Hoffman said is more durable levels lean towards flexible planning, have on hand. plans based on the information they districts’ planned first day of school. that guidance will not be available until making those decisions. Unfortunately, guidance as to the data to be used in the school year, with the state offering to determine when and how they will start a 14-day decline, as recommended by the Centers for Disease Control, they will begin plans to open campus. On-campus options range from smaller groups of students attending in person on alternating days to full campus opening. Onsite learning for students who need a supervised place to participate in distance learning will always be an option. Some special students who need a supervised place to participate in distance learning will always be an option. Some special

By Sarah Klingenstein

As of July 29, Patagonia Schools will begin school online on August 17, with distance learning for at least the first month. Elgin Schools begin online August 10, moving on campus August 17. Patagonia Montessori School plans to begin the year on campus August 17. Principals of all three systems acknowledge plans may change, depending on the severity of the virus in the community and any state mandates. Each school will allow parents to choose to keep their children home if and when classes move on-campus.

At a July 23 press conference, Governor Ducey and State Superintendent of Education Kathy Hoffman announced that local districts can determine when and how they will start the school year, with the state offering guidance as to the data to be used in making those decisions. Unfortunately, that guidance will not be available until August 7, only a few days before some districts’ planned first day of school. Many schools now are making their plans based on the information they have on hand.

Leaders on both the state and local levels lean towards flexible planning, which Hoffman said is more durable than mandating one start date and one delivery model. They believe plans will change over the course of the year as Arizona grapples with surges of the virus, and there is a strong possibility that many students will spend part of the year in distance learning.

The state is requiring that districts provide an onsite option for certain students, even if the school is in a full distance learning model. Students whose parents cannot supervise them at home due to their work or students with other special needs will be provided a safe place to engage in distance learning.

Patagonia Supt. Kenny Hayes said that, after starting the year online, the school will watch the trends in COVID19 cases. After there has been a 14-day decline, as recommended by the Centers for Disease Control, they will begin plans to open campus. On-campus options range from smaller groups of students attending in person on alternating days to full campus opening. Onsite learning for students who need a supervised place to participate in distance learning will always be an option. Some special

By Marion Vendituoli

The Santa Cruz County Fair and Rodeo Association (SCCFRA) Board has announced that plans are underway for the 105th annual Santa Cruz County Fair to take place this September. In a statement to the PRT, Harry Dotson, President, SCCFRA, wrote, “The SCCFRA Board of Directors is committed to conducting a County Fair in 2020. However...this year’s fair may not look like those in the recent past. We are particularly committed to having the 4H/FFA/Champions for Youth Foundation portion of the fair. To that end, we are working closely with those organizations to provide a meaningful event for the youth of our community. In addition to the 4H and FFA activities we envision a fair that hearkens back to a basic celebration for our community. We are working now on activities and events that are safe and fun for all members of our community. But as we all know the COVID landscape seems to change daily. We can assure you that as we plan, the health and safety of our community will be in the forefront of our thoughts.”

Dean Fish, who, along with Amanda Zamudio and Valerie Burleson chair the Champions for Youth Foundation, discussed the challenges associated with putting on the 4-H / FFA livestock show and auction this year. The livestock and small stock show, auction, and judging of non-animal projects is the culmination of the year’s work for the 65 youth preparing ‘market projects’ - working with animals to show and sell at the annual event - and the more than 100 kids involved in 4-H and FFA projects.

“We work with Cooperative Extension and the U of A and we will abide by their guidance,” he said. “We’re going to provide an opportunity for these young people to complete their projects,” he said. There might have to be a ‘virtual’ competition and/or auction this year, or the competitors may be able to attend the event at the fairgrounds in person to show their animals.

“August 15 will be when we will make the decision,” Fish said. “We would have to comply with CDC guidelines and state or county requirements.” The decision will be made by the U of A, which oversees the Cooperative Extension program, with input from the livestock committee, 4-H leaders and FFA advisors. “We are now in a holding pattern,” Fish said. “We are going to make our decision based on the health and safety of the young people involved.”

The 4-H / FFA auction is important for the youth involved in raising and showing their animals, as the money earned enables the participants to pay for the feed and care of the animals they are raising and to purchase their next project, as well as put money aside for higher education. When asked if he were concerned if restrictions, or perhaps the need to hold the auction online, would hurt sales, Fish responded, “We’ll provide a way for these kids to financially make out with these projects.”
WHAT WE’VE BEEN UP TO THIS SUMMER

By Marion Vendituoli

Traditionally, the summer months have been a time for us at the PRT to catch up on the laundry and weeding and maybe take a vacation, but not this year. The pandemic has pushed us to increase our coverage and expand our mission to our readers and to sort out new ways to bring you the information that we all need to find our way forward. Adding to that is the fact that this is an election year, and we are committed to helping voters make informed decisions at the ballot box.

In the last issue of the PRT we shared responses from both the candidates for the Patagonia Town Council and candidates running in the primary for the AZ House of Representatives. In this issue we introduce two of the four candidates for Santa Cruz County Board of Supervisors for District Three, Bruce Bracker and Donna Federici. In the October issue, we plan to feature Justin Lima and Valerie Kerby-Lockey, if she gains enough write-in votes to make it on the ballot. We also feature in this issue the five write-in votes to make it on the ballot. Kerby-Lockey, if she gains enough votes, could produce a political forum with greater effectiveness and success than national media and other outlets and organizations for something like a presidential debate?

Assistant Editor Aisha Sander posted zoom video interviews on YouTube that she conducted with the two candidates running for County Recorder in the Democratic Primary and will post her interview with the independent candidate running for that office next month.

The PRT will be hosting a live-streamed forum on Facebook for SCC Board of Supervisor, District 3, candidates on September 26. It will follow the same format as the previous forum, and we are looking for our readers’ input for questions to ask the candidates. Please send your questions to prteditor@gmail.com.

The PRT sent out three e-newsletters in June and three in July and has been posting updates and summaries of COVID statistics in Santa Cruz County, announcements from the Governor and the County Board of Health, an article that marked the 100th day of COVID, and school and business updates.

Our web reporting and our web presence has increased dramatically since the beginning of the pandemic. For the months of January and February 2020, our website had 9485 views. In June and July we have had 44,425 views, an increase of close to 470%.

On a lighter note, in August we will be filming gardens, chicken coops, baby goats and more for our video series, “How’s It Growing?” a virtual garden tour that is the brainchild of Board member Francesca Claverie. We hope to do segments on flower gardens, edible gardens, small stock raising, kids and animals and roses. If you would like to participate, please email us at prteditor@gmail.com.

We are also starting to work out the details for the second annual student essay and photo contest that was such a success last year.

What’s next for the PRT? One thing this pandemic has done, I believe, is demonstrate the importance of local news. We all need timely, local news to keep us informed in a time when rumor and fake news threatens to undo us. Thank you for following us, for your comments and for your support.

Patagonia Regional Times Virtual Tour Video Series

As the pandemic keeps us all closer to home these days, more and more of us are spending time in our backyards gardening and raising small stock, with some pretty impressive results. The Patagonia Regional Times would like to take our neighbors and friends on a virtual tour of the efforts of our ‘growing community’ and showcase your creative spirit and hard work, your delightful dahlias and extraordinary eggplants, your chic chicks and your gorgeous goats.

