the Town. The Council will send a note to the owner to appear and discuss this use, with one Council member feeling strongly it should simply be shut down as an eyesore.

The recent presence of a food truck in town was noted, with the Town not taking any action.
LIFE AMONG THE HUMANS

SPOOKTIVITY

By Cassina Farley

It seems like trolls and cyber-moles are everywhere, these days. Russian interference in our democracy is both worrisome and irritating. To subvert another country’s political process by propaganda, disinformation and divisive provocation is as dangerous, potentially, as outright military attack, by违约 in US policy for more than a century. To protect our own interests (Read: those of the ownership class) we support corrupt puppets - The Shah in Iran, for example, and, yes, even Saddam Hussein for a time, and shore up brutal autocrats like August Pinochet. Morality and justice do not enter into it. We do what’s cheapest and what works for us: “Stability,” I think they like to say. The list of foreign countries in whose domestic affairs we have meddled - and, often, with woeful results - is approximately endless, and that’s led - and, often, with woeful results - is approximately endless, and that’s

BUNDLE THIS

By Martin Levowitz

Every month my bill is different, my mom and I have been playing a good old game of chicken. I always pay my satellite/internet bill late. Usually I let it go until I get one of those threatening letters or email notifications telling me that if I don’t… then they will… I usually call-pay my previous balance and all is well, then neither can I.

I know I’m annoying but, damn it, they are annoying, too - this particular company (you know who they are) with its “Mob-like” hold on this town.

I were to line up all my bills, no two would be the same. Even the late fees vary. One month it’s $8, fast-forward two months and now it’s $10. I signed up for internet at $59, now it’s $79, and everyone at that company calls me Mrs. Or Ma’am.

Like an idiot a couple of years ago I went for their stupid bundle option. For a lower price I could bundle my satellite and Internet. So. Very. Stupid. I was paying for 50+ channels of sports, I don’t watch sports. I called. Followed the steps only to find out that the Mob Company doesn’t handle billing questions about satellite. I was transferred. Just when I was at the brink of insanity someone finally answered. I was informed that I had subscribed for the Season Ticket Premier Package. The conversation went like this:

“I didn’t subscribe to this package.”

(Infused with the best condescending voice) “Well ma’am it was part of the bundle and the promotion is over.”

“All I wanted to do was combine my bills for a discount.”

“Well you did and now its over”

“The promotion or the bundle???”

This went on and on. I don’t have the 50+ sports channels anymore but somehow, I’m still paying more than I originally agreed to. They have me ensnared in their Bundle of Confusion. I am writing all this on my office computer because I have no internet at home right now. The Mob called my bluff. They forced me to call. I think I spoke to the same condescending guy. They made me pay my bill. It’s clear who’s in charge.

If they’re reading this, I’m sorry. I’ll pay whatever you want.
By Gary Paul Nabhan

We often stay here, in our self-made matrix, without respite and leave this body carrying deep regret in our hearts. Fear is our conditioned response to the intense vulnerability of being alive. At any given moment we have no control over events that can dramatically displace us from our present state. The fear of the unexpected and the primary desire to survive burns in the continuously lit chamber of our physiology defined as the fight/flight reflex or our limbic brain.

Based on our evolutionary impulses we are conditioned to use control to survive the ever-present vulnerability of life. When things work in our favor we will congratulate ourselves for our correct decisions. And when things do not we will likely blame ourselves or other people and slip further into fear based thinking.

Why do we do this? First because we are primarily living life from a fear based reality. And second because control, distraction, blame, self-loathing and disassociation DO work in temporarily solving the central difficulty of being alive, which is that we are not in charge.

But by living in fear and avoiding pain we also avoid its opposites: joy, contentment, peace, love, and surrender. Though focusing on fear may work as a short-term strategy and getting us what we want it permanently impacts us from being who we are meant to be in this life and what we are meant to give.

If we are lucky though at some point all our fear-based tactics will not serve us and we will search sincerely for another way through life’s uncertainties.

“The next time you lose heart and you can’t bear to experience what you are feeling…Instead of blaming our discomfort on outer circumstances or on our own weakness, we can choose to stay present and awake to our experience, not rejecting it, not grasping it, not buying the stories that we relentlessly tell ourselves,” writes Pema Chodron, a Buddhist teacher.

When we begin to approach both the small and big disappointments in life and the thousands of undone plans with an abiding trust in the way things transpire we begin to receive the gifts of facing our vulnerability. Gifts which not only lighten our load but also give us the means to serve our true purpose.

Undoing fear and practicing acceptance is a profound way to approach the mundane in our lives. We practice facing life and letting go where it is easy or moderate as a way to prepare for the tests that we cannot expect or intuit. What do I say when I cut my hand while preparing food? What do I think when someone steals something from me? How do I respond when someone disagrees with me? How do I relate to the suffering of other people? In every moment there is an opportunity and the greatest challenges offer the greatest openings for transformation.

The practice of being with ourselves as we are and growing in awareness reduces the power of our beliefs and stories and reorients our approach to life. Every simple utterance of thank you and every step taken with felt-presence accumulates an inner reservoir of resilience. This reservoir of practice will support us when the foundations of our lives fall into oblivion, not by rising above what we experience, but by giving us the resources to allow and nurture ourselves through our worst fears. Where practicing fear makes us hard and rigid, practicing acceptance and surrender makes us soft and receptive to life.

MILESTONES

By Aisha Sander

“It is our objective as a community newspaper to present many views to our readers. The opinions expressed do not necessarily represent the views of this publication. If you would like to contribute your opinion or commentary to PRT, please send your article, in MS Word, to prteditor@gmail.com. The PRT reserves the right to edit all submissions for language, length, and content.”

BRINGING OUR COMMUNITIES TOGETHER

Arizonaans were caught off guard when they heard that the Santa Cruz National Heritage Area had recently been designated by Congress and signed into law at the White House on March 12, 2019.

Suddenly, we found ourselves in a 3300 square mile landscape that was nationally recognized for its distinctive natural and multi-cultural heritage.

Hadn’t a decade passed since all the communities in the Upper Santa Cruz watershed pledged their support for such a designation?

By the time Tucson became the first “City of Food Cultures” in the US to be designated by UNESCO, hadn’t the Heritage Area initiative become a river drying up in the sand?

Not really. Like most desert rivers, its energy just went “underground” for a while.

Since 2003, institutions, non-profits and for-profits had gained consensus on what they deemed the most unique assets of our region.

By 2009, the Santa Cruz Valley Heritage Alliance had brought together hundreds of entrepreneurs to discuss the best ways to promote as well as safeguard the distinctive products and experiences of the watershed.

The Alliance published a heritage food directory. It sponsored workshops that brought food producers together with chefs, food writers and tourism planners to restore our agricultural economy. Many of these producers were later featured in newspapers and in Edible Baja Arizona magazine.

Further encouraged by the Tucson City of Gastronomy initiative, producers of foods and beverages in the watershed found ready markets and consumers of foods and beverages in the City of Gastronomy initiative, bringing our communities together.

Friends of Sonora Creek in Patagonia, as well as the University’s Center for Regional Food Studies, Southwest Folklife Alliance, Local First Arizona and Community Food Bank of Southern Arizona, all of which work throughout the valley.

