Ranchers Face Uncertainty During Pandemic

By Marion Vendituoli

Ian Tomlinson, his daughters and cowboys brand calves on the Vera Earl Ranch this spring.

Ranchers in Santa Cruz County are not strangers to being affected by factors outside their control. The timing and amounts of winter rain and the monsoons, the price of hay and supplements, trade policies, the futures market and more have always influenced the rancher’s bottom line, but this year’s pandemic has left local ranchers scrambling to adapt their business models in the face of a lot of unknown variables.

Ranching is a major player in the economy of Santa Cruz County. According to the 2017 USDA agricultural census, the market value of livestock sold in the county was $10,000,000. A study released in April by the National Cattlemen’s Beef Association predicted a $13.6 billion loss to the industry nationwide because of the coronavirus pandemic.

Beef processing plants have closed or are working at greatly reduced capacity due to coronavirus outbreaks and the monsoons, the price of hay and supplements, trade policies, the futures market and more have always influenced the rancher’s bottom line, but this year’s pandemic has left local ranchers scrambling to adapt their business models in the face of a lot of unknown variables.

Ian Tomlinson, of the Vera Earl Ranch in Sonoita, estimates that the packing plants are operating at only 65%-70% capacity. This has created a backlog of cattle in feedlots and the price of fat feeder cattle has dropped 20%, according to Tomlinson.

He has cattle in two feedlots in Texas which should have gone to the packing plants one month ago. Not only is it costing more money to continue to feed these cattle, the quality of the carcass declines. “When they sit in the feedlot an extra month it completely skews your break-even point,” he said.

The slowdown in production at the packing plants is not the only factor cutting into ranchers’ bottom lines. Tomlinson pointed to “erosion of demand” as a worry for beef producers. Traditionally, “hotels, restaurants and institutions account for 33% of beef sales in volume and 50% of the value. And we zapped that right out of the beef pipeline. How much of that comes back?” he said. Added to that is the forecast that fewer people may be buying beef in the stores due to higher prices and to high unemployment.

“There’s a ton of unknowns. That’s the worst thing out there,” he said.
**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**

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**Managing Editor:**
Marion Venditutti

**Assistant Editor:**
Aisha Chapra Sander

**Bookkeeper:**
Cynie Murray

**Administrative Assistant Ad Manager:**
Jared Krikorian

**Contributing Writers:**
Bob Brandt
Alison Bunting
Francesca Claverie
Lynn Davison
Jo Dean
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Contact us at: prteditor@gmail.com
PO Box 1073, Patagonia, AZ 85624
(740) 206-9594
To Place an ad: prtads@gmail.com
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**The Case For Data Driven Decision Making**

By Aisha Sander

The curious case of the family that tested positive in Sonoita began with an anonymous statement in Clare Bonnell’s newsletter. On April 30 the family wrote, “Our family would like to share with the community the fact that we are local and have tested positive for Covid.”

For the next two weeks the PRT repeatedly watched the data from the county, waiting for it to reflect the four cases and to see a change in the zip code map. The county officials would only confirm one case in the Elgin zip code and Sonoita was, and is, still, at 0 cases. They also asserted that they know of all positive tests in the county. Finally, a county official relented and said, “Maybe only one of them got tested.” If that is the answer, then you might want to know, why weren’t the other family members tested?

The PRT has been able to corroborate this information with the family from Sonoita. Only one person tested positive in the family. Even though others in the family had symptoms, they were not tested because of the lack of availability of testing. It makes one wonder how many hidden cases like this exist in our communities?

Tracking this curious case also exemplifies the challenges for a rural area like ours to receive information about cases in our community. It helps that we know how many new cases per day. The zip code map helps us identify where outbreaks are happening. But in the early weeks of the pandemic AZ was releasing less information than many other states.

Journalists demanded more complete information and the current data dashboard on the AZ Dept of Health Services (AZDHS) website is a direct result of journalists advocating for more information.

Health departments should not reveal names or exact addresses of positive cases, but the reason we have to keep guessing how many cases there are in our area is because, as long as there are less than 10 cases in a zip code, the AZDHS’s policy is to not release exact numbers to protect the privacy of individuals. However, the spread of rumors about who and how many people are infected is possibly worse than if the Dept. would confirm exactly how many cases and how many of those have recovered.

The other troubling piece is the lack of transparency from the state on what metrics they are using to reopen the state. Gov. Ducey showed a graph of the percentage of positive tests in the state and ICU bed availability in the state. And yes, testing has increased but AZ is still 49th in the country in viral diagnostic testing (Johns Hopkins University). Ducey does not talk about contact tracing in the state.

The AZDHS wrote on their website that they have a robust plan for testing and tracing. Yet almost three weeks have passed since the state has reopened and according to CovidActNow.org, Arizona remains at a dismal low of 60 tracers in the ENTIRE state. The AZDHS Information Office has not answered our many attempts to get an exact number of tracers working at this time.

However, it was reassuring to hear that the anonymous case in Sonoita/Elgin was contacted and thoroughly followed up on by the county. However, that was when the county had a total of 35 cases. As of 6/3 there are 438 cases. There are now seven staff members in the county tracing contacts, an improvement from last month when the county had only one contact tracer.

On May 15 when we asked what the county was doing to further prevent an outbreak as reopening orders were in effect, Jeff Terrell, the Director of Health Services, simply replied that they are following the CDC guidelines to reopen. Yet, since May 15 the county has experienced an exponential increase in positive cases, specifically in Nogales and Rio Rico.

As of June 3, the county has the third highest rate of infection in the state at 823.9 per 100,000 population (Read update on pg. 3). 3.4% of the county has been tested, remarkably better than last month when only 0.47% of the population had been tested, but still far from what is needed.

Public officials are taking notice. The county released an urgent letter on May 20 urging everyone to stay at home and on May 25 local elected officials released a PSA in English and Spanish because of “the spreading of COVID-19 at an alarming rate” said County Supervisor Bruce Bracker. The officials reiterated the CDC guidelines on how to prevent the spread of the disease.

Our county brings into question a statewide reopening rather than a more nuanced approach based on the data. The initial outbreaks in Arizona were happening in Maricopa and Pima counties when our county had no positive cases, which is when the state went into shutdown. Now as their outbreaks are coming under control, ours numbers are climbing rapidly. But instead of lockdown we are following the state and nation in reopening.

There is no clear enforcement of the reopening guidelines that were set by Governor Ducey. This is leading people to relax in following CDC recommendations, as statewide reopening has given us a false sense of safety, possibly at the very worst time.
Coping With the Infodemic

By Tom Beal

No. Microsoft billionaire Bill Gates did not concoct a coronavirus as a pretext for slipping microchips into a vaccine.

No. SARS-CoV-2 (the coronavirus) is not a lab-manufactured biological weapon, unleashed on the world in some nefarious “plandemic.”

No. It is not being spread via 5G cellphone towers, nor by houseflies and mosquitoes.

Yes. There is currently no proven effective treatment. There is no vaccine available and there probably won’t be one for quite some time. There is no daily regimen or miracle supplement that will keep you from getting COVID-19. Bleach and Lysol, by the way, are not good to drink.

The various stay-at-home orders and business closures prescribed by governors in most states, blue and red, are not the first step toward a totalitarian, Socialist government. They are tools that had to be employed when we, as a society, botched our first response to a pandemic that might have been blunted long before we got this far.

We can argue about who is at fault for that and we can argue about the steps needed to mitigate this disease after it became pandemic, but we can’t wish it away and it is unproductive to frame those arguments on the basis of ludicrous claims made by media trolls and bogus websites masquerading as news sources.

The first question we need to ask ourselves when confronted with the latest spurious claim about the virus is: Is it credible on its face? The more outrageous the claim is, the more skeptical we should be.

Next, consider the source and note that “I read it on the Internet” is not a ringing endorsement of credibility. A Pew Research Center survey in 2019 found that 55 percent of Americans get at least some of their news via social media and a majority of them (57 percent) report that much of what they view online is “largely inaccurate.”

That’s good and bad news, partly healthy skepticism, partly partisan divide and partly distrust of the social media giants and the decisions they make about what we see online.

So, in these times when we all need to find some solid, common ground from which to defend ourselves against the virus, let’s be skeptical, but not distrustful.

There are plenty of good, authoritative, scientific sources of information. The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the World Health Organization (WHO) both have pages on their websites devoted to squelching rumors and busting myths. The Arizona Department of Health Services and the Santa Cruz County Health Department provide local information about the virus in Arizona and the steps we can take to lessen its impact.

Don’t trust government agencies? Try the trusted folks at Mayo Clinic or the experts at Johns Hopkins University Coronavirus Research Center and read authoritative news sources as a check on what your government is telling you.

Whether your favorite national source of information is NPR or Fox News, the New York Times or the Wall Street Journal, you will find, beneath the bluster of the talking heads and the opinion pages, basic information about what is going on and how we should be dealing with it.

Regionally, The Arizona Republic and the Arizona Daily Star are providing free access to their coronavirus stories, as are the Green Valley News, Sierra Vista Herald and the Nogales International.

Here at the nonprofit Patagonia Regional Times, where access to our news is always free, our editor and reporters are working harder than ever to offer, online and in print, the latest news on the coronavirus and its impacts on the lives of our neighbors in Patagonia, Sonoyta, Elgin and eastern Santa Cruz County. A dramatic increase in the number of online visitors in the last two months demonstrates to us that you are relying on us to keep you informed.

We want to continue to be your trusted source of information for local news during this pandemic and we rely on you to help us in that task. Local newspapers have an advantage over national publications and social media - a direct connection to our readers, who are also our friends and neighbors. We count on you to let us know what’s going on or what you need to know.

Together, we can keep each other informed, safe and sane amid the madness. In the meantime, wash your hands, wear a mask in public and don’t drink the bleach.

Ranching

Cont. from Page 1

gras, “so we don’t need so many supplements.” If the summer rains are late, that will drive up costs, as the cattle will need more supplemental feed.

“I’m trying to imagine every scenario that I can and plan for it,” he said. If he had to, he would sell his open (unbred) heifers and older cows.