Each video will focus on one aspect of gardening or small-scale farming and feature several members of our community.

The topics we will cover are as follows:
- Roses
- Edible Gardens (vegetables and fruit trees)
- Flower Gardens
- Small stock (poultry, rabbits, goats and sheep)
- Kids Raising Animals

Consider taking part in this fun project!

If you would be willing to be filmed, please contact us at prteditor@gmail.com or 740-206-9594

Santa Cruz County Board of Supervisors Candidates Forum

Join us for this event on the “PATAGONIA REGIONAL TIMES” FACEBOOK PAGE

www.facebook.com/patagoniaregionaltimes

Saturday, September 26th, 10:00AM

Prior to event, send questions you would like us to ask the candidates to prteditor@gmail.com
Schools (Cont.)
EDUCATION

education students may begin the year working in the Resource Room, following the online curriculum with help from special ed staff. In all cases, safe procedures, including frequent handwashing, masks, distancing and strict check-in and pickup procedures will be followed. Elvia Gallagher, a 4th-grade teacher at Patagonia Elementary, said “At the meeting to decide how to proceed, my colleagues and I expressed our concerns about going back without good data to support that move. When things look better, we can make the decision to go back.”

As to working with students online, she said, “I feel lucky we had a chance to dip our toes into distance learning last spring. We are much better prepared now. And I hope families will be understanding. I know it’s frustrating, but I hope they are patient and work with the school system through this once-in-a-lifetime experience. Be my partners - make sure to use the hotspots if you need to, access the Chrome-books the schools are providing, help your children succeed.” Jennifer Myers has two children at Patagonia Elementary School (PES). “We’re very torn about school reopening! I know our kids miss their friends and need to be in a social environment similar to school...and would love more than anything to have them go back,” said Myers. “However, we have two immune-compromised kids as well as a new baby, so we don’t want to risk exposing our family while the numbers are still on the rise.” They have decided to opt for distance learning, even if campus opens.

Elgin School Principal Mary Faley welcomes the meetings she and other leaders have held, and will be holding, with the County Health Director throughout the year. “We know the importance of kids being in the classroom with their teachers and each other. The virus seems to disproportionately affect those who are older and/or have underlying health issues - that comprises some of our staff.” “We have designed our distance learning program so it mirrors what is going on in the classroom. Much of the curriculum adopted has online components already. So, we hope we can transition back and forth between online and on-campus easily. And our classes are so small that we will have an easier time distancing.”

Kelly Bostock, Sonota School District Board member and parent of a middle school student at Elgin, is concerned about attendance and participation in distance learning. She said, “I never could have imagined that we would be in this position going back to school. I thought things would be routine. Some people are ready to send their kids back and some teachers worry about contracting COVID19. It’s really put us in a tricky spot. I just hope the issue doesn’t become politically driven, as we would hate to lose Elgin students on that basis.” Callie Mattus, Elgin 2nd grade teacher, spoke about the skills she gained from the weeklong ASU distance learning training program that all Elgin teachers participated in. “It was intense engagement with other educators and experts in distance learning. I feel better equipped with the resources and tools available, should we end in long-term distance learning. I learned from others’ experience and practiced using the programs. I believe I have more tools to keep kids engaged. This experience will change how we use technology on-campus as well, going forward. And I have new tools to communicate with parents, and work with them as partners.”

Anthony Fennell, father of an Elgin 2nd grader, hopes this year is as close to a normal school year as possible. “If school is open, we will send our daughter to 2nd grade. There’s so much that’s important about school besides the academic, like the teacher-child relationship and learning to get along the world. We can see it’s a tough decision for districts and families. While we are not that concerned, I respect people who are afraid, and I respect their right to choose what is best for their family.”

At the Patagonia Montessori School, Principal Jessi Beebe has over-seen preparations including installation of HEPA H13 air filtration system and multiple handwashing stations, and seating students at individual desks as opposed to several around a table. As at the other schools, students will learn and practice strict COVID19 protocols right out of the gate.

In the event of a move to distance learning, the Montessori teachers will conduct direct instruction and individual sessions with students via Zoom. Parents can elect distance learning even if onsite school is in session. Those students will have ongoing access to a teacher or a peer for help or collaboration throughout the day, in addition to participating in at least two hours a day of virtual lessons.

With only ten to twelve students in a classroom, Beebe hopes they can have students at the school. “Especially at the younger grades, the Montessori method relies on hands-on materials and regular interaction with the teacher.”

“While we plan to start on campus, any one of our three options will be based on what is happening at the time,” she said. “It makes it really hard for parents who are wondering what their children will be doing all year. Many have to work. They want to be able to count on something, and we totally understand that. It is difficult for us to say that we can’t give them that assurance for the entire year at this point.”

County Conducts Blitz Testing At Three Sites

National Guard Troops help with COVID testing at the Santa Cruz County Complex July 25. 930 tests were performed the first weekend of testing.

By Aisha Sander
In June, Santa Cruz County (SCC) experienced an extraordinary rate of infection and high positivity rate in testing, and became the county with the highest in both in the state. Arizona became a national hotspot and at one point had the highest rate of infection in the world, according to the New York Times.

Local officials successfully petitioned Gov. Ducey to let the county mandate masks in public places. By June 21 mask ordinances were in effect for the county, city of Nogales and town of Patagonia. Though SCC continues to have a high rate of infections and positivity rate, our daily average of new cases went down from 48 in June to 25.7 in July.

To address the high positivity rate, the county was able to advocate for funds from the state to administer testing blitzes in Nogales, Rio Rico and Patagonia, but the state has been slow to release the funds it has received from the CDC to the county. The testing blitzes have gone ahead anyway, because local officials have decided that they cannot wait for the state. They expect the state funds to refund the over $1 million in expenses.

The other challenge of the testing has been the slow turnaround from the labs for results, sometimes taking up to ten days. Thus, the county purchased 5000 test kits from a lab in Tucson named Paradigm to ensure a quick turnaround in results, according to Jeff Terrell, the Director of Environmental Health Services at the county. On July 25 and 26 the county tested 930 people in Nogales, advising them to stay isolated until they receive their test result within 72 hours. Rio Rico and Patagonia will host testing blitzes on July 31 and Aug. 1.

The other marker that has gone up is the fatality rate in the county. Compared to the state’s fatality rate at 45.96 per 100,000 population the county is at 92.1 as of July 27. The number of deaths has increased from one death on June 1 to 49 deaths on July 27.

Dr. Eladio Pereira, Chief Medical Officer at the Mariposa Community Health Center, explained that he suspects that the rise in fatality rate is a consequence of the spike in cases in June. It takes about two weeks after onset of symptoms before those who are severely ill need to be hospitalized. Because of better treatments now available, many of those who are hospitalized recover. However, those who are already vulnerable often get secondary complications and can have much longer hospital stays and may succumb to the illness, said Dr. Pereira.