But of course, the real work must be done by community members like you. Make your voice heard. Volunteer to build check dams and plant trees. Harvest water. Guide others to our iconic places. Eat what our farmers produce. Care for this place.

Nabhan is author of two recent books, Food from the Radical Center and Mesquite. He has served on the boards of the Santa Cruz Valley Heritage Alliance, Tucson City of Gastronomy and Borderlands Restoration Network. He is a researcher at the University of Arizona. He lives in Patagonia.

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Barry Muehe: Acoustic Guitarist With Wide Appeal

By Bob Brandt

Although playing music has always taken a back seat to running a successful business, Barry Muehe has earned a special place among area musicians since arriving in Patagonia in the early 1980s. According to Jim Koweek, his long-time musical pal, Muehe “has done more to promote local music and keep a local music scene going than anyone around.” His easy-going style, versatility and mastery of the acoustic guitar afford him frequent opportunities to perform at a variety of local music venues.

Muehe’s recognition as a stalwart of the Eastern Santa Cruz County music scene reflects his love of the music, a dedication to tradition and a desire to help other musicians reach their potential. However, it’s not a status he attained through a steady course of improvement. There were fits and starts including a long stretch when he didn’t even own a guitar. (He now owns five.)

His musical journey began as an 18-year-old kid growing up in a “challenging environment” near Newark, New Jersey. With tips from his cousin, he learned the basics of guitar well enough to jam and just have fun.

After finishing high school, Muehe wandered through the next several years tasting food, freedom and fun in such diverse places as New Orleans and San Francisco’s Haight-Ashbury District where he played for tips (often in the form of beer, he says) and finally Tempe where his life took a major turn toward stability.

He began a volunteer stint with a Tempe food co-op, soon became its assistant manager and there met his musical pal, Muehe “has done more to promote local music and keep a local music scene going than anyone around.” His easy-going style, versatility and mastery of the acoustic guitar afford him frequent opportunities to perform at a variety of local music venues.

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Lunch Program Brings Unexpected Benefits

By Aisha Sander

Patagonia Senior Center President Ramon Quiroga was asked for examples of the health benefits from attending its Senior Lunch Program (SLP) since its makeover in late 2017. “Yes, me,” he said. “I’ve lost 30 pounds and I’m off insulin.”

Quiroga is not alone. A recent survey of 30 attendees showed that 29 felt healthier since coming to the redesigned SLP, with reports of results such as weight loss and reductions in blood pressure, cholesterol, blood sugar, and arthritis. The popular lunch program also provides vital socialization. Increased donations from attendees are now making the program more financially sustainable.

The SLP was almost shut down a year and a half ago, which led to implementing major changes in the menu. It had been given final notice of losing its funding for not meeting federal deadlines for compliancy with a nutritional evaluation issue.

Community members and SLP supporters Binx Selby and Linda Jade Fong of BalancePoint Institute were asked to step in to help solve the urgent crisis. Selby and Fong had developed their nutritional expertise creating the science-based BalancePoint eating protocol for reducing and reversing inflammatory-based cardiometabolic diseases, including diabetes.

The SLP needed to show analysis and certification that the lunches followed a complex set of 20 or so nutritional criteria set out by federal regulations. Hiring the required nutritionist would have been very costly, but Selby and Fong conscripted nutritionist Badria Bedri of Rio Rico to join their volunteer efforts.

While ensuring that SLP menus were government-compliant, they also used the BalancePoint system to optimize menu choices to meet various dietary needs such as those of diabetics, vegetarians, gluten and grain-sensitive, or lactose intolerant. “Too many lunch programs,” said Selby, “contribute to, rather than reduce, conditions such as diabetes.”

Selby, Fong and Bedri worked together, each donating hundreds of hours, to create meal plans with all those goals at a reasonable cost. Above all, they wanted the meals to be delicious.

One of the most dramatic differences seen due to the revamped SLP has been a change in people’s eating habits. For example, previously diners would have a tiny serving of salad. Now there is a ten-item salad bar. The salad bar opens early and there is a long line up waiting for it. “I overhear a man saying he could never imagine eating, let alone looking forward to, big salads every day,” said Fong. Responses to the survey indicate that people are taking their new eating habits home.

Chef Carla Haro, who came on board in 2018, uses the menu guidelines to create gourmet-quality meals, such as lemon grilled fish on a bed of shaved leeks, cauliflower tacos with avocado-cilantro sauce, or ribs served with Mexican quinoa. An average of 25-40 seniors, representing a diversity of socioeconomic and cultural backgrounds, come to the Senior Center daily for lunch. “There is tremendous affection between people,” said Selby, “It’s a place where people who come from different walks of life share a meal together and learn about one another.”

Recently 90-year-old Doris Wenig stood up at the end of lunch, grabbed the empty salad serving bowl and banged on it with a spoon to get people’s attention. “I just want to say how much I love the food,” she said, “and how much I love coming here every day just to see all of you.”

Government funding subsidizes half of the cost of each meal, so contributions are necessary for the program to continue. Any seniors and their guests, of any age, are welcome for a donation.

Senior lunch programs are generally facing dwindling attendance but the Patagonia one is thriving.

BalancePoint Institute hopes to receive funding to research the impacts of its nutritional program so that it can be used as a model for other centers around the country to demonstrate how lifestyle change for health can be achieved.
Glimpses Into Our Past

By Alison Bunting

The Rothrock family made their first Arizona home in Elgin sometime after 1912, taking advantage of the Homestead Act which allowed a man or woman to claim first 160 and later 320 acres. By building a home, raising crops, and improving the land for 5 years, the claimant would receive title to the land. The Rothrocks were encouraged to move to Arizona with the promise of “free” land by George A. Beebe, who also homesteaded in Elgin. Beebe offered to “meet prospective settlers at the train, take the visitors to his home and show them all available parcels until they found one they liked, all for a fee of $150.” [Barr, Arizona Cattlewoman, p. 13].

Oliver Rothrock Sr. was born in 1854 in Pennsylvania into a farming family. He was a school teacher in Kansas in the 1880s and married a fellow Pennsylvanian, Ella Sarah Mohler, in 1884. They had eight children, five boys and three girls. By 1900 he had returned to Pennsylvania to farm and by 1910 was farming in Chico, CA. Oliver, Ella and their two youngest sons, Oliver Jr. and Ira then moved to Elgin to their 320 acre homestead.

Bruce Rothrock, Oliver Sr.’s adult son also homesteaded 320 acres. He was married to Esther Swigart, who later encouraged her two sisters, Carrie and Rhoda*, to homestead in Elgin as well. After Bruce and Esther proved up their homestead they moved to Patagonia, before returning to Pennsylvania by 1920. By 1930 they had moved to Oregon.

Oliver Jr. and Ira grew up in Elgin. Oliver Jr., at age 19, “was seriously injured when an automobile operated by George Beebe...overturned near Patagonia.” [Bisbee Daily Review, 4/19/1922]. Doctors were forced to amputate his leg.

The family resided in Elgin until Oliver Sr.’s death in 1925. The 1930 census lists Oliver Jr. as living in Patagonia with his mother. Ira, his wife Margie, and their one-year old son Vance were also living in Patagonia in 1930. He and Margie married in 1927. Sadly, Ira died of pneumonia at age 27; his obituary noted that “He was active in civic entertainments, being a member of the Patagonia orchestra.... At the time of his death he was employed by R. C. Blabon, of the East Side garage.” [AZ Daily Star, 3/10/1935].