Fish sells many of his calves as ‘club calves’ for 4-H and FFA students to raise and show. In addition, he is the beef project leader for Santa Cruz County 4-H and runs the junior livestock auction for the County Fair. Plans for holding this year’s fair, scheduled for September, are still uncertain.

“I’m not closing the doors to anything. We’re rolling forward as if we’re having the fair,” Fish said. “Pima County held a virtual show and online auction. It was well supported. We are prepared to do it an alternative way if we have to.”

“There’s a lot of uncertainty in the market, it is so dependent on the futures market. There’s so many factors and tremendous fluctuation,” Fish said. Despite that, he is not pessimistic about the long term picture. “I don’t see a loss of ranches here,” he said. People are still going to eat. Beef is still the protein of choice.”

SCC Has 3rd Highest Rate of Infection in State

By Aisha Sander

Santa Cruz County has one of the highest rates of infection in the state, at 82.4 per 10,000 population, (as of 6/3) only behind Navajo andApache Counties. There have been five additional hospitalizations in May. The first death of a 65 yr old male was reported on June 1.

The rise in the cases is not a reflection of more testing. As of June 3, only 3.4% of the county’s population has been tested. The virus is rapidly spreading throughout the community, according to Dr. Eladio Periera, the Chief Medical Officer at Mariposa Community Health Center (MCHC), because people are not taking the precautionary measures of social distancing and wearing a mask in public.

The county has done 1461 PCR swab tests and 142 serology (antibody) tests (as of 6/3). Serology tests are being conducted at Nextcare Urgent-care in Nogales. The Director of Health Services at the county, Jeff Terrell, clarified, “There are two different antibodies...IgM and IgG. IgM indicates a recent infection so, if positive, it should be followed up with a PCR test. at this time we have not counted any [serology tests] towards our total, only PCR positives.”

MCHC expects to receive approximately 500 PCR swab tests per week for a total of 3500 tests over the next two months. The testing will be reserved for those who have symptoms or have been around those with symptoms.

They also intend to use their tests for essential workers like police, first responders, and produce warehouse workers. Periera said, “we need to take this (COVID-19) seriously.”

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Earl Ranch

A calf waits his turn in the branding pen at the Vera

Photo by Jessica Zamudio

Earl Ranch.

Photo by Jessica Zamudio
Friends Pitch in to Sew Masks
By Marion Vendituoli

When Mimi Henley and Steve Johnson added onto the garage and workshop at their home in Elgin, they could not have anticipated that their new space would be transformed almost immediately into an assembly line that has produced close to 4000 cloth masks since the beginning of March.

“It was Elin’s idea,” Henley said. “What are all those sewing machines doing?” Elin Kentnor asked her, looking at Henley’s four machines that she had brought with her from Washington. Soon the two women began to cut out and sew masks to donate to organizations and individuals throughout Arizona and beyond.

Using a website called deaconess.com, which lists people in need of masks by state, they started by sending 160 masks to visiting nurses and to homeless shelters in Tucson. They also donated masks to migrant shelters in Nogales, Sonora. “We wanted to send masks to people who were not high on the list,” explained Kentnor.

They also distributed masks to local restaurants, the Patagonia Clinic and to Desert Streams Clinic in Sonoita. April Anderson, a nurse at Holy Cross Hospital in Nogales, took 80 masks to the hospital for nurses there. They have sent masks to South Tucson and Nogales for social workers to wear when making home visits, and to census workers in Tucson. 100 masks went to the Tuba City hospital, 1000 masks have gone to the Navajo Nation in northern Arizona and 500 masks were sent to the Hopi Reservation.

Henley and Kentnor make a minimum of 50 masks per day and have made as many as 100 in one day. “We couldn’t have done it without Steve’s innovations,” Kentnor said. In the beginning she was cutting each piece of fabric by hand until Johnson fabricated die cuts for cutting the backing and lining filters. She was also pleating the mask fronts by hand and pinning them before handing the front pieces to Henley to sew. She calculates that she made 9000 pleats before Steve came up with a pleating template and large clips to eliminate the pinning. He also created a hook to make inserting the elastic into the sides of the mask easier.

Kentnor still cuts the front of the masks by hand. She also serges, or finishes, the raw edges of the pocket that holds the filters that they provide with each mask. Henley does the bulk of the sewing. “The last thing I sewed before this was when my 47-year-old son was three and I made him a clown costume,” Kentnor said.

After experimenting with materials to fashion the nose piece on the masks, they settled on ‘bell’ wire, an 18-gauge, thin, flexible material used for wiring doorbells. The filters that they insert in the pocket of each mask are made of melt-blown polypropylene, the same material used for N95 masks. This material proved to be too expensive for the women to purchase. Henley, in researching polypropylene, discovered that cambric is the same material. They have found that the most economical way to buy cambric is to purchase shoe bags on Amazon. Each shoe bag can be cut into 18 filters, and the draw strings from the bags are repurposed into ties for the children’s masks that they produce.

The fronts of the masks are made from donated fabric. The backs of the masks are cut from men’s cotton or cotton/polyester crew neck undershirts. They get 20 pieces out of one XL shirt.

Henley estimates that they have used at least a half mile of elastic on their masks so far, much of which has been donated. When they ran out of elastic, they made fabric ties, which many people find more comfortable to wear for long stretches of time. While it was difficult for a time to find elastic, they now have a good supply. “We are really rich in elastic right now,” Henley said.

Henley and Kentnor give all their masks away but will accept donations, which have come mostly from local people. They have received some from Sierra Vista and Tucson, as well as from family and friends. The Mountain Empire Rotary Club has donated $150 to help defray expenses. “Very generous people have bought elastic and fabric,” Henley said. At this point in time they are in need of white, thin mens’ crew neck tee shirts and broadcloth in neutral colors to use as binding.

“We weren’t counting on people donating, but there’s no way we’d still be able to do this without donations,” Kentnor said. Henley agreed, adding, “The outpouring of support is staggering.” They plan to continue production as long as there is a need for the masks. “The whole point is that people wear them,” Henley said.

Pat Basinger has passed away and gone to be with our Lord and Savior on April 28, 2020.

Pat is preceded in death by her mother, Martha DeShano Spore, her father, Alvin O. DeShano and her brother, Alvin A. DeShano. Pat is survived by her husband, Wayne (Cotton) Basinger and six children: Debbie Basinger, Tyler Basinger (April), Judy Jablonski, Michael Basinger (Julie), Sherri Stout (Russell) and Terri Powers (Gene), 14 grandchildren, 26 great-grandchildren and one great-great grandchild. Pat was active in the Santa Cruz County area volunteering to help for any occasion and was involved in various organizations such as Cowbelles, Sonoita Fair and Rodeo Association, book and quilt clubs and her beloved “Udder Bunch.” She was an avid quilter and when not volunteering somewhere, you could find her in her sewing room working on another quilt design.

Pat will be greatly missed by her family, her many friends and relatives. The world has lost a great wife, mother, grandmother, great grandmother, and friend.

Celebration of Life to be announced at a later date.

Elin Kentnor folds a mask front into pleats and then secures the folds with large clips that have eliminated the need for pins.

Patricia May Basinger
AUGUST 10, 1936 – APRIL 28, 2020

Danann Accountancy, LLC
Shari Danann, CPA, M.S.T.
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Patagonia Town Council Candidates

Three candidates are running for three open seats on the Patagonia Town Council on August 4, 2020: Anita Francesca Claverie and incumbents Ron Reibslager and Michael Stabile. This is a non-partisan race. The candidates were provided questions or topics by email. Some questions and answers have been edited/paraphrased for space.

Anita Francesca Claverie

Why are you running for Patagonia Town Council?
I’ve loved Patagonia since I first moved here and am continually inspired and grateful to learn and interact with our vibrant and unique community. I’ve grown up in our town in the next five years?
What do you think are the top two challenges facing the town in the next five years?
Top two challenges are maintaining our air and water quality while enjoying some limited growth.
What is the biggest challenge that you see to economic growth in Patagonia?
The biggest challenge I see is the town enjoying some economic growth while not falling prey to outside industrial interests.
What are the top accomplishments of your current term?
Top accomplishments are the hiring of our current town manager which I feel is the best we have ever had since I have lived here, as well as our town attorney/prosecutor who is doing a great job for us. Also the Mayor, Council and Town Manager have been working on solving problems that have been overlooked by previous administrations such as the sanitation plant needs, public works getting the equipment they need to safely do the job asked of them. Helping the Town Manager to deal with and solve problems of the general public and to restore faith in the Mayor, Council and the town government/staff which I feel is now fully in place to do so.

Ron Reibslager

Why are you running for Patagonia Town Council?
I am running for council to maintain what I feel is the strong and balanced council that we now have.
What are your top goals, if elected to the Town Council?
My top goals are the complete overhaul of the towns sanitation plant and helping to get our budget in control and balanced.
What do you think are the top two challenges facing the town in the next five years?
Top two challenges are maintaining our air and water quality while enjoying some limited growth.
What is the biggest challenge that you see to economic growth in Patagonia?
The biggest challenge I see is the town enjoying some economic growth while not falling prey to outside industrial interests.
What are your top goals, if elected to the Town Council?
Top goals or with public office/staff which I feel is now fully in place to do so.

Michael Stabile

Why are you running for Patagonia Town Council?
I am running to help maintain the health, welfare, and quality of life of the people of Patagonia.
What are your top goals, if elected to the Town Council?
Replacing the wastewater treatment plant and making sure that if the South32 mining operation begins operation, their ore trucks do not come through the town.
What do you think are the top two challenges facing the town in the next five years?
Trying to maintain the Town financial viability and keeping the mining haul trucks out of town.
What is the biggest challenge that you see to economic growth in Patagonia?
Getting through this pandemic without losing any of our local businesses.
What are the top accomplishments of your current term?
The hiring of Ron Robinson as our Town Manager.