“If people continue to adhere to the precautions and our rate of infection continues to stabilize and reduce, then we should see the fatality rate go down as well,” said Dr. Pereira.
Bruce Bracker

as a small business owner for 30 years, I have helped me better appreciate the needs of my constituents.

What are the two biggest challenges the County faces and how do you plan to address them?

The most immediate challenge is the effect that COVID-19 has had on our County. We advocated with the office of the Governor for the ability to mandate face coverings. In addition, Santa Cruz County is securing grants to bring additional testing to our community to help deal with the spread of this virus. We will be contacting representatives from six bill in session and the public to determine what the business needs will be over the next three years. Our second biggest challenge is a financial one. Rural Arizona has not recovered from the financial crisis in 2008 and the state legislature continues to shift costs to the counties. We must remain vigilant to prevent the legislature from shifting any additional expenses. All elected officials and county department heads need to continue to evaluate if there are any additional efficiencies that we can realize. We must not lose sight that our long-term viability is impacted by the closure of the Justice of the Peace Court in Sonoita. After detailed analysis, it would have been financially imprudent not to close the facilities. This goes back to the County in Sonoita. After detailed analysis, it would have been financially imprudent not to close the facilities. This goes back to the

What do you think the County’s biggest environmental challenges are, and how do you think the County should address them?

Conservation easements, solid waste and recycling, and air and water quality are the biggest environmental challenges facing the county. The county has been exploring options to develop long-term solutions for landfill service. Recycling has been a challenge in our community, a challenge that is compounded with the drop in demand for recyclables. The COVID-19 Pandemic has delayed a county pilot program for recyclable products. For some of the recyclables such as glass, we are looking for local ways to reuse. Conservation easements are an excellent tool to preserve our most treasured assets and open space. Through local advocacy and ADEQ enforcement both ground water contamination and air particulate issues are being monitored. We also work closely with ADEQ on international wastewater issues that affect the Santa Cruz River. Recently the International Boundary and Water Commission (IBWC) and ADEQ announced that $39 million that will be invested in making major repairs to the International Overflow Interceptor (IOI), a sewer line that connects Nogales Sonora to the International Waste Water treatment Plant at Rio Rico. These repairs will offer a cure-in-place for the IOI. We are also in contact with ADEQ and the Environment and Water Resources Committee of the Arizona-Mexico Commission in order to keep apprised of binational efforts to protect the environment. Finally, we are working to bring Hudbay and the Nature Conservancy together to address Hudbay’s plan for upper Sonora Creek.

What would you do to improve the County’s internet infrastructure?

In a special meeting on June 15 the Board of Supervisors in collaboration with the Superintendent of Schools, approved a contract to identify all the “middle mile” high speed internet fiber throughout the county in a study that will serve as a key building block to improving our broadband capacity. In addition, we are looking at some of the grant opportunities from the state and federal governments in helping to narrow the digital divide, some of which have already been submitted. These grants will help connect underserved parts of our community to assist in distance learning for K-12 schools, adult education and telemedicine. The result will be a robust high-speed internet connectivity throughout the county.

In the past two years there have been calls from residents in the Eastern part of the county to secede and join Cochise County. What would you do as supervisor to address concerns in the Eastern part of the district?

The call to secede from Santa Cruz and to join Cochise County has been led by a vocal minority who were upset by the closure of the Justice of the Peace Court in Sonoita. After detailed analysis, it would have been financially imprudent not to close the facilities. This goes back to the commitment, as a Supervisor, to be prepared to make the tough decisions for the long term good and sustainability for the County. The savings from that closure now totals just under $300,000.00 dollars. If we had not made these difficult decisions, the recession that we are facing because of the pandemic would have meant that far more County services would have been curtailed. The push for the secession of that portion of the county to Cochise County, in my opinion, is an irresponsible one, as there has been little analysis as to the impact that this could have on both counties. Regardless of the opposition and countless personal attacks, we have not strayed from the course of fighting to make improvements in the East County. I have worked with the wineries and the Rodeo and Fairgrounds to address their needs and to advocate on their behalf. Since my first year in office, the Rodeo and Fairgrounds, has received a cash contribution of $25,000.00 each year for the past three years. The county has supported them with maintenance needs including the work crew from the state correctional institution. In working with the wineries, it was determined that there was a need for new way-finding signage to provide a more tourist and user-friendly environment. The first phase of this project was completed this past spring with signage placed on Elgin and Upper Elgin Roads. I worked with the Deputy County Manager/Public Works Director to advance road projects and improved maintenance. As a result, the county has completed over 28 miles of chip seal roads in the Sonoita/Elgin area including extensive work on Elgin Road. After the 2017 fire in Sonoita, the county added water capacity in the maintenance yard with a quick fill tank and by rehabilitating the pond and installing a pump to fill firefighting equipment.
Supervisor Candidates (Cont.)

Donna Federici

Why are you running for this seat on the Board of Supervisors?

District 3 of Santa Cruz County is home to one of the most beautiful and diverse areas of the State, but it’s also one that is fraught with complicated problems and issues — and that was before the Covid-19 pandemic. The current lack of transparency with which county officials, supervisors, and management operate is inappropriate and contrary to the very words public process. It’s counterproductive to problem solving and diminishes trust in office. It appears that county officials have lost the concept that they are public servants whose salaries are generated by taxpayers. I believe our constituents deserve better and that my proven track record and business expertise can help navigate the stormy waters that lie ahead.

What unique qualities would you bring to the Board of Supervisors?

As an executive vice president in the corporate world, I’ve had to deliver top line growth and bottom-line profit for owners and shareholders. I had to have the vision to know how, when, and where to manifest that growth, and from there, be able to develop the strategic plans that provided the path to all those waiting to execute them. I monitored budgets to make sure we delivered the profit we promised. Vision, planning, and communicating are not concepts our county officials seem to gravitate towards. My expertise could make a substantial difference in how we operate. Oh, and did I mention that I’m female? I’m a wife, mother and grandmother.

What are the two biggest challenges the County faces and how do you plan to address them?

The shelter-in-place, traveler restrictions, and quarantines have crushed the economy and are killing small businesses across the state. Santa Cruz County will be greatly affected if state and federal monies dry up. Had Governor Ducey not dropped $2.9 million into the county already, we would no doubt be in dire straits. If elected, I will lead a concerted effort to reach out to help existing businesses stay afloat and will put a true effort on economic development. We must also acknowledge that industry diversity is paramount to county growth. We cannot rely too heavily on the border for our economic expansion. The hardest part of that challenge will be to grow our county economy without harming our natural resources. The other critical issue facing our future is Public Health and Safety. Santa Cruz County was ill prepared to deal with this pandemic and still has no County Health Board as mandated by ARS 36-183. If elected I will fight to have funds redirected to a County Health Board, with a physician at its helm. We must be prepared to fight future pandemics while acknowledging that, as a border county, we face more challenges than most. We must protect our citizens and all essential border crossers.

What do you think the County’s biggest environmental challenges are, and how do you think the County should address them?