Oliver Jr. became the Patagonia school bus driver in 1926, a job he held until 1940. “Rothrock, this year, completes 14 years of driving school children to and from Patagonia High School. His route is not a smooth one, over unpaved mountain roads, through sand washes, and dirt roads twice a day. The daily trip for education is the longest school bus route in southern Arizona. The distance covered in 14 years, during the school period, has been over 218,720 miles, or about eight times around the world without an accident.” [AZ Daily Star, 4/24/1940].

Oliver Jr. was Patagonia’s Justice of the Peace from 1944 to 1978. One of his most notable cases was the Herman C. Bender killing described “as the most brutal murder in the history of Santa Cruz County.” Bender’s body was found at the bottom of the “Big Jim” mine shaft south of Patagonia. [AZ Republic 5/6/1945]. Bender’s wife and her two teen-age nephews were charged and convicted for his murder. [Arizona Republic, 5/11/1945]. Bender’s son-in-law, Manuel Calixtro, was also charged, but the charges were dismissed after two trials resulted in hung juries. [Arizona Republic 9/24/1945].

Oliver’s mother, Ella, lived with him until her death in 1942. In 1947, at age 43, he married Marie J. Lyon, a divorcée from Iowa. Oliver and Marie supported many community activities in Patagonia, Sonoita, and Nogales. She died in 1976 at age 72; Oliver died in 1984 at age 81.

Seven Rothrock family members are buried in the Patagonia Cemetery.

Vigilance

By Robert E. Druchniak

A highway cuts through the rural area where I live connecting a few small towns I ride a bicycle along its shoulder passing great swaths of native grass peppered with mesquite and oak rising and stretching out their woody arms to where I must be alert and go around all the while being mindful of the whoosh of trucks and cars causing those defining frequencies of duplicative Doppler and amid this din is another higher pitch of organic mister rising from the grasses and piercing through the thunder of traffic with a sweet screeching from their dark shiny bodies those crickets calling for the safe regard of the world.
Chasing Sky Islands Bird Rarities

Every year a cavalcade of birds from all over the world flock with great excitement to our little corner of paradise to “chase rarities.” Amidst our unique Sky Islands and its legendary myriad of bird species, a few hyper-rarities are found every year that stand out from the avian crowd. These bird species are either at the extreme edge of their normal range, perhaps blown off course by the wind far away from their normal range or driven to fly here by some inexplicable impulse. Regardless of the reason why they are here, they understandably attract an inordinate amount of attention from salivating birders.

We begin our “Chasing Rarities” journey with a species that arguably constitutes one of the Holy Grails of U.S. birding - the five-striped sparrow. Our Sky Islands host the most sparrow species on Earth, so one might think that this species is just another drab face among the crowd. Not so! Having first been recorded in the U.S./Arizona in 1957 - rather late in the ornithological game - this species remains rare. Each year it’s recorded at just a handful of sites in Santa Cruz and Pima Counties.

Though highly secretive and inhaled by remote, steep, and brushy canyons, the five-striped sparrow has an unmistakable blend of colors and patterns. The belly is slate gray, the back a dull rufous, and the face boldly patterned with, yes, five white, black and gray stripes.

Our next target species emanates straight from hell - at least in name. The Lucifer hummingbird is so dubbed because of its flaming purple gorget. The iridescent throat of the male “burns” brighter than in most species, as it is about twice as large as that of other local species. Combined with a devilish curve to its bill, these two traits make the male unmistakable.

Most lucifers are spotted at area hummingbird feeders. This little jewel prefers arid foothills with ocotillos and agaves - both seasonal nectar sources for them. He curved bill likely affords them access to flowers that straighter-billed hummingbird species would have difficulty reaching. I have to admit that they skunked me so badly at first that I dubbed this species the “elusiverhummingbird for a while!”

Rose-throated becards have been variously thrilling and frustrating birders since they were first discovered in Arizona in 1888. After that sighting in the Huachuca Mountains, they disappeared until 1947. It was then they began nesting intermittently along Sonora Creek near Patagonia. Lately their U.S. stronghold has been along the Santa Cruz River by Tubac and Tumacacori where they have nested and even wintered.

Once placed among the New World flycatchers, rose-throated becards are now placed in the same family as the tropical Tityras. Beards build a huge nest that looks like flood debris, albeit at a height that even the most audacious flood will never reach. There, the adults raise their young cooperatively, bringing them various insects and the invertebrates upon which to sup.

The last of our rare quartet of birds is not recorded every year in Arizona, and then normally in winter and early spring. The rufous-backed robin is in the same genus, Turdus, as our familiar American robin with the two species sometimes forming mixed flocks. True to its cousin’s culinary leanings, the rufous-backed robin relishes various fruits that bedeck our winter woods. Key amongst these are netleaf hackberry fruits.

Tubac and vicinity have been the spots to observe this tropical robin in the U.S. Sporting the same basic colors as our American robin, this species also has a rich rufous color that wraps around to its back. Befitting its rare status, this species often furtively skulks in the dense cover of trees, making clear sightings difficult at times.

Despite my ongoing Sky Islands research and explorations as a wildlife biologist, to catch even a glimpse of any of these hyper-rarities amidst our diverse ecosystems requires patience, skill, and a large helping of luck.

Hosting Birding & Biodiversity Tours with guests from all over the world since the early 90’s eager to “Chase Rarities” has taught me patience, diligence, and a deep appreciation of the amazing ecological diversity of the region - even when they outwit me!

Vincent Pinto and his wife, Claudia, run RAVENS-WAY WILD JOURNEYS LLC, their Nature Adventure & Conservation organization devoted to protecting and promoting the unique biodiversity of the Sky Islands region.

Visit: www.ravensnatureschool.org

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**STARSTRUCK**

*By Harold Meckler*

Our planet is moving through space at a tremendous speed. Miraculously, we don’t feel it. Even better, 66,000 miles per hour is just right to keep us where we are in relation to the life-giving benefits of the sun. We’re in the right lane, doing the right speed.

But occasionally we drive through the debris of a comet or, possibly, the remnants of an asteroid. The majority of these leftovers are very small, may be not larger than grains of sand. Occasionally, they are considerably larger. In space, these objects are called meteoroids. If they are large enough and make their way to the earth’s surface, we name them meteorites.

As a meteoroid enters Earth’s atmosphere, the air in front of it is compressed and rapidly heated, burning up the meteoroid and turning it into a meteor. It’s a brief existence, but wonderful to see. On any given night one may be lucky enough to see one of these “shooting stars.”

Astronomers have calculated multiple times of the year when we get to see a real display, a shower of meteorites. The chart to the right will give you approximations of dates and the maximum number of meteorites you might see under perfect conditions. It’s best to check for the best viewing times and dates. The meteor shower names come from the apparent originating point, or radiant, of the meteor. So, for example, look for the Eta-Aquarids near the constellation Aquarius. The best time for viewing them is roughly, from 2:00 a.m. to sunrise on the morning of May 6.

Meteors are among the most beautiful objects in the night sky. But, with beauty sometimes there can be danger. That’s why NASA works to identify and track near-earth objects that are large enough to potentially be a concern. Sometimes, though, smaller but still significant chunks of rock enter our atmosphere unnoticed. This past December, a meteor the size of a bus exploded about 16 miles over the Bering Sea with a non-nuclear force ten times that of the Hiroshima atomic bomb. Apparently, its entry angle and relatively small size kept it hidden from detection. It lit up the sky but caused no damage.