Name: Michael Stabile
Residence: How long? 11 years in Patagonia
Education/licenses/certifications/military: BS in Geology. 30 graduate credits in Geology, stopped before writing Masters Thesis
Recent employment: Certified Rolfer, Board Certified Bodyworker
Community organizations/activities: Founded PARA (no longer part of the organization.)
Finishing first term as Town Councilman

Name: Ronald Lee Reibslager
Residence: How long? I’ve lived in Patagonia for 13 yrs. 9 months.
Education/licenses/certifications/military: 12 years education, Served 9 /12 years in the U.S. Marines and a combat veteran in Vietnam 1969.
Recent employment: Retired.
Community organizations/activities: Patagonia Town Councilman, currently serving 4 year term.

Name: Anita Francesca Claverie
Education/licenses/certifications/military: Bachelor’s from UC Davis in Native American Studies and International Agricultural Development.
Recent employment: Native Plant Materials Program Manager at Borderlands Restoration Network.
Community organizations/activities: The Arizona Native Plant Society Santa Cruz chapter. Board of Directors at the Patagonia Regional Times and Previous public office/service: First time running for public office.
Learn more at: https://www.borderlandsrestoration.org/fran-bio.html
LD2 Candidates Answer Questions On Local Issues

Four candidates, incumbent Daniel Hernandez Jr., Andrea Dalessandro, Luis Parra, and Billy Peard, are running in the Democratic primary for Arizona House of Representatives District 2, which includes Sonoita, Elgin and Patagonia, on August 4, 2020 for two spots in the general election. The candidates were provided questions or topics by email. Some questions and answers have been edited/paraphrased for space.

Andrea Dalessandro
Why are you running for LD2 State House of Representatives?
As a proven and experienced progressive leader, I want to use my voice in the House for the benefit of my constituents. Because of my eight years in the legislature I know how the process works, I already have relationships with Representatives and staff on both sides of the aisle. I am ready to return to the House to assume a leadership position.

What experiences/personal qualities do you have that would make you a good representative?
I never give up. In 2019, I was one of only eight legislators out of ninety who was in attendance every day, for every vote. I am the Ranking Member of Senate Education Committee, senior member of Senate Judiciary and a member of Natural Resources and Energy Committee. I have a 95% rating from the Arizona Education Association and the Sierra Club and a 100% rating on Who’s for Kids and Who’s just Kidding and Progressive Score.

What are your top goals, if elected to the House?
Restoration of public-school funding. Health Care access and affordability, support for small businesses impacted by COVID-19,sustainability issues and making sure there is adequate and safe water.

What do you think are the top two challenges facing the district in the next five years?
Before the COVID-19 crises, more than 30% of the children in Legislative District 2 lived in poverty. Now the poverty rate has to be much higher along with a higher unemployment rate.

What do you think are the top three issues facing the constituents in Eastern Santa Cruz County and what will you do to respond to them?
1. Healthcare, particularly lack of access to mental healthcare. I will work to expand telemedicine, for affordable health insurance options, and incentives for providers to work in rural environments.
2. Supporting our homegrown industries. Santa Cruz, particularly the eastern portion, is full of natural beauty and has incredible agriculture. We must expand our local tourism and wine industries.
3. Funding for physical and digital infrastructure. Broadband access, increased road maintenance, and clean air and water for all our citizens.

What are the top accomplishments of your current term?
Securing $1.01 Million for Holy Cross Hospital in Nogales and $3.6 Million for the Santa Cruz Valley Regional Hospital in Green Valley. Rural communities rely on these facilities in the best of times but during this pandemic they are invaluable. I’m also proud of the work last year to create a $20 million dollar school safety grant program that allowed for money to be used to hire counselors, social workers, or school resource officers. I also successfully fought to kill bad bills including a bill to arm untrained people to be used to hire counselors, social workers, or school resource officers. I also successfully fought to kill bad bills including a bill to arm untrained people.

Name: Andrea Dalessandro
Residence: Sahuarita
Education/licenses/certifications/military:
Certified mathematics educator.
CPA Certified Public Accountant-tax accountant
Recent employment: Legislative District 2 Senator
January 2014 - present
Community organizations/activities: Honorary Member of Tubac Rotary, Zonta International, League of Women Voters, Sierra Club, AAUW (American Association of University Women).
Previous public office/service: Legislative District 2 Representative January 2013 - January 2014
Learn more at: Facebook Andrea Dalessandro Twitter Dalessandro4AZ

Daniel Hernandez, Jr.
Why are you running for LD2 State House of Representatives?
There is still a lot of work to be done. I’ve been an effective advocate for the 2nd Legislative District. Despite being a Democrat I’ve been able to fight for our values and achieve results.

What do you think are the top two challenges facing the district in the next five years?
Keeping our young people in Santa Cruz county and creating quality jobs. We have to fight for expanded options for higher education and technical education to attract and keep high wage jobs.

What do you think are the top three issues facing the constituents in Eastern Santa Cruz County and what will you do to respond to them?
1. Healthcare, particularly lack of access to mental healthcare. I will work to expand telemedicine, for affordable health insurance options, and incentives for providers to work in rural environments.
2. Supporting our homegrown industries. Santa Cruz, particularly the eastern portion, is full of natural beauty and has incredible agriculture. We must expand our local tourism and wine industries.
3. Funding for physical and digital infrastructure. Broadband access, increased road maintenance, and clean air and water for all our citizens.

What are your top goals, if elected to the House?
1. Securing $1.01 Million for Holy Cross Hospital in Nogales and $3.6 Million for the Santa Cruz Valley Regional Hospital in Green Valley. Rural communities rely on these facilities in the best of times but during this pandemic they are invaluable. I’m also proud of the work last year to create a $20 million dollar school safety grant program that allowed for money to be used to hire counselors, social workers, or school resource officers. I also successfully fought to kill bad bills including a bill to arm untrained people in our schools, anti-women’s health care legislation, and anti-equality legislation.

Name: Daniel Hernandez Jr
Residence: South Tucson
Education/licenses/certifications/military:
University of Arizona BA (Political Science) degree pending completion of final class in May 2020
Flinn Brown Civic Leadership Fellow
Recent employment: State Director for Everytown for Gun Safety, Raiz Program Manager for Planned Parenthood Action Fund, Western Political Director for Swing Left.
Community organizations/activities:
Wider Bridge Board member 2018-Present,

Luis Parra
Why are you running for LD2 State House of Representatives?
I am running to bring socioeconomic progress to southern Arizona by focusing on its core strengths. As a fifth generation border resident and great-grandson of a rancher in the San Rafael Valley, I am intimately familiar with our past and present landscape.

What experiences/personal qualities do you have that would make you a good representative?
I am a husband, father, and son who values family above anything else. I have strived to live a life of service to others. I have been practicing law for 20 years in the public and private sector advising local governments, business startups and immigrants.

What are your top goals, if elected to the House?
Helping residents of Southern Arizona find employment by creating and promoting economic development opportunities. Enacting legislation that will help prioritize funding of higher learning for our youth as well as life-long learning opportunities.

What do you think are the top two challenges facing the district in the next five years?
Finding our niche economic driver and balancing economic initiative with a steadfast support for sustainability of our region. Impressing upon our youth and recent residents that they matter just as much as the long time residents of southern Arizona thereby creating a sense of unity among all.

What do you think are the top three issues facing the constituents in Eastern Santa Cruz County and what will you do to respond to them?
1) Environmental Sustainability; 2) tourism growth based on our regional landscape, flora/fauna, and natural resources. 3) Improved education and government facilities.

Name: Luis Parra
Residence: Rio Rico
Education/licenses/certifications/military:
Nogales High School
B.A.(Psychology/Spanish) University of Arizona J.D., ASU-Sandra Day O’Conner College of Law Licenses: AZ State Bar, AZ Federal Bar; 9th Circuit Court of Appeals
Recent employment: Managing Attorney: Parra Law Offices, PLLC; 2009-Present
Nogales City Attorney - 4/2018-4/2019; Community organizations/activities:
Advisory Board member: U of A School of Social and Behavioral Science 2016 -Present
Founding Board Chairman/Board Member Emeritus: Kino Border Initiative 2009-Present
Previous public office/service: Chief Civil Deputy County Attorney, Santa Cruz County: 2005-2009 Nogales City Attorney’s office 2001-2004
Local Bit Maker Carrying on Western Tradition

By Pat McNamara

Elgin welcomed yet another fine craftsman to the area when New Mexico native Kim Parkey and his wife Karen built their house and settled here in 2019. Parkey, a bit and spur maker for over thirty years, is a horseman, a rooper and a metal worker whose custom bits are sought after by world famous horse trainers and competitors for their fine quality and craftsmanship.

A welder by trade, Parkey had plenty of metal experience and as a horseman, he was always looking for a more balanced, better quality bit to use when working with his own horses. Since he was “too broke” to buy a custom-made bit back then, Parkey decided to try his hand at making his own. From there, a passion was born. Through the years, he has learned what works best and how to build a bit that the horseman can use to help refine subtle methods of communication with the horse. He likes to call it “teaching the horse language” through his bits with the lightest touch from the rider.

In 2009, Parkey’s wife encouraged him to take a silver engraving class in Alpine Texas given by silversmith Johny Weyerts. As a result, Parkey’s bits, belt buckles and spurs became more attractive and appealing to customers.

In 2010, with a scholarship from TCAA (Traditional Cowboy Artists of America), Parkey attended a weeklong session that concentrated on traditional California-style bridle bits. This tradition originated in Spain, going back to the renaissance when horses and their horses came to the New World and settled in Southern California, going back to the renaissance when horses were highly trained for battle. As the Conquistadors and their horses came to the New World and settled in Southern California, they brought their traditional style of horsemanship with them. The tradition spread to other western states as well, and is now a part of many competitive equine events.

The first question Parkey asks himself when working on his bits is, “Would I ride my horse in this bit?”

Parkey holds up one of his custom made bits. The first question Parkey asks himself when working on his bits is, “Would I ride my horse in this bit?” He works with a consistent pattern for the most part, though if a client needs something specific, he will accommodate him or her.

Though Parkey also makes custom spurs and belt buckles, bits are his passion and he prefers to concentrate on their construction. Each November, Parkey makes the journey to the WRCA (Working Ranch Cowboy Association) Ranch Rodeo Finals in Amarillo, Texas, where he joins hundreds of other vendors in the largest handmade western gear show in the world. There he meets with hundreds of horse enthusiasts, reconnects with other craftspeople, and receives most of his orders for the year.