Water conservation/water pollution and wildfire mitigation are two of my biggest environmental concerns for Santa Cruz county. Our county is mostly dependent on groundwater, especially the Santa Cruz River. It’s why we must protect our ground water and also stay vigilant with the repairs and maintenance of the IOI. A source for continual pollution when breached by storms or mechanical failures, it could be a public health risk of immeasurable proportion if not protected. Wildfire mitigation can be a life, and property, saving decision. We need a task force in the county to provide education to our constituents, and to liaison with the fire departments and wildlife groups. There is money available for a program like this via Wildfire/Hazardous Fuels grants, which are available to fire departments, local governments and educational institutions.

What would you do to improve the County’s internet infrastructure?

Broadband access is more important than ever due to shelter-in-place and social distancing. Remote learning, telemedicine, video conferencing, and of course entertainment, all depend on it. This county has a unique challenge with regards to topography and cell towers. Our other challenge is that cell towers are a love/hate situation with regards to constituents. Everybody wants and demands better service, but ONLY if it’s not in their sight line. Doing nothing about this is not the answer. Businesses gravitate to other regions with greater broadband infrastructure, capacity, and resiliency. This situation will continue to impede our growth. This is another area where lack of vision, planning and communication affects our county. There are monies available. The ACA (Arizona Commerce Authority) provided 3 million dollars in grants in 2020 to help rural Arizona communities of less than 150,000 residents improve broadband service. The monies went to non-profits focused on economic development and for-profit companies in the telecommunication industry. Planning awards went to counties and cities, while development awards went to corporations. We need leaders with the foresight to see the challenges in advance, and the impetus to change - before change is needed. In the past two years there have been calls from residents in the Eastern part of the county to secede and join Cochise county. What would you do as Supervisor to address concerns in the Eastern part of the district?

Donna Federici-Ciesielski

The Truth That We Ignore

By Jon Larsen

It’s an insane place
Not much grace here
They’re too busy making profits
To care about us
While killing the life
Of the world
Using the corporate so-called “free press”
Government B.S.
Military conquest
With wars of aggression
Called “fighting terrorism.”

The World is warming
The seas are rising and dying
A pandemic is upon us
With more disasters in store
As the corporate White House, Senate, Supreme Court and more
Give to the rich what they take from the poor.

More DINOs and RINOs
Dems and Repubs
Bought by the corporations
Are putting on a show
While filling their pockets
With corporate dough
Playing that game of pretending to be
Working for us
Stealing our rights
To democracy.

We fought against fascism,
Won the Revolutionary and two World Wars
Why do you vote and fight for fascists?
You support them galore
“Is it not the rich who are exploiting you?
But you have insulted the poor.”
(James 2:6)
Sonoita Elementary School District Board Candidates

Five candidates are running in the general election on November 3, 2020 for four-year terms on the Board of the Sonoita Elementary School District which oversees the Elgin Elementary School. There are three seats available. This is a non-partisan race. The candidates responded to a request for information by email. Some of the information has been edited for space.

Ginny Cosbey

Residence: How long? Sonoita, Since 2010
Education/licenses/certifications/military: Colby College
Recent employment: Manager, Sonoita Self Storage; Manager, Circle Z Guest Ranch for five years; In-school supervision coordinator, Orange Grove Middle School, Catalina Foothills, for 21 years Librarian of Elmwood Franklin School, Buffalo, NY, 11 years, an independent day school serving grades K–8.
Community organizations/activities: UMC Thrift Shop in Patagonia
SCC Fair and Rodeo Association volunteer
Empire Ranch Foundation International Book Club member
Mountains Empire Rotary (interim member and volunteer)
Elgin Community Club (past President)
Previous public office/service: Sonoita School District Board (4 years, President 2019 and 2020)

Why are you running for re-election to the Sonoita School District Board?
During my tenure on the School Board, we have hired an outstanding Principal / Superintendent, reduced excessive administrative costs, and were able to raise teachers’ salaries. Additionally, four new teachers have been approved and hired for the upcoming school year. It was not a difficult decision for me to run for re-election because I love any work that benefits children. I deem this opportunity the most important calling of my life. During these fragile, uncertain times, we need to look at all the needs of our children who are experiencing a life-changing moment in their educational world. I wish I had a crystal ball to see what will be coming our way as a school community this year. We will have to adjust quickly if the need arises. I want to see our children back at school this year and face-to-face with our teachers. As an educator all my adult life, my belief system will always be “CHILDREN FIRST”!

Kathleen Crockett

Residence: How long? I live on Elgin Road and moved here in 2013, but have been in the area for 15 years. My husband and I retired here and plan on staying for the long haul.
Education/licenses/certifications/military: I was an honor student in high school and graduated at age 16. I studied Criminal Justice at Montgomery College and Civil Engineering at Old Dominion University but did not obtain a degree before moving to Patagonia to take care of my Grandmother after my Grandfather passed away. My career internship started when I was 19 in the District of Columbia. I have dozens of certifications in leadership, public speaking, budgeting, and all aspects of Federal Human Resources.
Recent employment: Owner/operator local 10 Acre vineyard. Retired as a GS-15, Deputy Director/G1 of Civilian and Military Human Resources in 2014 for the Army’s Network Command with 32 years of experience spanning six states, three countries and five agencies.
Community organizations/activities: Member of the SCC Fair and Rodeo Association (and volunteer), Sonoita-Elgin Community Group, Campaign Manager for Donna Federici - D3 Supervisor, Whetstone Community Group, volunteer deployment specialist for the 101st Airborne Division at Fort Campbell, KY, and Master Gardener.

Why are you running for election to the Sonoita School District Board?
I would like to contribute to the community by applying the skills I have learned over the years to support our local school system. One of my favorite jobs included seven years as the HR director for a public school district with five elementary schools, two middle schools, and one high school. I managed pay, benefits, training, recruitment, retention, awards, performance, and teacher certification, and gained valuable insights into school administration. I would like to apply my experience on recruitment and retention of high-quality teachers and staff. Our school is a major employer in our community, and it must withstand our current economic and pandemic challenges to sustain well into the future. I also want to find efficiencies that do not compromise quality education but will enhance student learning and entice more families with children to our community. I would be honored as a member of the school board to help meet the challenges we face today and solidify the future of Elgin School with quality education, quality spending, and quality planning. Fly High Eagles!

Anthony Fennell

Residence: How long? Sonoita; since 2017
Education/licenses/certifications/military: B.S. Environmental Biology conc: Herpetology; Eastern Illinois U, 2003
M.S. Environmental Sciences conc: Hydrology / Wastewater Remediation; Southern Methodist U, 2010
U.S. Army: 1999: Enlisted as Nuclear, Chemical, Biological Specialist
2003: Commissioned as Infantry Officer
2006: Transition to Intelligence Officer
At present hold rank of Major, awaiting promotion to Lieutenant Colonel in Fall 2020; currently serve as the Executive Officer for United States Army Garrison Ft. Huachuca (since 2018)
Recent employment: Active Duty Army Officer
Community organizations/activities: Volunteer within community for numerous events / locations / businesses as able: Notably Elgin Elementary
Previous public office/service: Military since 1999

Why are you running for election to the Sonoita School District Board?
The Sonoita-Elgin area is a unique and truly special place. Between the climate, tight-knit community, safety of the area, and quality of the school, we chose this area to be our forever home (upon my retirement). In our years of travel from literally one corner of this country to the other we have never lived in such a great area. I wish to continue to serve our local community in a greater role and will work to maintain and continue to grow the excellent ratings, educational opportunities provided, and unmatched staff that we enjoy today with our school today. I am a firm believer of “when our school is successful, our community is successful”.