Meteors and meteorites are well-known to Arizona. The world-famous Meteor Crater near Winslow is the result of an asteroid striking the earth some 50,000 years ago. Closer to home, the Tucson Meteorite, housed at the Smithsonian in Washington, D.C., comes with a rich tale that originates with the discovery of iron masses in the Santa Rita Mountains. Two large pieces—1400 and 600 pounds, respectively—were used initially as blacksmiths’ anvils in the 1800s.

Bringing it back to today, what do you need to see a meteor shower? Just a dark, safe spot with a wide view of the sky. They’re cost-free: way too fast for binoculars or telescopes. I can’t predict the weather, but with a new moon coming on May 4, the Eta-Aquarids might be worth a sleepless night.

**Editor’s note:** Harold Meckler shares his love for the night sky in this column. He is the author of “Monsoon,” a novel about immigration, awe and self-discovery.
CHOP Lends Helping Hand to Local Homeowners

Community Homes of Patagonia (CHOP), the local nonprofit Community Housing Trust, has recently completed three home repair projects. The purpose of the program is to assist low-income resident homeowners who cannot afford to make needed repairs that pose a risk to their health and safety.

The first project entailed removing old shelving, so the homeowner could replace a leaking gas stovetop with a new stove/oven unit which the homeowner will finance herself. Also, leaking plumbing fixtures in the bath needed to be replaced.

The second project was replacing a gas water heater that had internal leakage. The final project was a gas water heater that had internal leakage.

Funding for CHOP’s Home Repair Program is provided by United Way of Santa Cruz County grants, as well as individual donations.

Film Series Sponsored By Local Non-Profits

By Linda Huffsteter-Dearing

The Tin Shed and The Lending Shed are co-sponsoring a Women’s Film Series to be shown this summer in Patagonia.

A group of Patagonia residents were invited to choose six films produced by Women Make Movies. Women Make Movies (WMM), a non-profit social enterprise based in New York, is the world’s leading distributor of independent films by and about women.

The group’s selections will be shown from June through October featuring cutting-edge documentaries that give depth to today’s headlines, to smart, stunning films that push artistic and intellectual boundaries in all genres.

In this day of #MeToo and a renewed interest in issues pertaining to a woman’s life experience, The Sheds will be offering opportunities for residents to see award-winning films which have been exhibited in museums, television, theaters, libraries and universities; films used by thousands of educational customers and community groups throughout the US and the world. These films have garnered top prizes at prestigious film festivals such as Cannes and Sundance.

The Sheds are proud to present these films and invite you to bring your daughters, wives, sisters and friends to take advantage of this unique opportunity.

Depending on the film there may be a discussion of the film after the showing. The current plan is to show one film per month and six films this season. There will be a donation for attendance and proceeds will be shared between The Tin Shed and The Lending Shed (sponsored by Family Health Care Amigos).

In keeping with The Tin Shed’s tradition, wine and cheese will be available before, during intermission or after the film.

Dates and times of the showings will be listed in upcoming issues of the PRT.

Visitor Center Looking for Volunteers

By Erin Botz

The Patagonia Regional Visitor Center operates under the umbrella of the Sky Islands Tourism Association, which promotes tourism in the region, which in turn helps area businesses and local employment.

In addition, the Visitor Center is affiliated with the Arizona Office of Tourism. As such, it keeps visitor statistics to submit to the state office. In 2018, there were 4,305 visitors who signed the visitor log book. About 34% of these came from in-state, 57% from out-of-state, and 9% from other countries.

The countries include visitors from France, UK, Australia, Japan, Netherlands, Germany, Mexico, Colombia, New Zealand, Belgium, China, Ireland, Croatia, Denmark, and Canada.

The visitor center has resources for locals as well as visitors, such as hiking and biking trail maps, birding lists, lists of javelina-resistant plants, and information about area attractions. It is a great place to stop and chat with a volunteer or bring out-of-town guests!

The visitor center always welcomes new volunteers and is currently seeking a new volunteer coordinator. If interested, please stop by during operating hours or call 520-281-8183.

On May 1, summer hours begin.

The visitor center will be open Friday - Sunday from 10 a.m. - 4 p.m.

Senior Center News

By Valerie Hing

The community is invited to the annual Cinco de Mayo lunch at the Patagonia Senior Center on Friday, May 3. Chef Carla is preparing a variety of Her Mexican specialties. The cost is $10 at the door and proceeds benefit the center.

The center was recently accepted as a partner of the Food Bank of Southern Arizona, said Chuck Kelly, a spokesperson. This means “we should soon be eligible to receive free produce and meat products, thereby decreasing our food expenses,” he said. March totals include 661 meals served, “thanks to our one employee, Carla our chef, and our kitchen and serving volunteers,” said Kelly. The transportation program tallied 3,524 miles and 158 volunteer driving hours for seniors’ trips to doctor visits and...
Check It Out At The Library

Libraries and Librarians in Film: Part 2

By Laura Wenzel

My continuation of last month’s list takes us into more of my favorite pop culture library classics:

The Music Man (1962) – Never one to shy away from a musical, I grew up watching this ridiculous movie and dancing around my house to tunes like “76 Trombones” and “Shipoopie,” which is, in my opinion, probably one of the dumbest and weirdest songs to ever appear in a musical. Robert Preston is Howard Hill, an elegant scumbag salesman trying to con a town out of their money. Librarian Marian Paroo, played by Shirley Jones, begins to suspect his con and thus, he attempts to seduce her into silence. The storyline is silly but if you watch any scene from the film, make sure it’s the elaborate library dance number “Marian the Librarian,” full of delightful pick-up lines such as:

Marian: Please make your selection and leave. Howard: I have.

Marian: What do you want to take out?

Howard: The librarian!

Ghostbusters (1984) – There really isn’t a more recognizable library than the New York Public Library. Lions, columns, pigeons, oh my! The opening sequence of Ghostbusters, which takes place there, is equally iconic. As ominous music plays in the background, we follow a librarian — modestly dressed in a smart cardigan and skirt, with a chin-length bob — as she goes about her business, collecting books on her cart to be put away. We follow her to the basement where she shelves books while books float from shelf-to-shelf just out of her view. The ultimate nightmare happens when the library cards systematically shoot out of their holders and into the air — what a mess!

Game of Thrones (2011-2019) – The Citadel library is magnificent. Period. Yes, it’s computer generated imagery, but still. It’s stunning. We see it in detail for the first time in Season 6, Episode 10, when Samwell Tarly travels there to begin his training as a maester. The library is 8430 feet tall. It looms over Oldtown as a giant beacon, complete with a giant fire pit on the roof. The inside is even more resplendent. An octagonal room that stretches for miles, with books, parchments, stairs and shelves lining the walls. A spherical mobile with lenses hangs from the ceiling and catches light from clerestory windows. A bibliophile’s dream, you see the awe and wonderment on Sam’s face as he experiences the sight for the first time.

Beauty and the Beast (1991) – When the Beast flings open the curtains and Belle opens her eyes in the library for the first time, the camera pans up, music swells, and cue the tears. What could be more romantic than someone giving you an 18th century French library because they love you and don’t know how to express it in any other way?