Parkey’s bits are not only useful but works of art that last forever and can be handed down for generations. He even gets an occasional order from people who just want one to hang on the wall because they are so beautiful.

Handmade horse equipment is a western tradition that Parkey and many other horsemen and horsewomen appreciate and treasure. It is their hope that this tradition and art continues to be appreciated.

For more information, visit Kim Parkey Bits and Spurs on facebook, or go to his website, www.kimparkeybits.com.
I think I’ll name my next dog Fauci. I simply love the sound of it and do respect the man whose name it is. He seems to have integrity and is, therefore, believable, when so many are not.

I’m quite surprised that Fauci’s still around. He’s done what one must never do - he’s contradicted Donald Trump - and thereby garnered death-threats from the true deplorables. Our President is insecure and pretty much insists that we accept his point of view. (Remember Comey, Mattis, Sessions, and the others? They wouldn’t forsake their principles, so they’re all bye-bye now.) And Fauci, who is well informed, will not support Trump’s lies or loony, wishful fantasies.

The President is nearly frantic to escape all blame. He quite reflexively insists that everything which happens on his watch is WONDERFUL. He worries he’ll be found at fault if everything’s not GREAT. When one cannot admit to having flaws, it’s very tempting to deny that anything is wrong, unless there’s someone else to blame. (There always is!) Pelosi, China, Muslims, and Obama come to mind.

Doc Fauci is a gentleman. He does not stoop to criticize or harp on the administration’s flaws. He simply, calmly states his truth - the scientific truth. That Fauci’s even still around suggests to me that Donald Trump, once he (at last) awoke to just how grim the virus was, felt grateful that he had someone to stand up on the stage with him and keep the public’s trust. For an arch-narcissist like Trump to tolerate the rising star and burgeoning celebrity of someone in his coterie suggests that our poor President is flustered to his core. Imagine letting someone else attract attention and gain praise! The like has not been seen before! In general, such impudence results in the offender’s head displayed upon a pike. (To remain safe, you must stay small like Pence, who, I suspect, has been embalmed.) So far, so good for Tony Boy, but let’s be real; it isn’t over yet.

A bad scientist is one who arrives at incorrect conclusions. Even worse is the knowingly dishonest expert who steals and falsifies data. One such disgraced scientist is virologist Judy Mikovits, the subject of a current video called ‘PLandemic,’ whose purpose is to smear Doc Fauci and the C.D.C, suggesting that they have a plan to milk their lofty status and make trillions on a new covid vaccine. (That’s why they aim to make the virus sound more nasty than it is.)

So, who would want to make so paranoid an “exposé”? Our country has reached an insane level of division, pitting objective science against partisan sentiment. It’s sad that science can’t declare what those like Trump would like to hear - that the danger has passed and it’s really OK to resume our old ways. Until the strong economy - Trump’s chief and daily boasting point before the recent Fall - has dragged itself back up the stairs, Trump stands exposed as a buffoon who’s muffed the whole pandemic thing. Does that mean we should just ignore the scientific facts and act as if the danger’s really passed?

Throughout most human history it is the biggest, scary threats (like wars or “Acts of God”) that let us put aside our constant sibling rivalries and pull together as one team. Today, instead, the True Believer Loyalists just turn their backs on science to proclaim, “Hooray, We’ve Won!” Perhaps they think that dying can be fun. Who’s skeptical? Well, me, for one.
SUMMER IS CANCELLED

My first year running the Summer Art Camp we had a sweet little boy join us from out of town, a grandson of a local, here for just the summer. Right away we realized this guy was the sensitive type. Not quiet and broody, more like whiny and moody and, because we knew his grandma, we all walked on eggshells. Things were going along swimmingly right up until he burned off his fingerprint with a hot glue gun. (On my watch!)

I’ve mentioned in a past column that when I took over the Art Center I didn’t have a lot of practice managing kids and, to be honest, my first instinct was to drive him out to the woods and leave him there, but I didn’t. Instead I listened to him cry and carry on until his grandma came and picked him up. I then endured the wrath of a grandma scorned. He didn’t come back, and we didn’t call. We did, however, put away all the glue guns.

A few years later another delightful child joined us. He was not “sensitive,” just unlovely, and yet another grandson of a local couple just trying to expose the guy to rural life. On the day in question, during a project using staplers, our little city friend stapled his hand to his project. Not many staplers back in the city, I guess. His teacher (my sister) ran to the office, dragging him by the hand essentially hiding it from him so he wouldn’t see the staple protruding from the softest part of his hand. We went outside and decided the only thing to do was pull it out fast. We did and what leapt out was a scream to beat all screams and tears and blood and snot. Eventually he went back to grandma and strangely enough he came back the next day and the day after that. We were in the clear, so we thought.

The following week was one of the hottest on record. To avoid walking in the heat we used my little pick-up to drive the kids to the library for lunch. After loading up kids and taking extra care of our injured camper we started out to the library only to stop because apparently Staple Boy had sat on a bee. UnBEEliveable! After that, the kid made me nervous. I watched him former to change her clothes because she was going to get married. After her Nikka (marriage contract), she went back outside to play. A few years later, around the age of 13, she moved to live with her husband’s family and consummate her marriage. They lived in pre-partition India. Where? I don’t know.

In 1947, the year that Pakistan was partitioned off from India, my Nani migrated to Karachi with her husband, my Nana, and three of her children. Did they walk? Did they take the infamous trains that had been filled with deadly violence during partition? I don’t know. They were too poor to have traveled by boat.

After their migration she soon had another child, her son. In 1951, my Nana, just 35, died one day while walking on the street because his liver failed. Did he die right there or was he taken to the hospital? I don’t know. He was an alcoholic and my mother never met him. She was still in the womb when he died, just about to arrive in the world.

These family details are hazy. Stories of loss and pain are like that. Will I tell my children what I endured? Perhaps. Perhaps I’ll be less inclined to keep secrets as I know how quickly things are forgotten.

We don’t know what compelled my Nana to drink. Was he drinking before he had to migrate? Apparently, he was not unkind to my grandmother or his children. But he couldn’t quit the habit. Pakistan was created in the name of Islam and drinking is forbidden for Muslims. There was a lot of shame around his drinking. My mother never told my Nani that she had started drinking as well.

My Nani was in her mid-twenties when my Nana died. She had five children and a determined heart to perpetuate the legacy of pain but she has also sustained my life in her body, labored to bring me into this complicated world and has advocated for my equality in a society and family of male privilege.

I thought that I could heal my mother-daughter wound if I had a girl. This wound that is not just mine, but my mother’s, my grandmother’s, and all the mothers in my ancestral line that I will never know about. But I didn’t have a daughter. I realized I’m not going to heal in some phantom future with a fantasy daughter but right now by working in the relationship with my mother while she is still alive.

eat his snacks, just in case he choked, made sure his shoes were tied good and tight when we went outside and made sure he got in the right car when it was time to go home.

The following year we had a child we only knew as The Cryer. He cried if he was mad, sad, happy, bored, hungry or didn’t like the color blue. We didn’t know how to console him or how to keep him hydrated. We finally just let it happen. If he started to cry, we just let him. Ironically, for our parade float that year he wanted to be the sun. Go figure.

To hear me tell it, summer camp sounds like a real blood bath. It can be. It’s also sweet when we play freeze dance and eat popsicles and we make art with our new friends. Its fun to spend my June birthday with kids who are more excited than me for cake and ice cream. It’s fun to just have fun with a bunch of kids, scraped knees and all.

Summer isn’t cancelled, it just looks a little different this year. Make art with your friends, play freeze dance and eat popsicles. Just avoid the kid we called The Cryer.
Our proximity to the border of Mexico provides us with a special opportunity to experience for ourselves the truth of information coming from our leaders and the media. Vaccinations and the health of migrants has been a subject not well documented or reported to the public. Some of our political leaders and some news outlets have made false claims that label the illegal immigrants as dangerous, disease-carrying aliens.

According to information from the Center for Disease Control (CDC) and the Cato Institute, our neighbors to the south have higher vaccination rates than the United States. These facts are easily researched, but the politics of fear is easier to believe. President Trump has accused illegal immigrants from Mexico and Central America with inaccurate quotes such as, “tremendous infectious disease is pouring across the border.” A former Immigration and Customs Enforcement agent, David Ward, states that migrants are “coming in with diseases such as smallpox.” Dr. Ben Carson former retired surgeon and presidential candidate, enthusiastically embrace vaccinations, as do third world countries. People who have death and disease as a regular part of their lives are realistic about the added grief, pain, and death that life brings without vaccinations.

Several migrant aid shelters in Nogales, Sonora are supported by churches and aid groups from Arizona and beyond. Two that I am familiar with, and have participated in as a nurse and aid worker, are El Comedor, providing humanitarian aid through the Kino Border Initiative, and Cruzando Fronteras, administered by the Episcopal Diocese of Arizona.

Kathleen O’Leary, RN, MS is the clinical director of Cruzando Fronteras. She has been volunteering there since 2018. O’Leary has extensive experience working in third world countries at refugee camps and aid centers from Lesotho South Africa, Bangladesh, Nigeria, Vietnam, a Syrian refugee camp in Greece, and nine times in Haiti since 2010. At Cruzando Fronteras she estimates that she has treated approximately 700 migrants since 2018.

Currently, most refugees in Nogales are coming from southern Mexico. O’Leary has been astounded at the detailed vaccine documentation most refugee mothers bring for their families. The vaccine booklets, always carefully protected, are comprehensive in documenting up-to-date vaccination records. She has also been impressed that most refugees, children, and adults, are fully vaccinated to the same standards that the CDC recommends.

The only children not vaccinated are those born in transit or up to one year old during their migration. Of the babies not vaccinated, Mexico says they will vaccinate them.

Last fall Cruzando Fronteras provided 100 flu vaccines for all the migrants at their facility. Every adult, parent, and child were vaccinated. Not one person refused. “Documentation is good as or better than what I have seen American parents carrying around,” O’Leary stated. “Measles outbreak is usually blamed on immigrants. Not true. I have never seen anyone at Cruzando Frontera with a communicable disease.” The fact is, Mexico has a higher percentage of people vaccinated against measles than the United States.