Cera Lynn LAc., LMT Aesthetician

Acupuncture - Medical/ Massage - Facial Aesthetics
Women's Health - General Wellness
Lymphobioogy - Pain Syndromes

520/398-9886
cera@celarynnllc.com
www.spazen.net

LITTER IS PREVENTABLE!
Residence: How long? Sonoita; since 2004
Education/License/certifications/military: College: Commonwealth of Virginia – Certificate of completion of Four-year apprenticeship at the trade of Electronics Mechanic; Tidewater Community College - Engineering/Technical Assistant Certificate Magna Cum Laude; George Washington University School of Business and Public Management - Master Certificate in Project Management. Although not active Military, I supported the Military through my Civil Service Employment in the Federal Government.
Recent Employment: I retired March 2014 from 33 years of Civil Service Employment in the Federal Government. During this period, I assisted in determining ‘should cost’ data and negotiating contracts for piece parts, maintenance, and weapon systems. The last 14 years prior to my retirement, I was the Depot Manager on a missile system. This included estimating budget requirement for missile maintenance and repair, assisting in negotiating the annual contract, ensuring parts and material required were available, working with several agencies to return the missiles to the contractor for maintenance/repair, track maintenance to stay on schedule, and schedule the return of the missile to the U.S. Navy Fleet. In order to maintain and re-certify/repair this weapon in support of the US Navy, I managed a multi-million-dollar budget.
Community Organizations/Activities: I have maintained my membership of the Santa Cruz County Fair and Rodeo Association in support of the Sonoita Fairground. This includes volunteering to assist where needed to support the Fairground activities. I am now involved with the Sonoita Ranch Rodeo held every September at the Fairgrounds.
Previous public office/service: Not applicable
Why are you running for election to the Sonoita School District Board? I am running for the Sonoita School District Board because I am invested in the future of our schools and our community. My oldest son will be going into the second grade this year, my middle son will be starting kindergarten this year, and my youngest son will begin in the year 2022. I believe in the betterment of our school and community, both on a personal level and professional. A graduate of Elgin Elementary, I am now a local real estate agent. My career provides me with a connection to the local community. I am in contact with not only current residents, but also people who look to call this area their new home. My hope is that I can help bridge the gap between the local schools and the school by providing accurate information to both sides, provide input to the board from the view of both a parent and assist with action items and decisions taking a newer digital-age generation into account. My professional experience in marketing and advertising with a focus on digital media has given me insight into effective communication with and into the ever-evolving digital world. I cannot think of a better way to serve and help pay it forward than to be a part of the school’s future goals, policies and success. Being actively involved in the community, helping with our youth programs and taking a seat on the school board are just a few of the ways that I can contribute to the school that served me once before and the community that I have always called my home.

Megan Thomas

Residence: How long? Sonoita and attended K-8th grade at Elgin Elementary. I moved to New Mexico in 2005 for college and then lived in Texas from 2009-2018 until my husband and I and our three kids moved back home to Sonoita two years ago.
Education/licenses/certifications/military: Bachelor’s degree in Business Administration with an emphasis in Marketing.
Recent employment: Real Estate Agent
Community organizations/activities: Coach of the middle school girls’ softball team, a little league t-ball coach, and I am also involved with the Sonoita Ranch Rodeo held every September at the Fairgrounds.
Previous public office/service: I was appointed in May to serve on the school board until the November election.
Why are you running for election to the Sonoita School District Board? I am running for the Sonoita School District Board because I am invested in the future of our schools and our community. My oldest son will be going into the second grade this year, my middle son will be starting kindergarten this year, and my youngest son will begin in the year 2022. I believe in the betterment of our school and community, both on a personal level and professional. A graduate of Elgin Elementary, I am now a local real estate agent. My career provides me with a connection to the local communities. I am in contact with not only current residents, but also people who look to call this area their new home. My hope is that I can help bridge the gap between the local schools and the school by providing accurate information to both sides, provide input to the board from the view of both a parent and assist with action items and decisions taking a newer digital-age generation into account. My professional experience in marketing and advertising with a focus on digital media has given me insight into effective communication with and into the ever-evolving digital world. I cannot think of a better way to serve and help pay it forward than to be a part of the school’s future goals, policies and success. Being actively involved in the community, helping with our youth programs and taking a seat on the school board are just a few of the ways that I can contribute to the school that served me once before and the community that I have always called my home.
Wildlife Corridors To Preserve Additional Land

By Bob Brandt

Having already preserved nearly 1000 acres of land for the free movement of wildlife that was formerly slated for residential development, Wildlife Corridors LLC (WC) wants to preserve at least another 500 acres of land, and thanks to a $615,000 grant from the US Forest Service (FS), the company will be able to reach that goal.

The grant funds come from the Forest Service’s Forest Legacy Program and will flow through the Arizona Department of Forestry and Fire Management (DDFM). The grant will enable WC to place still more of the foreclosed Three Canyons subdivision, which it purchased in 2015, in the conservation easement and to purchase and set aside additional land currently slated for residential development.

All of the lands targeted by WC for preservation lie within the 20-square-mile Sonoita Creek Wildlife Corridor (WCSC) that stretches from the Santa Rita Mountains to the Huachuca Mountains and is part of one of the most biologically diverse regions in the Western U.S. The WCSC is home to several threatened or endangered species such as the yellow billed cuckoo, Gila topminnow and Chiricahua leopard frog and is federally-designated as jaguar critical habitat.

WC has requested the Town of Patagonia to partner with it in this project by helping to draft a conservation easement to cover the newly-acquired acreage and possibly to hold the easement under an agreement in which the local nonprofit Borderlands Restoration Network would conduct the annual monitoring activities required by the FS and DDFM. At its July 22 meeting the town council unanimously passed a resolution in support of the project.

Ron Pulliam, WC’s Managing Partner, pointed out that this project will help protect the town’s future water supply in addition to providing opportunities for Patagonia residents and visitors to enjoy the natural beauty of these unspoiled lands while protecting native flora and fauna.

Wildlife Corridors has been approved to receive a second round of Forest Legacy funds amounting to $475,000 which, if funded, will be used to protect still more land threatened by residential and commercial development.

New Pastor Seeks ‘Boardwalk’

By Linda Jade Fong

Pastor Patty Frick, the newly arrived pastor at Patagonia Community Church, is looking for a boardwalk. Yes, we are about 300 miles from the ocean, but she’s not deterred.

Well, actually, she’s looking for a boardwalk-equivalent. At her last appointment, which was 14 years in a town on the Eastern Shores of Maryland, she conducted both a traditional worship service in the church, and then went outside to an Irish pub on the ocean boardwalk to offer “a different kind of connecting on Sunday.”

Moving southwest to the desert may be a big change in geography for Pastor Patty, but not in her enthusiasm and creativity for bringing people of different backgrounds and ages together in community.