Summer Youth Tennis Offered

If you happen to go by the Patagonia School’s tennis courts on Tuesday and Thursday mornings and evenings in June, you most likely will hear racket and see racquets. Along with laughter, these are the sights and sounds of Community Youth Summer Tennis. The morning session, from 8:00 until 9:00 a.m. for 1st through 5th graders, will be facilitated by Tod C. Bowden, Owner of Bowden’s Choice Fitness and Patagonia Union High School’s Head Tennis Coach. A fun variety of games and challenges introduce the movements and skills needed to enjoy the sport. Participants need comfortable clothing, sneakers, a water bottle, an available healthy snack, and if necessary, shade cap and sunscreen. Racquets and balls are provided. If owners take responsibility for them, personal racquets are permitted.

The evening program runs from 6:00 until 7:30 p.m. for 6th through 12th graders. Coach Bowden and Greg Mullins, Patagonia Schools Substitute Teacher and tennis enthusiast, will share tennis skills and enjoyment of the game. Mullins will be providing a ball machine which should be a big “hit” with participants. The goal is to develop and hone striking and movement skills with plenty of “touches on the ball” and fun game scenarios. The “what to bring” list is similar to the one mentioned above.

To obtain a registration form for the COMMUNITY YOUTH 2019 SUMMER TENNIS PROGRAM, please call Tod C. Bowden at (520) 394-2973 or e-mail todcdb@q.com. Funding for the Community Youth Summer Tennis Program comes from individual donations. Contributions are welcomed. Patagonia Youth Enrichment Center (PYEC) is the fiscal agent for this Program. Checks can be made out to: PYEC. Please write “Youth Tennis” on the check’s memo line.

Take A Hike!
The Nature Conservancy’s Geoffrey Platts Trail

By Grace Fullmer

If you haven’t checked out the spring wildflowers that are sprinkled all over our local landscapes yet this year, now is the time. Close to town, and characterized by being an upland desert, I can’t think of a better hike than the Geoffrey Platts Trail to introduce you to the all the flare and color of this year’s wildflowers.

This 3.8-mile loop trail takes its users through open grasslands with a plethora of native forbes, grasses and cacti, weaves around mesquite trees and ocotillo (which are blooming right now!), and offers great views of Sonota Creek, and the Santa Rita and Patagonia Mountains. At the trailhead you will walk through a mesquite bosque until the trail veers right and starts to incline gently- entering open hillsides with views of the large cottomwoods of Sonota Creek. Continue along this trail and follow the well-marked trail signs that say “G. Platts.” At a certain point you will come to a T in the trail with two signs pointing down and up that say “Trail”, take either as this is the beginning of the loop.

From here, I can only suggest to “get lost”, while still following the trail. Observe the landscape, get up close and personal with the flowers (but remember to leave them where they are), listen to the quietude, and enjoy the flow of this remarkable trail that is so close to town, yet feels miles away. This trail is rated as moderate due to some hilly inclines and declines. No pets or horses allowed on this trail. No fee required.

Directions: From the Visitor’s Center on the corner of 3rd Avenue and McKeeown, head northwest on 3rd Avenue. Turn left onto Pennsylvania Avenue, and continue onto Blue Heaven Road for about 0.7 miles. There is a small parking area on the right hand side. (Trailhead is about 0.5 miles before TNC’s Visitor Center).
South32 is the new owner of the Hermosa Project, a high grade zinc, lead and silver development option located here in the Patagonia Mountains. South32 is a globally diversified metals and mining company.

At South32 we manage our natural resources carefully and strive to ensure the safety and environmental well being of the communities we serve. We work closely with federal and state agencies to comply with strict and comprehensive environmental regulations. We strive to be a strong community partner and are committed to the nonprofit and business organizations that make this region special.

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South32 is the new owner of the Hermosa Project, a high grade zinc, lead and silver development option located here in the Patagonia Mountains. South32 is a globally diversified metals and mining company.

Jess Kaufman was running around Patagonia earlier this month. Well, not exactly running, but let’s say moving at a “New York pace.” She was visiting various Voices from the Border members in Patagonia and working on plans for the second Beyond the Wall Festival, a cross-border celebration of borderlands arts that will take place in Nogales Arizona/Sonora on Sunday, May 5.

Back in 2017, Kaufman, a puppeteer who makes and researches theatre for young people and families, was looking for a way to connect her artistic work to activism. She called up a friend, Ana Díaz Barriga, a Mexican theatre artist and puppeteer focused on international collaborative performance.

Together, they conceived of a performance with 15-foot-tall puppets at the border wall, made collaboratively with local artists and young people. The event got quite a bit of national media coverage including the Huffington Post, Nogales International, and El Diario to name a few.

Being out of towners, (Kaufman lives in New York and Barriga is from Mexico City) Kaufman reached out to make contacts at the border and found her very first offer of help from the Patagonia Voices from the Border group. Voices had some experience with cross border collaboration to offer her, having created an innovative cross border Mother’s Day event in Nogales. “Our friends at Voices were the first big “YES!” we got, and were instrumental in making the first event, and thus our whole organization, a reality and a success,” Kaufman said. “We wouldn’t be here without India, Kathi, and the whole gang, and we’re so grateful to be friends and collaborators still today.”

Both Kaufman and Barriga have international reputations; they met at the Royal Central School of Speech and Drama in London and have performed (separately and together) in London, Scotland, the Czech Republic, and the U.S. and Mexico.

Later this year they’ll bring the giant puppets to the Prague Quadrennial and London’s “Creative Interruptions” festival. Kaufman’s play “Mathilda and the Orange Balloon” (based on the picture book by Randall de Seve) is currently touring the U.K., being performed by a company of deaf and hearing actors. Barriga is pursuing her PhD at Northwestern University, researching how puppetry incites/invokes empathy.

Over the past year, Kaufman has made several trips to the area to consult with her friends from Voices, the rest of the local Beyond The Wall team, and to work with Nogales, AZ and Nogales, Sonora high school students to develop Beyond the Wall’s pen pal program.

Teenagers from both countries have written to each other for the past academic year, getting to know each another, breaking down stereotypes and “building bridges, not walls”. The teens will come together in May to conceive, build and ultimately, animate, the giant puppets for this year’s festival.

The festival will feature artist booths, two stages, and a performance of 15-foot-tall puppets at the wall, as well as a corresponding binational art exhibition at two galleries in Ambos Nogales that will continue throughout the month. It is free to the public and family friendly. As their literature says, the festival “aims to showcase authentic, diverse, local perspectives on life at the border through the work of local artists, in contrast to the pervasive negative picture of the border painted by the media.”

The Beyond the Wall / Más Allá del Muro Festival will take place on Sunday May 5, from 1-7p.m. in Karam Park in Nogales, AZ and Plaza Pesqueira in Nogales, SON.
May 4: 5 p.m. “Best F(r)iends, Volume 2” Join Greg Sestero LIVE for Dinner and a Movie at the Tin Shed Theater. Dinner: Tacos and all the Fixings with vegetarian options available. $12, includes dinner and the movie

May 6 10a.m & 7 p.m. Club Theater presents “Jack and the Beanstalk” Free

“Dates and Times Subject to Change”

PCAA wishes to thank all our generous sponsors of the 2018-2019 season at the Patagonia Movie House. If you would be interested in sponsoring upcoming events, please contact Cassina Farley at 520-394-9369. Visit www.patagoniacreativearts.org or 394-9369 for more information.