In my own experience and working with other nurses at El Comedor, we concur that communicable diseases that can be controlled by vaccinations are rarely or never seen at El Comedor or Cruzando Fronteras. In fact, you probably have more to fear from your American contacts than from your fellow human beings coming from Mexico or Central America.

Don’t let mining companies mislead you.

According to the United Nations Environment Programme, mining makes up over 20% of our global climate impact. It disrupts communities, harms biodiversity, scars sacred lands, depletes regional water sources, pollutes the air, and threatens the delicate habitats needed for species survival. Operations are rarely sustainable; the resulting aftermath can require indefinite water/soil treatment.

While minerals and metals may be necessary for human consumption, we believe there are certain places that SHOULD NOT be mined. In fact, no type of mining can support the longterm ecological needs of the Patagonia Mountains—a hotspot of biodiversity that’s home to over 300 bird species, 600 native bee species, and 100 Federally-listed threatened, endangered, and sensitive species. The Patagonia Mountains should never be a casualty of corporate greed.

Let’s protect the biological wealth of our region. Learn more about our mining concerns at:

www.patagoniaalliance.org
CORONAVIRUS AND THE AIDS EPIDEMIC

By David Krest

The fear and anxiety I see and experience with coronavirus in our community could be compared to when I was physician-ing in the early 80s, when AIDS first made its debut. AIDS was known to be a death sentence once contracted, the media informing us that specialists had concluded that AIDS was not only a death sentence for those who contracted the virus but that it was highly contagious through physical contact and bodily fluids and that it was airborne. At that time there were no cell phones or personal computers. News spread very slowly and was basically contained and controlled by radio and TV corporations.

During that period, I was living one-on-one with individuals who had contracted HIV. Now, 38 years later, information is a hundred-fold faster and is available to anyone connected to the internet and includes data from hundreds of thousands of news sources and the billions of us who now can also be a news source...a much wider perspective.

The current health crisis, officially named COVID-19 by the medical establishment tells us we are all at risk, just as we were told in the 80s about AIDS.

It seems to me that there are parallels between AIDS and COVID-19. Both are a virus of pandemic proportions. Both have brought forth mandates of “do not touch, and wear masks” as self-protective measures against infection. Both brought a high level of fear and anxiety. The difference is that the fear and anxiety now is being spread instantly in myriad ways, to a world population.

How we are reacting to the news, the crisis that inundates us daily, depends on our personal reality, who we consider “the authority”, how much of our life is consumed by instant virtual news, and how much we trust ourselves to take the precautions needed to safeguard ourselves and others.

Some of us see the virus as part of a much larger picture. The larger picture includes our connection with and inter-dependence upon each other and all other life forms which our competitive individualistic values do not support. It seems that a competitive, individualistic approach leads to the crises that we are experiencing on all levels: personal, social, global and ecological. We have separated ourselves from the lifestyle that cultivates diversity, inclusion, cooperation, and one that fosters the sense that we are dependent upon each other.

It is known that, for many people, just being in nature, with trees, birdsong, flowing streams, vast sky above, and solid earth brings a sense of well-being, as does reaching out to those we care about and those who we hear about who are lonely or in need - calling, writing a letter, being creative with art, food, music and sharing it with others, online if need be.

I see and hear and know of those of us who are creating a healthy environment by their kindness, slower pace, supporting others in reducing fears and anxieties by doing that ourselves.

For general information and news regarding reopening please refer to Cose Buone (Patagonia) on Facebook.

Hoping everyone is weathering the virus storm.

Stay safe and be well!

Gene Griego
Chef/Owner
436 Naugle Ave.
Patagonia, AZ 85624
520•394•0010
COVID-19 is revealing divisions in our society. As one older woman from Elgin described when asked what she is most concerned about with the economy reopening, it is the "strange confusion of a society divided in responses to scientific vs political information." Particularly the mask, a simple tool to limit (not prevent) the spread of aerosolized droplets, (similar to coughing in your sleeve when in public), has become a symbol of one’s beliefs around the virus and the economy reopening.

The PRT conducted a survey on how people are feeling about the economy reopening. We received 178 responses. 45% were from Sonora & Elgin and 38% from Patagonia. 17% were from Nogales, Tucson, or other places of residence. The respondents were overwhelmingly female (69%) and 51 years and older (86%)

When asked if they wear masks when they go out, a majority of respondents replied ‘yes.’ In Sonora and Elgin 84% wear a mask all or some of the time. 16% do not wear one. Of those who do not wear a mask, their reasons were that masks are not necessary, are ineffective, don't protect you from getting the virus, and masks symbolize “excessive fear.” One man from Elgin, 51-60 years old, wrote, “I have a better chance of getting hit by a bus then getting COVID in our area.” Among those who live in Patagonia 91% wear a mask all or some of the time and 9% do not.

Of those who replied to the question why they wear masks, 65 people (45%) wrote it is to protect others and themselves. 85 people are staying home except for essential activities, and 53 people are only sometimes going out for non-essential activities (83% in total). Respondents from Sonora, Elgin and Patagonia shared self-isolating behavior. They differed, however, in their feelings about businesses reopening. 42% of respondents from Sonora/Elgin felt anxious versus 63% of Patagonia residents. Respondents seem most uncomfortable dining in a restaurant (57%) and going to a gym (64%).

168 people responded when asked what they are most concerned about with the economy reopening. 65 people (39%) commented about the fear of a resurgence in cases, or a second wave. The next most common concern was people not following the precautionary measures to help curb the spread of the virus.

When advising businesses on how to reopen, 157 people responded. 45% wanted employees to wear masks. In addition, 43 people said they wanted social distancing measures in place and enforced by businesses.

The survey revealed that, among the respondents, those who are choosing not to wear a mask are in the minority. Of the 23 people who said they do not wear a mask, all but one of them are going out for more than just essential activities.

Though this is a small number of people, it reflects the divisiveness over masks and how it influences behavior. As one Patagonia respondent commented, her main concern is, “People who just don’t care if they are contagious.”

“Coronado’s Trail” and “Death Rattle,” two mystery novels featuring Deputy Sheriff Calvin Creede, are romping fun mysteries set in the grasslands of Sonora. The books were written by Carl and Jane Bock, biologists who did research for 25 summers at the Appleton-Whittell Research Ranch in Elgin.

The first novel, "Coronado’s Trail," blends the historic expedition in 1540 led by Francisco Vasquez de Coronado with a twenty-year-old murder case involving the son of a prominent ranching family. Solving the murder uncovers connections with drug lords, archeological site looting, jealousy, and dysfunctional families.

The second novel, “Death Rattle,” features Deputy Creede solving the mysterious sudden death of a young man from a rattlesnake bite. The death leads to a convoluted web of border vigilantes, vineyards, unscrupulous housing developers, and illegal reptile trade. While solving the murders, Deputy Creede struggles with his personal life, balancing work, and relationships, completely absorbing the reader into the story.

For those of us who live in the Sonora area the books are delightful in describing the beauty of the local mountain ranges, rivers, and canyons. Locals will recognize the descriptions of monsoons, one horrific drive over Box Canyon, and many other references. For readers who are not familiar with our area, they will be transported to the beauty of the grasslands and its amazing history. Every reader will benefit from learning more about archeology, cultural and natural history, local food, and the diversity of people who are fortunate enough to live or have lived in the Sonora Valley.

The books are available at the Patagonia Library and on Amazon in book, eBook and audible format. “The View from Bald Hill, Thirty years in an Arizona Grassland,” also by Carl and Jane Bock is available on Amazon, as well.
LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Praise For the PRT
You are to be commended for your local coverage of the COVID-19 pandemic. No screaming headlines, no exaggerated claims, just the facts as you, your staff, and your contributors know them.

I was particularly drawn to your front-page story, “The new normal for health-care workers.” RN Jennie La Dage’s story really got to me. I understand what it’s like to work a twelve-hour shift. I’ve worked my share of them, but never under COVID-19 conditions. Never did I have to wear a face mask or protective clothing. Never did I have to wash my hands after every time I touched a doorknob. Never did I have to strip off all my clothes and shower before entering the house. Never did I have to worry that going to work might be life-threatening.

Think of what it would be like to be a nurse or any health care provider working day after day, week after week, month after month facing the same routine. How do they do it? How do they keep from burning out?

Robert Kimball, 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

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Tropical Travellers

Sitting at approximately 32 degrees north latitude, the Patagonia area lies at the verge of the American subtropics. Follow this imaginary line around the globe and you’ll find yourself in such exotic locales as North Africa, Iran, and northern India - also subtropical regions.

As colder climates retreated north from our area, a host of more tropical species followed the warming trend into the Sky Islands region. Many of the most famous, as well as some of the most obscure, of our flora and fauna were originally inhabitants of tropical Mexico who gradually or not-so-gradually moved into our region in the last 8,000 years or so.

The first wave of tropical species likely could fly or at least hitch a ride, including birds and bats. Perhaps the first sojourners were visitors who veered off-course or were unable to colonize our region. Lesser long-nosed bats, for example, require tropical plants for their nectar and pollen. Thus, they need giant saguaro, other columnar cacti, and various agaves, which may not have made the northern move yet. What if one of these bats had recently feasted upon saguaro fruit in Mexico and defecated the seeds on a Sky Islands mountain slope. Voila! - instant tropics thanks to a combination of wings and hitchhiking seeds!

Such plausible ecological scenarios played out over thousands of years and continue to this very day - perhaps spurred on by our current climate change. Witness the first Arizona record of a clay-colored thrush in May of this year.

Whether chronicled by humans or not, tropical species from mammals to (especially) invertebrates, birds, and perhaps reptiles, amphibians, and fish dip their proverbial toes into Arizona. As to their actual staying power in our state, that depends upon a myriad of factors, such as habitat(s), weather at the time, as well as sheer luck.

Case in point: I have seen only two blackened bluewings, stunning tropical butterflies, in my life, both near Patagonia Lake and both winter visitors that were likely making cameo appearances with no hint of breeding potential.