Frick came by Patagonia honestly - through the lure of the Methodist Church Thrift Shop. She and her husband, Andy, a fellow United Methodist Church pastor, had retired last year and moved to Green Valley. When visiting friends wanted to visit Patagonia, Frick happily agreed. It was a chance to return to the village with its church-run Thrift Shop and her favorite bakeries. On this visit, Frick asked in the Thrift Shop if there was any way to get a peek into the little church across the courtyard.

The afternoon light coming in through the stained windows did its magic. “It truly was a jewel box as advertised,” said Patty. That, plus what turned out to be an extensive impromptu tour by church music director, Anne Quinlin, astonished Frick with what she calls a “God moment.” . . . I felt like I had arrived in a church home.” She had been considering coming out of retirement, and when she heard that there might be a vacancy here due to restructuring to a half-time position because of budget constraints, she went home and crossed her fingers. “Even if I don’t get the appointment now, I’ll come back to Patagonia,” she decided. In a stroke of good luck, the bishop’s office making yearly decisions on where pastors are assigned in the state announced the appointment of Rev. Patty Frick to Patagonia Community UMC.

Both she and her husband will be living in the town parsonage together for the first time in their pastoral careers. Back in Maryland, their churches were 35 minutes apart, but both felt strongly about being part of the community. So instead of commuting every day, Andy would come to Patty’s home on Thursdays, leaving Saturdays. “People would wonder ‘who is this maintenance man coming with ladders and work tools and staying...and she’s a pastor!!!’” they laughed.

Here in Patagonia, where they expect their half-time position will have them in town from Thursday to Sunday, they want people to see both of them as their ministers. Andy will also offer office hours since he especially enjoys pastoral care. “Everybody has a book inside them and it’s an honor - humbling - to be able to listen to people’s stories,” he said.

Their backgrounds offer plenty to equip them with in contributing to the Patagonia community. Frick worked in a variety of fields, including education and communications before becoming a minister. She holds a Master of Education degree from the University of Maryland and a Master of Divinity degree from Lancaster Theological Seminary in Pennsylvania. Andy worked in retail sales with Kraft Foods before he felt the call to ministry. He also used to build sets for community theater. Both pastors are eager to see Thurber Hall with its curtained stage used as a community resource.

Frick’s hope in Patagonia is to “bring people together in community, finding bridges through our many different backgrounds, so we can feel filled with God’s love, grace, and acceptance for each other. My core is Christianity, but I would like to also offer alternative ways to knowing God.” In the past, this has included Persian food and poetry night and a blessing of pets – costumed - including horses. Andy even used to bless combines for harvesting.

While the church is closed due to Covid restrictions, Sunday morning services are broadcast at 10am on KPUP 100.5 and live-streamed on www.kpup.rocks. After her first on-air service, Frick hoped she had communicated her “big heart to reach all those who need love and compassion.”

So any ideas for boardwalk-equivalents? Pastor Patty Frick welcomes all thoughts or questions at 520-394-2730 or patagoniaumc@gmail.com.
DON'T LET GRANT MONEY SILENCE YOUR VOICE

By Anna Sofia

As the communications consultant for nonprofit Patagonia Area Resource Alliance, I understand the importance grant money has during incredibly unprecedented times. Right now, grant money is competitive and hard to find, and everyone - from schools to local businesses - needs help to protect their family, friends, and community from the long-term fallout of the COVID-19 pandemic.

There have been many instances lately of mining companies giving gifts of cash and supplies to those in need. Giving back to communities, especially during uncertain times, is very appreciated, and I encourage people and organizations to apply if they’re eligible. For those who accept a grant from mining companies and other for-profit industries, however, I think it’s important to acknowledge the underlying motivations these corporations have.

Called “Social License to Operate,” companies use the tactic of giving money to communities to buy their support, acceptance, or silence. While grant money should be considered a gift, one that does not come with strings or expectations, this is not often the case.

I live in Bisbee and work as a freelance reporter. Like Patagonia, Bisbee has a strong mining presence. Over the last year, I’ve interviewed nonprofit and businesses who have accepted grant aid from Bisbee’s resident mining company. This company has been added to the board of our local science lab, funded a new STEM program at our elementary school, donated books and money to our library, and gifted supplies to the City of Bisbee after our city hall burned down.

As a result, this mining company is seen as an integral part of Bisbee, frequently mentioned as a partner or donor in almost all my newspaper assignments. Meanwhile, the reality is that Bisbee, like Patagonia, faces a future of renewed mining in our mountains. The more this company buys their way into local businesses, the less likely residents will object to their mining practices - good or bad.

I admit I work for a Patagonia nonprofit that is frequently vocal against Patagonia’s mining companies. But I am more than my career as a consultant. I am a citizen of the Earth, concerned about the rise of corporations and their devaluation of ecotourism, wildlife, water quality, and the unique makeup of local communities. I also belong to a younger generation that will need to fight climate change and fix the long-lasting environmental problems that corporations - especially industrialized mining - can create.

While I encourage corporations to support local communities, I reject the use of grant money as a means of buying a town, a business, or a person. Please, use your freedom of speech to speak out against the corporate practices you don’t agree with - regardless of whether you’ve received a grant. This is the only way we can ensure corporations don’t use their position to negatively impact our families, our livelihoods, our economy, or the biodiversity within which we live.

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LIFE AMONG THE HUMANS

DON'T BE SO SURE!

These varied ways stand side by side, without ever really completely respecting one another. When focused on their own domains they do OK. More badly when they venture onto one another’s turf. The odd tango of science and religion has continued for centuries, sometimes quite harmlessly, sometimes with beaucoup de blood and burnings at the stake.

Back in the Hippy days, a lot of us learned to look beyond the rational and scientific, which, we’d been taught in school, were touchstones of reality. Psychotropic drugs revealed that there were worlds on other planes that science hardly seemed to know exist. Mystical experience is not inimical to science, but comes at life from a different angle. It certainly doesn’t meet the requirements of “empirical inquiry,” which demand objectivity, measurement and duplicability. A few smart voices in The West, like Ram Dass, Trungpa, Aldous Huxley, Carl Jung, and R.D. Laing, seemed hip to something very large that science didn’t or could not recognize. Eastern philosophy, especially Zen, emphasized that there was no need for philosophies at all, or even beliefs. The key was to be conscious, Here and Now. The world is as it is. That’s all.

I seized upon the Eastern view with zeal and some relief because I was a lazy man who had no idea of what my life should be. I thought, Well, hell, if being Here and Now is all there is, we are already here and now. No need to seek or think about such trivia as money or career. And, furthermore, since value systems are arbitrary human inventions, there’s no need to evaluate yourself. (This spares you the peril of judging yourself below par.) Apparently, we’re good enough exactly as we are!

Today a toxic narcissist and his huge flock of purblind sheep, apparently informed by something higher than we know, have turned away from science, discounting the experts and claiming their data are lies. Their intrepid leader, one Lucidus Trump, whom someone should have given a white cane for father’s day, seems to think that the cosmos is all about Him. (Why be distracted by the facts?) The fool has publicly opined that those who wear face masks these days do so primarily to mock and frustrate him.