The Santa Cruz Singers gave their 17th annual spring concert on April 25 at the Benderly-Kendall Opera House, performing works by Copland and Schubert. The performance was a benefit concert for the Patagonia Museum.

KPUP Broadcast Schedule Spring 2019

Monday: 7:00pm to 8:00pm; eTown repeat of Saturday’s show.
Tuesday: 10:00am to 12:00pm; World Jazz with Mark Berg
7:00pm to 9:00pm; Jazz and Blues with Fred Hansen
Wednesday: 7:00pm to 10pm; Sean Alexander show
Thursday: 7:00pm to 10:00pm; Possibility Explorers. “Celebrating the Evening of Mushkil Gusha, the Remover of All Difficulties”. Hosted by Graves
Friday: 7:00pm to 9:00pm; Hook’s Sunken Roadhouse
Saturday: 12:00pm to 1:00pm; eTown - “Educate, entertain and inspire a diverse audience through music and conversation”
Sunday 6:00pm to 8:00pm; Acoustic Café - “Today’s great songwriting talents. A bit of country, rock, blues, folk, pop”
8:00pm to 10:00pm; Folk Alley - “Folk Music Radio from WKSU-FM in Kent, OH”
Daily Shows:
Swing Hour: 5:00pm to 6:00pm.
Best of the Oldies: 1:00pm to 2:00am.
Feature Story News (FSN.com) Mon – Fri. 8 am., 12pm and 6pm., Sat. 8am & 6pm., Sun. at 8am.
Patagonia Weather Forecast: Every odd hour. Ponder that if you like.

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344 Naugle Ave. Patagonia, AZ

Schedule
MUSIC IN MAY
Free Outdoor Concerts

May 14: 6p.m. Borderline Band - Rich Moreno and Friends
May 17: 6p.m. Dan Levenson and the Cat Mountain Rounders
May 26: 5p.m. Desert Fever Jazz Band

Donations gratefully accepted.
Visit www.scfpapresents.org for more information

Photo by Linda Jade Fong
Few plants are more iconic in the southwest than the agave. Countless species of these succulent, spiky plants can be found in nurseries to adorn home gardens and native landscapes alike. Often misleadingly referred to as “century plants,” agaves, a member of the asparagus family, flower only once at the end of their life cycle, usually around 15-20 years. Some plants produce abundant seed, while others clone themselves by producing “pups.”

With over 200 species recognized, the beautiful fractal forms of agave are an exotic plant collector’s dream; but there are spectacular agaves right in our backyard. Our native agaves have ecological, cultural, and aesthetic value that make them deserving of our attention and care.

The local species, Palmer’s agave, Agave palmeri, and Huachuca agave, Agave parryi var. huachucentis, are both pollinated by nectar-feeding bats that migrate from Mexico to southern Arizona every summer. Three nectar-feeding species are found in the southwest, including the lesser-long-nosed bat, Mexican free-tailed bat, and Mexican long-tongued bat which is an endangered species. Nature-watchers can catch a glimpse of these species by setting out hummingbird feeders in July and August evenings to feed the voracious mammals’ appetites.

Two other native agave species found in the Sonora Creek watershed, shindagger, Agave schottii, and the sensitive species New Mexico agave, Agave neomexicana, are spring flowering species that are pollinated by bees and other insects. Travel to certain canyons in the Sky Islands and you will also see the spectacular golden flowered agave, or Agave chrysantha, with bright yellow flowers that drip with nectar that attract hummingbirds and insect pollinators.

Not only diverse and beautiful, these species have value to humans as spirit, food, medicine, and fiber that has withstood the test of time. You are likely familiar with agave spirits from tequila, produced from the blue agave, Agave tequilana, and perhaps you have even tried different smoky mezcales, produced from many different kinds of agave plants, or bacanora, the mezcal important to the northern regions of Sonora and Chihuahua produced primarily from Caribbean agave, Agave angustifolia. But have you ever tried pulque, a beer-like beverage produced from sap harvested from live agave plants? Or, did you know that cooked agave hearts are sweet like brown sugar, and that rope, and other fiber products produced from agave fibers are exceptionally strong? I could go on; the inner leaves of some agave species produced from agave fibers are exceptionally strong?

Worldwide popularity of tequila and other agave spirits has spiked in recent decades, causing an ecological crisis for wild agave populations and the species that depend on them. As the demand for agave products grows, their value grows, and so their situation in an economically imbalanced Mexico grows more precarious. As a nation of consumers that drives these situations, it is Americans’ responsibility to educate ourselves about ecologically sound production practices that support habitat restoration initiatives for wild pollinator species and to participate in making these practices a reality for farmers and producers. Collaborations between U.S.-based groups Borderlands Restoration Network, Bat Conservation International, and the Sonoran groups Naturalia and Colectivo Sonora Silvestre are working towards these goals and restoring thousands of acres of agave habitat in the U.S./Mexico Borderlands.

At the Tucson Agave Heritage Festival, held the last week in April, there are many different events you can participate in to taste, learn, and restore. One event to note is the Agave Expo at Hotel Congress, where you will be able to visit local vendors and nurseries while enjoying live music and entertainment. Enjoy agave spirit tastings and an agave plant you can take home. There will also be presentations by experts that work with agaves.

Visit the Agave Heritage Festival’s facebook page for a complete listing of events. In the meantime, keep your eye out on your hikes, drives, or bikes through the wildlands that surround us for these special and beautiful giant asparagus plants!
Wondering how to keep the kids in your life engaged this summer? Local nonprofit organizations have been tackling this issue for a combined total of over fifty years. This spring we came together to create a listing of free programs and educational activities available to youth in our extended Patagonia/Sonoita/Elgin communities.

Offering these varied options is a long-term commitment to ensure a healthy, diversely literate and engaged population of young people in our communities. Each of these free programs is funded through grants, private donations and organization fundraising events. Please support the efforts of the participating organizations with monetary donations, food, supplies and volunteer time.

We invite you to visit and meet with the Directors and volunteers of our organizations. Come and spend some time to learn about how we operate within the community.

Summer Lunches at the Library
Ages 18 and under
Monday through Friday: May 28 - Aug 2, except on July 4
12:00pm -1:00pm in Cady Hall
Volunteer servers and cooks are welcome!

Patagonia Creative Arts Association
From STEM to STEAM Summer Camp at PCAA
Where Science Meets Art - a collaboration with the Patagonia Library
June 17 - July 11
Monday - Thursday, 9a.m. to Noon
Ages 5-12
Space limited: Call 520-394-9369 or email makeart1@msn.com to register.

Patagonia Public Library
Chess and Board Games
Monday through Friday: June 3 - July 26, 12:00pm – 2:00pm

Story Time: A Universe of Stories
Read, sing, talk, play and write during our high-energy story time with Ms. Laura
For caregivers and children ages 5 and under
Wednesdays: June 5 - July 31, 9:00-10:00

Focus on STEAM: Science, Technology, Engineering, Art and Math
Contact the library for a detailed list of the planned science and art activities
Ages 7 – 12
Tuesdays and Thursdays, June 3 - 27, 1:00p.m. – 2:00p.m.