As the soaring months of June and July come into play, so too do many of our more common tropical species. Many of our succulents, the majority of which have tropical origins, bloom. The showy flowers of cacti often lure in tropical bee species, while various yuccas have evolved species-specific symbioses with their pollinating yucca moths.

If you want to witness a real tropical treat, then hang out at a flowering agave and enjoy the procession of both tropical and temperate pollinators. Such disparate species as tropical bats, several oriole species, bees, doves, ants, and hummingbirds are among the throngs drawn to the nec- tar feast at agaves.

June and July are prime time for many of our tropical reptiles. Soaring ambient temperatures equate to more amenable body temperatures for these sunning saurians. Gila monsters are on the prowl for a satisfying meal of quail eggs or baby mice, for example. Meanwhile, Sonoran spotted whiptails ply the hot ground for smaller invertebrate prey. As monsoonal moisture is pulled into the region, watch for increasing activity among our legion of rattlesnake species. While they can be reserved just for those who wield great power or just for those who ruled with unmatched authority.

Maybe it’s no coincidence, then, that tiny Corona Borealis is squeezed between two of the larger constellations, fighting for space and perhaps easily overlooked. Maybe it’s a perfect reminder right now that little things matter and that the powerful have no choice but to share acreage with us regular folk. I don’t have a problem with seeing a crown in the sky. But for me, broken bowls, a ring of elders, and a child’s toy turn the sky into a place that’s not only accessible, but also private.

So, how do you find it? It will be visible to the naked eye at 9:00 p.m. on June 21. That is the date of the next New Moon, when the moon is, at best, very minimally visible and when the sky is at its darkest.

By Harold Meckler

With apologies to places like Corona, Queens in New York and Corona de Tucson just up the road, I haven’t wanted to think about the word “corona” in connection to anything for a while now. But, on a clear night a few weeks ago I casually glanced up at a familiar constellation and realized that everything “corona” is not bad. I’m talking about the seven stars that comprise Corona Borealis, the distinctive, if flattened, “U” that lies between mighty Hercules and Boo-
Mental Health Concerns on the Rise

By Sarah Klingenstein

“If you injure yourself, you’re going to see a doctor. It’s no different if you are suffering from a mental health crisis. We are available for residents who are in crisis, whether physical or emotional. Our staff will answer your call. We’ll listen for as long as you need us to, and get you the help you or your family members need,” said Frank Bejarano, D.B.H., L.P.C., head of Behavioral Health at Mariposa Community Health Center (MCHC) in Nogales.

A recent Census Bureau study amidst the pandemic showed that a third of Americans are suffering from anxiety or depression. Bejarano reported an increase in stress among local people due to job loss and isolation. “People initially seemed to be adapting okay to the crisis, but as time has gone on, stress has increased, leading to more financial worry, depression, alcohol and drug use, and domestic violence. The crisis has brought some families together, but for others, the cracks in family relationships are really starting to show.”

Dr. Philip Williams, head of Pediatrics at MCHC, outlined the menu of services the clinic provides. “Besides providing medical and mental health, the center provides dental care and pharmacy services. They offer education and support to chronic disease, mental health and prenatals clients.

A staff of care coordinators has been able to follow up on current clients who have not checked in since the start of the stay-at-home orders. If they are concerned and cannot reach an at-risk client, they can enlist emergency services to do a wellness check by stopping by the client’s home.

“We are an information source as well, especially during this time. People call us with questions about keeping their families safe, and how to recognize when they need to seek help to find out if they have contracted COVID-19. We are happy to answer all questions,” Williams said.

Williams and Bejarano are glad they were already using telemedicine in areas such as chronic disease and prenatal education. “We added behavioral health, so we can see our clients remotely. Some are returning now for face-to-face visits, which is still preferable.”

Adolescents are especially vulnerable, as the absence of school leaves many kids without a safe and supportive environment. Tempest Smith, a local resident and Licensed Clinical Social Worker who provides mental health services part-time to Patagonia public schools, is relieved that the pandemic arrived later in the school year, when trusting relationships had been developed.

Check It Out At The Library

Patagonia Library Phased Reopening Planned

By Laura Wenzel

Phase 1: Curbside Pickup

- Staff will be required to wear masks at all times while in the building. Gloves will be provided for handling books.
- Patrons will place holds on items and staff will have their items ready for pickup. Staff will check out materials onto patron’s account. Patrons will call when they are outside or schedule a time to pick items up and staff will meet them at their car. Or staff will place items in a bag with the patron’s name on it and patron will pick it up on the bench outside the front door. Patrons will pick up these items themselves, so that contact/exposure is reduced.
- Only items held by PPL will be available for holds. Interlibrary loan services will not resume at this time.
- Staff will not accept returns directly. Patrons will exclusively use the book drop to avoid person-to-person contact.
- Returns will be placed in Cady Hall, and will be quarantined for up to 72 hours before being checked-in and re-shelved. (The Library is continuing to promote health and safety within its facilities by increasing its practices of cleaning and sanitizing frequently touched surfaces. Please note that the Library is unable to comprehensively sanitize every single item that is checked out, and as such, customers are advised to wash their hands after handling materials and avoid touching their faces. We are setting items aside for three days since this is how long experts have said the virus may live on surfaces.)
- Programming will remain virtual.
- Seeds will continue to be mailed to patrons.
- Summer reading packets will be available for curbside pickup.
- Limited hours: Pickup available 10 a.m. - 12 p.m., Monday - Saturday. This is subject to change as needed.
- Volunteers will not be utilized in Phase 1.
- Phase 1 will last until it is deemed safe to move on to Phase 2.

Editor’s note: Phases 2 through 4 of the library reopening can be viewed on our website: www.patagoniaregional-times.org.

Sonoita Library Reopened

The Sonoita Library has reopened with social distancing measures in place. Face masks are required. Please call to see when the library is open as they sort out staffing the library. They are cleaning every day, including all the books as they come in and out. For computer use: Only two people at a time, for 15 minutes and disinfecting the computer between uses.

The Sonoita Library is participating in a survey on how the county can repurpose the building housing the Library. Go to https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/2P5SL92.

Reopening Planned

• Phase 1 will last until it is deemed safe to move on to Phase 2.

Editor’s note: Phases 2 through 4 of the library reopening can be viewed on our website: www.patagoniaregional-times.org.

Sonoita Library Reopened

The Sonoita Library has reopened with social distancing measures in place. Face masks are required. Please call to see when the library is open as they sort out staffing the library. They are cleaning every day, including all the books as they come in and out. For computer use: Only two people at a time, for 15 minutes and disinfecting the computer between uses.

The Sonoita Library is participating in a survey on how the county can repurpose the building housing the Library. Go to https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/2P5SL92.

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Foundations Rush to Community’s Aid

By Sarah Klingenstein

Three Arizona foundations, the Arizona Community Foundation, the Legacy Foundation of Southeast Arizona and the Community Foundation of Southern Arizona, have established grant programs to provide immediate relief to residents suffering because of the pandemic. The grants have been given to local nonprofits that serve our communities. At a time of decreased fundraising capability, these nonprofits have been able to respond more quickly because of this help. Some of the grantees spoke with the PRT about how the pandemic has affected their operations.

Food needs in the community saw a huge increase in the month of April, due to job losses. The Eastern Santa Cruz County Food Bank, received funding from United Way and the Arizona Community Foundation to purchase a large stockpile of non-perishable food that they hope will see them through this summer. Jim Staudacher, volunteer head of the Food Bank says it is difficult to predict the need. “We saw a 100% increase in our monthly food bank pickups from March to April, from 40 bags of nonperishable food to 80 bags. Then the numbers went down a bit. Perhaps people had received unemployment and/or stimulus checks by then and those are providing a bridge. But we anticipate a steady demand throughout the next several months.”

The monthly food distribution takes place at St. Theresa’s on the second Wednesday of the month from 9:00 -10:00 a.m. Staudacher and his wife, Faith Coburn, also run the produce distribution program next to the Senior Center, every Monday from 10:30 -11:30 or 12:00. The produce is donated by Borderlands Produce Rescue. All involved are volunteers and safe social distancing practices are observed.

Toni Leo operates Whisper’s Sanctuary, a nonprofit home for animals in need, currently housing 50 animals. They typically raise funds with their plant-based mobile kitchen called Sparky’s Cantina; however, all the festivals they usually attend were cancelled due to COVID19. Funding from the Legacy Foundation and the Arizona Community Foundation will help cover the cost of feed for the animals, which is likely to reach almost $10,000 by June, when they plan to purchase a large load of hay in addition to the regular bagged feeds they use daily.

Family Healthcare Amigos of Patagonia has relied on local donations, as well as support from the Legacy and Arizona Community Foundations, to provide incontinence supplies to the elderly and disabled of our area for the past five years. Recent economic losses have made the need greater, as families struggle to care for their relatives.

The nonprofit’s plans to open a new thrift store at 325-27 W. McKeown Ave. have been delayed by a disruption in the construction material supply chain. Recent COVID19 grant money was used to purchase a donation receptacle for adult diapers and pads. Donations are being accepted at that location now, at the end of the building next to Long Realty.

The Patagonia Youth Enrichment Center has received funding from the Patagonia Regional Community Fund, United Way, the Mountain Empire Rotary Club and the Community Foundation of Southern Arizona to help them fix healthy, take-home dinners for the youth who rely on the meals provided to them during the Center’s after-school program. “Currently, the Youth Center is closed, but the need for meals is increasing as time passes,” according to PYEC’s Director Anna Coleman. “To date, we have prepared and served almost 4,500 take-home dinners to the PYEC youth, their families and the community. We will continue through the month of May, then change to serving ‘to go’ meals only to the PYEC youth through the summer.”

The South32 Hermosa Community Fund has provided relief over the past several months, supporting the Community Foundation for Southern Arizona, as well as Patagonia Unified School District’s distance learning efforts and several of the local nonprofits described in this article. Groups receiving South32 grant money prior to the pandemic have been given permission to use the funds for any needs that have cropped up since that time, regardless of their original proposals.