80 million stubborn bozos to the right of right dismiss the whole pandemic - yup, along with climate change - as a huge hoax. (And those who die? Well, clearly, they are far too credulous!) One dude, interviewed on TV recently, when asked why anyone would want to perpetrate the viral hoax, had his response at hand. “The deep state likes to make up stuff and bury us in rules to see how far the public can be pushed. They think we’re sheep!”

It rained the other day and I went out. The thunder was magnificent. The clouds were black and dense. I got real wet. It looked like rain and smelled like rain, but, these days, how can you be sure? Might it not be that Biden or the Skull and Bones elite have found a way to make us think it’s rain, but really not?

By Martin Levowitz

We Humans have different ways of knowing things: from experience, for instance, or by intuition (hunches / gut feelings.) And then, more cumbersomely, there’s science - systematic observation and measurement. These different modes of inquiry deliver “facts” of different sorts. To learn if God exists and if He / She believes in us, you’d need to pray and meditate. Science is less exciting, perhaps, emotionally, but deemed most reliable for addressing the nuts and bolts of practical reality.

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This has gone on way longer than I’m sure any of us could have imagined. We are restless, irritated and put out by everything associated with the virus. Have you seen the dogs in this town? My dogs are starting to get buff from all the walks around the block. I’ve baked all the bread, rearranged all the drawers and improved upon our home as much as the budget would allow. It was time for a break, I said to myself as I fired up the computer.

“Where to go? Where to go?” Well it will not be by plane and certainly not to New York, Rhode Island, Connecticut or New Jersey. “How about New Mexico?” Nope. They hate us there. “To New York, Rhode Island, Connecticut or New Jersey?”

By Cassina Farley

By Aisha Sander

George Floyd’s murder brought to the surface both the inhumanity of racial violence and how the false ideology of race has shaped the world we live in. Floyd’s death became a tipping point in my life, forcing me to reckon with the belief that raising my children in Patagonia is the best thing for them. Even before Floyd’s death we had always planned to return to Pakistan. I often worried about how I would fulfill my duty as a Muslim parent to teach my children Islam in a community that had no other practicing Muslims. I would worry how my children as they got older would be treated with their Muslim names and their mixed race heritage in a culture dominated by Whiteness. I worried that my children

would resent me for being the reason that they are different from their peers.

Then I would comfort myself with the open, beautiful lush desert that we are blessed to live in, the friendships that I had made and my work at the PRT. I’d comfort myself by saying God must want me here because life in Patagonia had fallen into place so easily.

COVID-19 has brought a magnifying glass into many of our lives and for me the ugliest part of what it has revealed is the enduring systemic racism in American society. For the foreseeable future my children will be the only Pakistanis and Muslim kids in this community. Pre-COVID I could convince myself that long summer trips in Pakistan would ground them enough in both cultures. But Floyd’s death and the subsequent uprising has opened up a Pandora’s box of unresolved racial trauma. I spent many a sleepless night after seeing some of my peers post racist videos and comments on Facebook. I knew that the little space I had carved for myself in Patagonia had gotten even smaller.

I grew up in Karachi in a bubble of economic and religious privilege unaware of the forces that had shaped my world. But even as a rich person in a poor ex-British colony our lives were immersed with a matter-of-fact belief that the West is better and that

White is better than Brown. White is prettier, smarter and more coveted than Brown. In our society all people were coded by the fairness or darkness of their skin. And yes, Black was the worst. Even Brown people are taught to be anti-Black. As the only daughter to a light skinned Pakistani with green eyes I was constantly reminded that my tan color, my brown eyes and my big hair must be a disappointment for my mother. As a young child and teenager I didn’t understand why my mother’s lighter skin was preferred. I just accepted it as a truth.

Until I started studying social justice and diversity in my Masters of Social Work at the University of Toronto I had never considered the weight of my privileges or the pain of my oppression. I started uncovering the story of India before colonization and obsessed about the events leading up to the partition of India into two countries. I couldn’t believe how little I had been taught about British rule. I learned as an adult about the violence that allowed the British to control millions of people. I learned of the segregated societies the British created in their colonies, the ways that they employed divide and rule to sow discord between Muslims and Hindus in India, and the amount of material wealth they looted. I learned of the thousands of Indians they forcibly migrated to other British colonies around the world and the thousands of Indians who had to fight in the British Army in both the first and second World Wars. I learned of how racism was used to justify oppression, violence, genocide and how the world we know today was shaped by racist ideology.

When I moved back to Karachi in 2009 I promised myself that I would never move back to the West. I had my family, I had lifelong friends, I made amazing new friends, and started teaching social sciences at a university and teaching yoga. In 2010 I became a committed Muslim and in 2011 I met my spiritual guide Shykh Muhammad Harun, a German who had embraced Islam in the 1970’s. In 2013 I began the first-ever yoga retreats in the northern areas of Pakistan.

I could have never predicted the course my life would take in 2014 after meeting an American paraglider by chance in northern Pakistan. Against my own promise I agreed to move to the U.S. in 2016 with the hope that we could create a home for our growing family.

But now, with all the world turned upside down because of the pandemic the future seems both uncertain and clear to me. I want to be in Pakistan where I feel I belong. I want to be with my most cherished and loved ones. I want my boys to have the utmost pride in their names, in their rich Pakistani and Muslim heritage, and in their mother’s dreams for being of service to her people.

OPINION & COMMENT • OPINION & COMMENT • OPINION & COMMENT

DONT GO OUT THERE!

THE REckoning

MILESTONES

Alaska, Hawaii and Kansas. Kansas? Why are they so good? We are not welcome in Europe or Mexico either - Americans that is. Not that I’d consider leaving the country amid this craziness anyhow.

So, it was settled. We would stay in Arizona. We would camp and it would be glorious. We loaded our gear, packed up the dogs and hit the road. First stop, Page Springs. We would swim in the creek, grill hamburgers and sleep under the stars. We did swim in the creek until about 100 other people joined us. We tried to stick to the plan and grill burgers under the stars but were told about the state-wide fire ban. So, pan fried burgers while we drank beer would have to do. We listened to the 100 other people who were nearby running their generators so they could watch Netflix in their RV’s.

Day three was spent marveling at how many people could fit along the creek in Sedona. They were practically sitting on each other’s laps at Slide Rock State park. Cars were lined up all the way to Flagstaff.

As we continued toward the Grand Canyon the crowds seemed to thin, but when we got to the South Rim the parking lot revealed what we already knew in our hearts - the 100 other people plus about 1000 more had followed us there.

Did they even want to be there? Or did they do like I did and research that there was no where else to go? No matter. We got out, donned our masks and had a look. Zach hates heights and giant holes and refused to get any closer than a football field away. I, of course, went all the way to the edge. Do you ever stand at the edge of something and for a moment imagine just falling in? No? Just me? Ok.

After dodging people left and right and having a hurried lunch at a questionable picnic table we decided to find a place to camp. Couldn’t be in the park, said the park ranger with the face shield around her head. Campgrounds are at capacity. Stupid RV’s. We ventured south and found a nice place off the main highway. Seemed to be less people and there was plenty of room to spread out.