Cupcake Decorating with Cassina
Wednesday, July 17, 1:00p.m.
Ages 5 and older
Questions? Call 394-2010 or info@patagoniapubliclibrary.org

*More activities to be announced.

Please note that children under age 6 must be accompanied by an adult.
Library Quiet Zone - No children’s computer usage from 12:00-2:00p.m. M-F, unless part of an already scheduled program

Patagonia Borderlands Earth Care Youth Institute 2019
Monday-Thursday June 3 - July 11 (not meeting July 4)
Watershed Restoration, Ecosystem Restoration and Community Restoration
Youth 15 and older; (All positions filled.)

Patagonia Youth Enrichment Center
115 S. 3rd Ave
Youth welcome, with a signed permission slip, ages 10- 20 years of age- (strictly enforced)
Summer Hours: Mon, Tues, Wed: 4:00p.m.- 8:00p.m. (High school only after 7:00p.m.)
Fri & Sat 5:00p.m.- 9:00p.m. (High school only after 8:00pm)- unless posted with changes.
Antibullying, Depression, Anxiety and Mental Illness Workshop
June 11 & 12 (grades 6-12): 4:30-6:30p.m. Dinner provided:
Game Nights: June 14, June 26, and July 10
Board games, pool & foosball (no phones) 5:30-7:00p.m.
Movie Nights: popcorn & snacks provided. June 22, July 6, and July 13 5:00p.m.-8:00p.m.: Other activities may be added, check back!
Questions: 520-343-2356 or www.pyec.org

Community Vacation Bible School
June 24 - 28, 9a.m. - Noon
Ages potty trained preschoolers - 6th grade.
Older students welcome to come volunteer.
Sonoita Bible Church
Theme: IN THE WILD!!
Contact Heather Robbs (520) 471-2951 for more information

Harvest Christian Fellowship
(across from Sonoita Propane, Sonoita, AZ)
Kids Summer Movie Series - Titles and dates TBA
Food & Fun Youth Game Nights - Dates TBA
For more information, call 602-292-1616

Patagonia United Methodist Church Vacation Bible School
Preschool through 6th Grade (2018-19 school year)
Dates TBA
9:00a.m. to 12:00p.m. at Patagonia United Methodist Church.
There will be a special presentation put on by the children for Parents and Families. Date and Time TBA
For more information, please call the Church Office at 394-2274.

Patagonia Schools Summer School
Currently Registered Kindergarten - 8th Grade students
Monday, June 3 - Thursday June 20 9:00a.m. - 1:00p.m.

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Brayden Johnson

Throughout my time at Patagonia Union High School, I was involved in FFA and I played football and baseball. My favorite subject was math because it was like trying to put a puzzle together. My favorite teacher was Mrs. Hayes because she is so nice to everyone and she is always willing to take the time to help – as long as you show effort. Outside of school, I like to hang out with my friends and my family.

The most challenging thing for me during my years at high school was keeping up and doing my homework. I was surprised how much work there is to do in every subject. The best thing that happened to me in high school was learning that I could count on my friends and the teachers at Patagonia to help me whenever I needed it. The worst thing that happened to me was not being able to attend the play “Hamilton” with the rest of my class. I was supposed to do an assignment that was due before the play and I didn’t get it done. I learned my best lesson from that experience. Even if you don’t want to do the work, sometimes you have to keep your mouth shut and just do it!

If I could change one thing in the world, it would be for world peace. I’m tired of all the wars and conflict that are so prevalent today. The biggest influence in my life has been my mom because she taught me how to be strong in any situation. After high school, I plan on working to become a fire fighter/paramedic. I think the one quality that best describes me is caring because I really do care about everyone in my life. My friends would describe me as outgoing, friendly, loyal and funny.

Cole McGuire

I am a senior at Patagonia High School and will graduate this May. I have been at the high school since my freshman year. Going to high school in a small town is an experience that I presume is quite different from going to a much bigger high school because of the close relationships that one makes with his class and teachers.

My favorite part of high school was playing sports with my friends and driving my ’62 Buick Wildcat around town. My least favorite part of high school was seeing people not care about their studies. When I am not in school I enjoy lifting weights, running five miles, and playing video games.

Sports have been a very big part of my time in high school. I have run cross country for all four years and played tennis for three years. I will continue to hone my back hand and mile time in the future.

History has always been my favorite subject. I find history extremely interesting because I can find times in history where the events match today’s and I can draw parallels between the two. My favorite period of history is when the Persian empire was involved in Greece.

I will be attending the University of Arizona next year to study Political Science. I am looking forward to college, but at the same time I am quite nervous because it will be a big change of pace. It will be the biggest change in my life, so far.

If I could change anything in the world it would be to make sure that we can eradicate hatred for each other over political stances and truly try to understand each other before we hate each other.

I will strive to make a difference everywhere I go in life, and I hope that I have left a legacy at this high school by treating everyone with respect and kindness. I hope to continue this into college and beyond.

Karina Norton and Victor Barajas (above) were named Athletes of the Year at the PUHS Sports Awards banquet held April 24. Ralphie Quiroz and Gigi Martin (below) were awarded the Babe Ruth Award for academic, citizenship and athletic performance.

Natalie Cooper-Ojeda, Natalie Jones and Serenity Dodson perform at the annual Patagonia School Talent Show.

The annual PUHS Senior Trip Fundraiser and Talent Show, held April 3, was a huge success with a large turnout. The dinner was provided by Wild Horse Restaurant. Participants received a certificate of appreciation.

Patagonia Union High School Senior Spotlights Patagonia Union High School

This month the PRT concludes a series of autobiographical profiles of the PUHS senior class of 2019.

The annual PUHS Senior Trip Fundraiser and Talent Show, held April 3, was a huge success with a large turnout. The dinner was provided by Wild Horse Restaurant. Participants received a certificate of appreciation.

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May 2, 6 p.m.  AZ Native Plant Society Santa Cruz Chapter  monthly meeting at Tia ‘Nita’s  in Sonoita, AZ

May 2, 9 a.m. – 3 p.m. KPUP Annual Hawaiian Shirt Sale. Patagonia.

May 2, 6 p.m. Update on Mining Company Area Activity by Patagonia Area Regional Alliance (PARA). Tin Shed Theatre, Patagonia.

May 3, 5:30-7:30 p.m. Elgin School Extravaganza & Community Showcase.

May 3, 10:44 a.m.  104th Annual Horse Races in Sonoita.

May 5, 1- 7 p.m. Más Allá del Muro // Beyond the Wall is a free, family friendly binational festival that will take place in Karam Park in Nogales, Arizona and in Plaza Pesquera in Sonora Mexico. beyondthewallfestival.com

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May 11, 8-10 a.m. Fire Dept Breakfast in Sonoita.

May 11, 9 a.m to 3 p.m. - Chipper day at Sonoita Elgin Fire District. For more info call the firehouse at 455-5854.

May 11, 10, 10 p.m. Author and American cowboy, Alan Day, guest of the Patagonia Museum to talk at the Patagonia Public Library.

May 11, 7 p.m. The Guardians – Free Movie, Outdoor Screening Patagonia bring a chair.

May 11, 4 -10 p.m. 11th Annual KPUP Luau at Cady Hall. $25 adult, $8 children.

May 15, 6 p.m. Learn about Your School Budgets at Sonora Fairgrounds.

May 23, 6 p.m. Fire District Tax Process at Sonora Fairgrounds.