Each of the nonprofit leaders spoke of the effects that the shut-down and social distancing have had on their budgets. Individual donations are still critical. Local donations to the Patagonia Regional Community Fund, which is an affiliate of the Arizona Community Foundation, will be used to support many of these organizations today and into the future.

Local nonprofits can still apply for ongoing COVID-19 grants by visiting these foundations’ websites.

Editor’s Note: The PRT received a COVID-19 grant from the Legacy Foundation of Southern Arizona to assist with the costs of providing information to the community during the pandemic through increased website reporting.
Glimpses Into Our Past
By Alison Bunting

As noted in the May issue of the PRT, the Gatlin Jones Cemetery was established in 1907 and is located at 508 S. Third Avenue in Patagonia. James Isaac Jones (1849-1931), the patriarch of the Jones family, moved to Santa Cruz County around 1907. Unless otherwise noted, all the Gatlin Jones family members mentioned are buried in the private cemetery.

James Isaac “Ike” Jones was born in Joplin, Missouri in 1849. He grew up in Texas and served in the Company D Frontier Forces of the Texas Rangers from 1870 to 1871. He married Mary Ann “Molly” Weaver in 1872 and they had five children: Mabel Emily, Bessie Ynez, Houstin Alvie, David, and John. The 1900 U.S. Census lists the family as living in San Ysidro, New Mexico. James’ occupation was farming. In 1904 their oldest daughter, Mabel, married and died a few months later. She is buried in Old Rincon Cemetery, Rincon, NM.

When the Jones family moved to Arizona, James was granted “permit to enclose and cultivate 20 acres within the Huachuca National Forest and to maintain a dwelling house, and the necessary outbuildings and fences to protect growing crops, for the purpose of making a home for himself and family.” [Bisbee Daily Review, 7/20/1907]. James later homesteaded 160 acres in the Parker Canyon area where he and Mollie remained until their deaths in 1931 and 1926 respectively.

As noted in last month’s “Glimpses” article, Bessie and Houstin “Hucie” each married a Gatlin brother. Bessie died in 1907, less than a year after her marriage to Albert Gatlin. Hucie married Jesse Gatlin when she was 16 and died at age 28 in 1919. Twins David and John Jones both helped on their father’s homestead. By 1920 John was farming on his own 58-acre homestead in the Huachuca in Cochise County. That same year he was a juror on the famous H. E. Wootton trial in Bisbee. The “Bisbee Deportation case” was brought against 210 citizens of Bisbee and Warren for the offense of “kidnapping” when they participated in the deportation of about eleven hundred miners and their supporters in 1917. [Bisbee Daily Review 5/1/1920]. Wootton was found innocent. After the trial John noted: “I went on the jury with only a slight knowledge of what happened over in Bisbee on July 12, 1917. After listening to the evidence presented in the Wootton case, I feel that what happened there was fully justified under the law of necessity. I believe that any unbiased jury would have been convinced that the deportation was the only available means to avert bloodshed and the destruction of property in the Warren District.” [http://www.library.arizona.edu/exhibits/bisbee/docs/lawncen.html].

In 1924 John married Inez Zander and they had two sons. John sold his ranch to Blain and Laura Lewis and moved to the Lochiel area where he continued to ranch. [Betty Barr, More Hidden Treasures of Santa Cruz County, 2008: 151]. He served several terms as a Santa Cruz County Supervisor in the 1930s. He died in 1970 and Inez died in 1984.

David Jones served with a cavalry unit in World War I and returned to the Parker Canyon area to ranch until 1942 when his ranch was purchased by Lincoln Hathaway. [Arizona Republic, 12/27/1942]. He married Gladys Barham in 1936 and they had one son. He also worked as a copper miner and as a prison guard in the Florence State Prison. [Arizona Daily Star, 7/12/1981]. Gladys died in 1979 and David in 1981.
While many municipalities across the country are facing severe budget deficits due to the double jeopardy of pandemic-related loss of income and extra expenses, Patagonia’s FY20-21 budget of nearly two million dollars shows a small surplus.

In his first year as Town Manager, Ron Robinson appears to have met the challenge of preparing a balanced budget in difficult times. In addition, he has garnered a supplemental grant of $500,000 to replace and upgrade key components of the town’s wastewater treatment plant. Although these funds are not shown in the regular budget, they represent a 25% increase in the amount the town will expend in its 2020-21 fiscal year that begins on June 1.

The $500,000 grant is coming from the North American Development Bank, a binational financial institution capitalized and governed equally by the Federal Governments of the United States and Mexico for the sole purpose of financing environmental projects.

The scope of work for the grant includes replacement of several components of the facility, one of which is the auger. This is the device that receives the raw sewage as it enters the treatment plant and in corkscrew-fashion transports some 2,000 pounds of solids every week up through a metal tube to be deposited into barrels for compression. According to Robinson, the auger is a sore spot with neighbors who frequently complain about the loud grinding noise it produces.

In addition to the $566,000 auger, as part of the grant’s scope of work, the town has already replaced two priming pumps that were in constant need of repair and will replace the belt press, which compresses the solids that are then taken to the landfill.

More than half of the grant funds, however, will go toward draining, cleaning and sealing the above-ground tank where the treatment of the liquid takes place as it moves through a series of chambers that mix it with oxygen and chlorinate it to make it safe for the aquatic life forms that live downstream from where the plant discharges the liquid into Sonoita Creek at an average of 50,000 gallons each day.

Approximately 2.5 million gallons of fresh water are pumped from the town’s two wells each month and about half of that volume finds its way to the wastewater treatment plant. Two full-time employees, Juan Urias and George Deithorn, keep the plant operational, take regular samples and submit the required regular reports to the Arizona Department of Environmental Quality.

Thanks to the grant, Robinson will be able to feel a great sense of relief when the repairs are all completed. Until then, he remains concerned that the auger or some other critical component will break down, creating a real emergency if the treatment plant has to be shut down.

Town Budget Survives COVID Effect

By Bob Brandt

Youth Center Receives $10,000 Grant

Patagonia Youth Enrichment Center (PYEC) director Anna Coleman recently received a call from Governor Ducey’s office congratulating her on being one of ten organizations statewide to receive an award from the Arizona Center for Afterschool Excellence. PYEC received $10,000 in recognition of their work during the coronavirus pandemic. The source of the money is the Arizona Coronavirus Relief Fund. By far the smallest organization recognized, PYEC competed successfully with big ones like the Boys and Girls Club in Phoenix.

While the Youth Center building is closed to youth during the pandemic, the programming has continued. As of May 20, the Coleman family has prepared 4320 meals for youth and their families (and a few others) in the Center’s commercial kitchen. Staff is maintaining regular contact with youth by phone and social media.

PYEC’s summer camp program will go forward, but in a different way. Participants will have challenges to complete at home, for example building projects, menu and food preparation, landscaping and restoration. To move to another challenge, the youth will have to complete the previous one and submit pictures of the process and the end result. The summer camp program is supported by a Patagonia Regional Community Foundation grant.

Another benefit of the statewide award is that PYEC is now on a list of nonprofits to be notified whenever potentially appropriate fund sources become available. Coleman has already received a call from a FEMA representative who linked her to an application to reimburse all PYEC’s food costs during the pandemic.

Youth Center Receives $10,000 Grant

By Lynn Davison
Mt. Empire Rotarians Respond to Crisis  By Anne Gibson

Local Rotarians responded immediately, focusing on supporting our community during the pandemic. The club has been busy applying for relief grant funds, baking for the Patagonia Youth Enrichment Center, learning how to use Zoom meetings, assembling and passing out grocery supplies to needy families, donating fabric to local mask makers, all the while continuing to support our local youth. Rotary Students of the Months (March, April, May) at PUHS were Nick Botz, Jose Santos, and Emma Young; each were introduced at a club meeting and awarded a crisp $100 bill. Two local students were awarded a $1,000 Scholarship: Ariana Ochoa Tovar and Jose Santos, both of PUHS. There were five excellent applicants who we are confident will make our community very proud with their continued successes. Six 8th Graders were awarded $100 each for their outstanding merits; from Patagonia Elementary: Hailey Mihai, Janelle Valenzuela, Angelina Bonell; from Elgin Elementary: Brett Gronlund, McKenzie Beyer, and Casen Scouten. These students were selected by the staff at their respective schools for demonstrating leadership in citizenship and academics.

The club received two grants from Rotary District 5500, one for $500 which was donated to the Patagonia Youth Enrichment Center in support of preparing meals for students’ families; and $300 which was split between two projects. The club donated $150 to Elen Kentnor and Mimi Henley who have made 3,000+ reusable fabric protective face masks that they have donated. $150 was used to purchase several hundred books to be distributed to students so they can continue reading through the summer while the library and schools are closed.

We’re very pleased to see that many folks have been enjoying our Rotary Park in Sonoita. We have terrific projects coming up and would enjoy more good folks joining our worthy and active club … People of Action, Making a Difference! Please contact Susan Scott, SusanScott15@msn.com if interested.

SEFD Receives FEMA Grant Funding  By Chief Joseph DeWolf

In October, 2018 the Tubac, Rio Rico, and Sonoita-Elgin Fire Districts applied for a regional communication grant from FEMA’s Assistance to Firefighter Grant (AFG) program. The total grant value for the three Districts was $363,646.00. Sonoita-Elgin’s portion of the grant was $108,214.00. SEFD had a 10% match, which equaled $10,821.00.

These new radios will be replacing radios that are 12 years old, a much-needed upgrade for SEFD at a great savings. The capabilities of the new radios bring the district up to current standards and federal requirements. It also keeps SEFD compliant to be eligible to apply for federal/state grants.

Over the next few weeks SEFD will work on installing the new radios in all apparatus and training all personnel on the new radios’ functions. This radio grant brings a $108,214.00 savings to SEFD. With these savings, SEFD will be able to upgrade personal protective gear and other small tools.