May 25, 6:30 p.m. AA Pat. Seventh Day Adventist Church Fellowship Hall, Thurs. at 6:30 p.m. Sonoita Bible Church, Tue. at 7:30 p.m. For more AA meetings, info, call (520) 624-4183.

May 31, 4-6 p.m. All Breed Circuit Show & Barrel Race at the Sonoita Fairgrounds.

May 31, 4-6 p.m. Santa Cruz Singers - rehearsals Thurs at 5 p.m., Beverly-Kendall Opera House, 348 Naugle Ave., Patagonia. New members welcome!


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

Santa Cruz Singers - rehearsals Thurs at 5 p.m., Beverly-Kendall Opera House, 348 Naugle Ave., Patagonia. New members welcome!

Bingo - 1st & 3rd Mon., St. Theresa Parish Hall in Patagonia, 6 p.m. Info: 455-5681.

Crossroads Quilters - 2nd & 4th Mon, Sonoita Fire Dept., 9 a.m. Info: (520)-732-0453.

Open Tennis - Saturdays, PUHS at 9 a.m. Info: 394-2973.


Gratitude Drum Circle - Tuesdays 4-6 p.m. at the Gazebo in Patagonia Park. Open to everyone. Bring water, chair, & drum. Extra instruments

Tai Chi - Tues & Thurs 10:30-11:30 a.m. at Senior’s Center. Free. All welcome.

Lunch for Seniors - Fresh-cooked meals, Mon - Fri, noon-1 p.m. At the Patagonia Senior Center.


Story Time with Ms. Laura - For caregivers and children aged 5 & under. 1st & 3rd Mon, 9-10 a.m. at Patagonia Library. Info: 394-2010.

Patagonia Methodist Church Thrift Shop - Fri & Sat 10-2 p.m.

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

Sonoita/ Patagonia Email Newsletter - usually twice a week. Free. Sign up at clarebonelli@sonoitapatagonialocal.com.

Patagonia Farmers Market ***SUMMER TIMING STARTED*** Thursday 9 a.m. - 12 p.m. In front of Red Mountain Foods

Nogales Mercado Farmers’ Market - Fri 2-5 p.m. 163 N Morley Ave. Nogales, AZ.
HELP WANTED

NOW HIRING - HIGH SPIRITS FLUTES
Please email your resume to admin@highspirits.com.

STRONG BACK? ABLE TO TRANSFER 200 LBS?
If you’re an experienced or certified caregiver, call Patagonia Assisted Care: 520-604-8179.

BORDERLANDS RESTORATION IS SEEKING A VOLUNTEER
To help plant sale events and opportunities.
Email horticulture@borderlandsrestoration.org if interested

LIVE-ONSITE HORSE CARETAKERS WANTED
Experienced only. No smoking/drugs/alcohol.
520-455-9246

HOUSING RENTALS
OVER 55+ ROOM AVAILABLE
With common areas in beautiful setting. $450, includes utilities.
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TRAILER FOR RENT IN PATAGONIA
$200 / month 520-394-2007

CLASSES

JULIA GREEN VIRTUAL VOICE AND PIANO STUDIO
Voice & piano lessons by Skype. $45/45 mins. www.juliagreenmusic.com
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LITTER IS PREVENTABLE!

FULL MOON
MAY 18

Santa Cruz Humane Society
232 E. Patagonia Hwy (Rt. 82)
Nogales, AZ 85621 (520) 287-5654
PATAGONIA: 325-A McKeown Ave., next to Gathering Grounds  520-394-2120
SONOITA: Corner of Hwys 82 & 83, next to Post Office  520-455-5235
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PATAGONIA CUSTOM HOME
353 SONOITA AVE.  MLS # 21900414
ABSOLUTELY GORGEOUS HOME! Great in-town location, private, walled. Double lot, lovely gardens, guest house, 2305 sf main house, AZ room.  JEAN MILLER 520 508-3335
$499,000

PARADISE IN THE PATAGONIA MTNS
MLS #21904726  23.92 ACRES
Luxurious estate just minutes from quaint Patagonia.  38d/2.58a main house, 593sf guest house, pool, courtyard, barn. Fenced pastures.  JEAN MILLER 520 508-3335
$1,495,000

PATAGONIA MOUNTAIN RETREAT
MLS # 21730369  29.3 PRISTINE ACRES
Farm house w/workshop, storage bldg., barn & chicken coop.  2532 sf main house w/4bd/38a, large kitchen, AZ rm. Nested by the creek  BARBARA HARRIS 602 826-4026
$550,000

HILL TOP CLASSIC ADOBE IN SONOITA
MLS # 21906981  16 ACRES
WOW Views! 48d/2.58a, 1984 sf. East & West stone patios for all season outdoor living. Raised deck, carport, pond to attract wildlife.  LARRY DEMUN 520 732-9179
$489,000

CASAS ARROYO HOUSE W/STUDIO
MLS #21810533  SONOITA
3 Bd/2Ba, 2343 sf with fresh paint & carpet. Burnt adobe w/ high beamed ceilings, Saltillo tile floors, 2 patios, 2 car garage & separate studio.  JEAN MILLER 520 508-3335
$298,000

ELGIN LOG HOME– PRICE REDUCED
MLS# 21905491  4.15 ACRES
1574sf, 2bd/2ba in the heart of Elgin Wine Country. Mature trees, Country kitchen, 2 fireplaces, workshop, storage. Room for horses.  CAROL FORD 520 604-0162
$259,000

LAKE PATAGONIA GEM
MLS # 21725571  4.14 ACRES
2121sf, 3bd/2ba. Great views, island kitchen, sunken liv rm w/fireplace, lg master bedroom, 3 car garage. Great private well. Great for horses. JEAN MILLER 520 508-3335
$345,000

JUST REDUCED! LAKE PATAGONIA
MLS # 21831077  8.59 ACRES
REMODELED KITCHEN AND BATH.  2623 SF, 4bd/38a, Great Room, 2 fireplaces. Bonus room w/Bath. Horse facilities, strong prv well.  JEAN MILLER 520 508-3335
$399,000

LUXURY HOME ON THE MESA
MLS #21824168  4.3 ACRES
GORGEOUS VIEWS! Gated community walking distance to town. Loaded w/luxury amenities. 28d/2ba, garage, beautifully finished inside.  JEAN MILLER 520 508-3335
$364,000

PATAGONIA COTTAGE
MLS # 21812194  163 DOUBLETREE LANE
Great location.  28d/2ba, Great Room, high ceilings, large kitchen, A/C, covered patio, fenced, carport, 2 storage sheds. Furnished, BARBARA HARRIS 602 826-4026
$154,900

AMBROSE RANCH HORSE PROPERTY
MLS #21906122  10 ACRES
2189 sf, 38d/28a plus 804 sf Casita w/18d/18a. Great Room, Lovely views of Mt. Wrightson. Mature trees, 36x36 Steel Bldg.  CHERYL VOLK 520 975-7271
$549,000

EAGLES NEST VIEWS IN RED ROCK ACRES
MLS #21827677  4.98 ACRES
COMPLETELY REMODELED! 2110sf, 3 Bd/2Ba, Great Room, large liv rm, 2 patios, workshop, garage. AMAZING 360° VIEWS!  BARBARA HARRIS 602 826-4026
$154,900

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