The Patagonia Regional Times does not endorse political candidates, specific legislation or ballot measures. See our policy on paid political advertising on our website www.patagoniaregionaltimes.org.
HONORING OUR GRADUATES

Grads Honored in Patagonia
By Aisha Sander

Anna Coleman, teacher and the director of Patagonia Youth Enrichment Center (PYEC), had the idea to print PUHS 2020 graduates’ pictures on banners and display them around Patagonia. She and PUHS English teacher Journee Hayes enlisted the help of Angelica Lucero, PUHS Business Manager, who designed the banners. The Parent Teacher Booster Club (PTBC) funded the printing of the banners which were put on display all around Patagonia as a surprise gift to the graduating class of 2020. Coleman also included college graduates in this acknowledgment. Although many parents paid for their child’s poster, others were covered by generous donations.

Though these banners do not make up for the loss of celebrating the milestone of graduation in the traditional way it shows, as Coleman said, that “We all love these kids”. “Journee and I have had many tearful conversations about these kids. Even though we know high school doesn’t define who we are as adults, it is a memorable time in our lives,”

Local Graduates of Higher Education

Mia Arrocha
Exelee Budd
Annika Coleman
Gaby Buera
Garrett Fish
Stasi Lucero
Kathryn Miller
Jose Perez
Danny Schrimpf

PUHS Graduation

PUHS Class of 2020

Jake Anderson
Brianna Arbizu
Jose Barraza Santos
Jennifer Beltran
Nicholas Botz
Damian Castro
Lauren Fletcher
Kenneth Kennedy
Kaelyn Kueneman
Andy Manriquez
Karina Norton
Arriana Ochoa-Tovar
Reyna Ochoa-Tovar
John Quiroga
Angel Isaia Ruiz
Russell Sherman
Stefania Tejeda Luziana
Luís Ubaldo-Ocampo
Alicia Valenzuela Sanchez
Sebastian Vasquez
Gabriel Wilson-Valero

Elgin School

8th Grade Graduates

McKenzie S. Beyer
Brody W. Bowler
Joshua J. Bronstein
Makayla A. Cicio
Grace A. Coulston
Brett E. Gronlund
Samuel C. Hubbell
Ayla M. Kennedy
Garrett D. Matthews
Liam R. Morgan
Gavin D. Nelson
Tyre S. Nevin
Jesse A. Phelps
Wyatt M. Roley
Cason R. Scouten
Zane D. Smith
Jayla C. Umfleet
Tyler W. Young
Annaliese L. Youngblood

Patagonia Elementary

8th Grade Graduates

Vincien Diego Arbizo
Anjelina Bonell
Carlos Chap
Heaven Day
Alexis de la Ossa
Andres Hoyas
Hailey Mihai
Leonardo Nunez
Andrew Sherman
Tallen Simpson
Edwin Ibarra Valencia
Janelle Valenzuela

Eighth Graders Respond to PRT Questions

The PRT asked eighth graders from the Elgin School and Patagonia Elementary to answer questions about their experiences in school and what they were looking forward to in high school. Here are some of their responses. For a complete list of their answers, visit patagoniaregionaltimes.org/eight-graders-2020/

What activities left an impact on you during your elementary/middle school years?
“Sports helped me become a leader and helped me bond with my teammates.” Vincien Diego Arbizo, Patagonia Elementary.
“Technologichicas pushed me to be smarter and learn more about technology and that women have a say in things like technology.” Heaven Day, Patagonia Elementary.
“When my middle school had a spaghetti dinner, because that was very fun but it also reminded me to tip at least like 20% because being a waiter/waitress is hard work.” Zane Smith, Elgin School.

Who was your favorite teacher and why?
“Miss Nelie, because I could go to her for everything.” Janelle Valenzuela, Patagonia Elementary.
“I cannot pick a favorite as I loved every single teacher the same for trying their hardest to teach every class.” Ayla Kennedy, Elgin School.

What do you look most forward to in high school?
“Seeing some of my old friends and having just a change. We have been in a little school for so long and to have a change will be weird but maybe fun.” McKenzie Beyer, Elgin School.
“I am excited for FFA and PE.” Tallen Simpson, Patagonia Elementary.
“Getting new teachers and kids to meet and make memories with.” Carlos Chap, Patagonia Elementary.
“Being able to drive.” Tyler Young, Elgin School.
“Graduating” Annaliese Youngblood, Elgin School.
Stradling Fdtn. Awards $12,000 in Scholarships

By Betty Barr

The Anne Stradling Equine Foundation has awarded three scholarships worth a total of $12,000 to graduating high school seniors from Santa Cruz County. The funds will be applied to their tuition at the college of their choice in increments of $1,000 per semester for four semesters beginning in the fall of 2020.

“These students epitomize the qualities of high academic scholarship, a deep commitment to community volunteerism, a strong background in agricultural activities and a dedication to their school’s organizations that our scholarships were designed to promote,” said foundation president, Beth Sullivan.

Sheyanne Pruett of Sonoita, is a graduate of Cienega High School where she ranked 161 out of 392 students. She plans to attend West Texas University to earn a degree in veterinary medicine. Her focus and interest in agriculture began when she joined 4-H at the age of 9. She began showing rabbits, then went on to showing cattle, and developed a goal of working at a feedlot. She has also been active in FFA (Future Farmers of America), National Society of High School Scholars, the Science Honor Society, and the Bobcat student of Success Program.

Another aspiring future veterinarian is Sonoita resident Alexandra Pallanes who attended three years at Patagonia High School and completed her degree at Andrada Polytechnic High School in Vail. She gained hands-on experience volunteering with a local vet during the summer. She joined 4-H Clover Kids at the age of five, progressing to large animals and spent the past several years raising livestock for consumption in the local area. She has been involved in FFA, Skill-A-Thon, and livestock judging, and was named the Arizona 2018 Junior Beef Ambassador, where she participated in statewide events promoting the cattle industry.

Maya Angelique Robles of Nogales High School graduated with a 4.667 grade average from the class of 411 students. She is enrolled in the University of Arizona and plans to obtain a degree in law.

SCC Cowbelles Award Scholarships

The Santa Cruz County Cowbelles have awarded $1000 scholarships to two local graduating high school seniors. Both Lauren Fletcher, a graduate of Patagonia Union High School, and Alexandra Pallanes, a graduate of Andrada Polytechnic, will be attending the University of Arizona to study animal science/veterinary medicine.

South32 Funds Small Business Relief Grants

South32 announced today its sponsorship of a $75,000 grant program through Local First Arizona to provide urgently needed financial relief to qualifying small businesses in Southern Arizona. The effort will help local entrepreneurs through the COVID-19 economic fallout.

Local First Arizona launched the Small Business Relief Fund in late March to provide immediate cash flow to Arizona’s microenterprises through mini-grants that can be used to cover costs like employee payroll and rent. The fund is dependent on the generosity of donors.

South32 contributions have been earmarked specifically for Santa Cruz County.

Grant amounts under the South32/Local First Small Business Relief Fund are expected to range between $1,500 and $2,500 per grant. Priority will be placed on business owners with children under 18 at home and on those whose families are reliant on the business as their sole income source. One application per qualifying business will be accepted.

To qualify for a South32/Local First grant, a business must meet the following criteria:

- Be located in Santa Cruz County, have 0-8 employees, less than $500,000 in annual sales
- Applications are available at www.localfirstaz.com/santa-cruz-county-sbrf

South32/Local First Small Business Relief Grants

- Local grass-fed ground beef
- Local coffee, honey & crafts
- Ice cream, produce, cheese
- Bulk beans, grains & flour
- Vegan & gluten free foods
- Case price discounts!

347 Mckeown Avenue, Patagonia, AZ
520-394-2786
TOWN UPDATES
Town of Patagonia Hours, Mon-Fri 9-12. Public Restrooms and Richardson park slated to reopen first week of July

MEETINGS
Information on monthly meetings is available at patagoniaregionaltimes.org/monthly-meetings

SPECIAL INTERESTS
For information: patagoniaregionaltimes.org/special-interests

CHURCH SERVICES
Most Church services have resumed. For schedule of services: www.patagoniaregionaltimes.org/church-services

FOOD
• Senior Center Luncnes Mon - Fri, noon-1 p.m. Available for pick up. Dining Hall remains closed.
• Patagonia Farmers Market Thursday 9 a.m. - 12 p.m. In front of Red Mt. Foods
• East SCC Community Food Bank: Every Monday Veggie Distribution 10:30-11:30 a.m. & 2nd Wed.

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109-4th Street, Sierra Vistaening Center weekly dinners for free for youth on Wed.

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24-7 Emergency Services Machines On-Site
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Patagonia Pool to Remain Closed Indefinitely

By Supt. Kenny Hayes

Patagonia Public Pools will not be opening as scheduled this year and will be closed until further notice. Even if the pool was in perfect working order, the current COVID-19 crisis would probably prevent its opening.

The installation of the new pump, while it worked for a couple of months, has highlighted other problems in the pool’s aging infrastructure. The issues that were known before this process were going to cost over $60,000, but the infrastructure costs have not yet been determined and will probably be extensive. The $30,000 that are contributed annually by PUHS, PES, and the Town cannot cover these costs.

Currently, Friends of the Patagonia Pool (FOPP) is working on a fundraising campaign to raise the necessary funds. The members that make up the Pool Advisory Committee will be using this time to decipher the best way to move forward.

LITTER IS PREVENTABLE!
On March 13, 2020 Andrea read How to Catch a Leprechaun to 1st, 2nd and 3rd graders in Patagonia. Those wishing to become part of Cochise County credit Andrea with stopping that endeavor. Andrea fought to keep Santa Cruz County intact which avoided a property tax INCREASE for all.

ANDREA NEEDS ONE OF YOUR VOTES IN THE AUGUST 4 DEMOCRATIC PRIMARY FOR LEGISLATIVE DISTRICT 2 HOUSE.

“State Sen. Andrea Dalessandro was named 2018 Legislator of the Year by the Arizona Alliance of Community Health Centers after being nominated by Mariposa Community Health Center in recognition of her support of the health centers in her district.”

~Nogales Internaitonal, February 13, 2018

PROVEN and EXPERIENCED PROGRESSIVE LEADER

www.DalessandroForLD2House.com • DalessandroForAZ@gmail.com

Andrea Dalessandro • @Dalessandro4AZ
PATAGONIA: 325-A Mckewon 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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