Then the elk came. Normally that would be wonderful and majestic and believe me it started out that way. We have 1000 pictures. Then they started ransacking the neighboring camp. One stayed behind poking through items left on a picnic table. We watched from a distance as a weary man emerged from his RV (they are everywhere!) and placed a container of water on the ground. The elk drank. Beers in hand we chuckled at the offering right up until the elk decided to shake us down. Grabbing the dogs, we took shelter near our car while the elk had its way with the dogs’ water bowl. I swear it glared at us when we would not refill it before it wandered off into the woods. Then it was dark and we retreated into our tents where we proceeded to freeze until morning.

Day four had us leaving Elk Land and heading south to Williams. Same crowd followed us, so we rented a hotel room (mainly to shower) and drove by a lake just because it was called Dog Town. Our final evening was spent eating pie from a local restaurant that delivered. Day five we got the hell out of there and headed home.

Some takeaways from our quarantine trip: Staying home helps you avoid all the people who should be avoiding you. There are no thirsty elk in Santa Cruz County. Fantasizing about jumping into the Grand Canyon may be a cry for help, and lastly pie delivery should be instituted in every town in America.

My advice? Stay home. We will for the foreseeable future.
LET’S TURN OUR LOSS INTO A WIN

It has been over a year and a half since the gavel fell for the last time at Eastern Santa Cruz County Justice Court in Sonoita. The building is now a storage facility for excess county equipment, a few county offices, and our beloved library.

Now is the time to take our loss and turn it into a win by collecting our ideas to re-purpose the 6400 sq. ft. facility, support our community, and engage the County leadership to partner with us in the endeavor.

Last year, my husband, George, and I were enjoying a glass of wine on the patio and we brainstormed some ideas to utilize the facility in the heart of Sonoita. Here’s what we came up with:

A VISITORS CENTER: The beauty of this area attracts cyclists, hikers, birders, hunters, and numerous tourists visiting wine country and enjoying our fabulous scenery and weather. A central facility with information on events throughout Elgin, Sonoita, Patagonia, and including the lakes and Empire Ranch would benefit our fairgrounds, restaurants, bed and breakfast facilities, markets and other community assets, and improve our economy. Encouraging our tourists visiting wine country and other events could bring them back to the area for host of other activities.

A COMMUNITY RESOURCE CENTER: The courtroom could be useful for training, meeting space, tax assistance resources, health and wellness information, flu shots, and general information and uses of interest to the community.

A PERMANENT FARMER’S MARKET: An indoor market would be viable year-round and the structure could provide electricity to support a wider scope of vendors. Having the market open on Saturday would encourage tourists visiting the wineries or other attractions to stop in and buy a snack, homemade bread, or local crafts. The market would also provide our youth in 4H or FFA with a chance to raise funds by selling homemade jams or other canned goods and fresh produce. I can visualize a super hand painted sign on the building front compliments of our talented artists in the community!

AN OUTDOOR PARK AND FISHING HOLE: The outdoor area surrounding the building could be cleaned up and park benches and picnic tables added providing a place to enjoy a snack from the farmer’s market. The small pond could be stocked with fish to provide a place for smaller children to cast a rod, provided this does not interfere with other uses.

LIBRARY AND COUNTY OFFICES REMAIN. Mt. Empire Rotary Club has offered to assist with administering the grants to cover the cost of infrastructure modifications. The Department of Corrections (DOC) workers could build the Farmer’s Market booths and tables, spruce up the grounds, and lay on a new coat of paint. Former Judge Keith Barth has volunteered to coordinate the DOC program labor. The county currently covers insurance and utility costs and could perhaps provide additional funds for upkeep and repairs. The library is in place and funded through the City of Nogales.

Other stakeholders could include the Fairgrounds, Sonoita-Elgin Community Group (SECG), wineries and distilleries, local businesses, the town of Patagonia, Sky Island Tourism Association, Arizona Tourism and Wine Commission, Empire Ranch, parks and recreational establishments, local artists, and many more!

George and I hoped to present these ideas and seek community input at our next town hall; however, COVID 19 has precluded our ability to meet in large numbers, but we can’t let that stop us from moving forward. We want to hear what you have say, refine the concept, identify volunteers, and coordinate with the county. Let’s turn our loss into a win!

To help us identify the best uses for this space, we ask that you fill out a short survey, which you can access at https://forms.gle/GLbgmx3tBfYRi82o6. Please share your ideas, comments, concerns and volunteer for the way ahead.

THE SONOITA CREEK WATERSHED

Our 128,000-acre Sonoita Creek watershed is a major tributary to the Santa Cruz River and the greater watershed that serves over a million people. However, the Forest Service currently lists the Sonoita Creek watershed as “functioning at risk.” We can—and must—protect the quality of our watersheds within the Patagonia Mountains.

Learn more at: www.patagoniaalliance.org/water-matters-more
Douglas Krause is a two-time winner of the “Will Rogers Artist of the Year” award from the Academy of Western Artists.
COUNCIL NOTES

By PRT Staff Reporters

July 8
Planning & Development Committee will be bringing a proposed set of changes to the Town Code to the Council probably in August.

The Town approved Manager Robinson to apply for a Technical Assistance Grant for $100,000 from the North American Development Bank. It would cover consultant costs for refurbishment design of the wastewater treatment plant and need 10% coverage by the town. The work phase would use the majority of the $500,000 Community Action Programs (CAP) grant. A year is estimated for completion of the project.

The Town approved the appointment of an Election Board for the August 4, 2020 primary election.

The Mayor and Council then went into executive session for a performance evaluation of Manager Robinson’s first year on the job.

July 22
The Marshal explained about traffic control at the upcoming Covid-19 testing blitz at PUHS.

The Town approved a joint conservation easement proposal from Borderlands Restoration Network, Wildlife Corridors, and the Town of Patagonia to protect approximately 1500 acres of land along SR 82 upstream of the Town, to be known as the Sonora Creek Wildlife Corridor (SCWC). Ron Pulliam discussed the ecology of animal movements, including jaguars, that have identified the SCWC as a critical passage. Pulliam gave a history of ownership and land use in the area, and mentioned the several habitat restoration and enhancement projects that have received funding and multi-agency collaboration. A big boost has been the receipt of a Forest Legacy Award from the US Forest Service, placing the SCWC “squarely on the national map of conservation values,” said Pulliam.

South 32 presented “a review of the company’s COVID-19 response,” and plans to restart development of the decline, “including associated dewatering and discharge.” South32 has created a model of groundwater flow in the northern part of the Patagonia mountains. The report stated “groundwater first will be encountered approximately 100 feet below the surface during the construction of the decline and will need to be pumped out to allow for safe passage of South32 personnel and equipment.”

“The purpose of this groundwater pumping is to relocate, not consume the water” but because “the groundwater in its natural state underground does not meet surface water quality standards, South32 will treat the water and make it “cleaner than drinking water for many parameters, and safe for wildlife.”

They report that the discharge rate will vary over time, but the average discharge rate is anticipated to be 3,270 gallons per minute (gpm) initially, dropping to 3,000/2,000 gpm within the first several years. The plant has an upper limit of 4,500 gpm.

Questions about the effects of this 24/7 discharge for flora and fauna, for aquifer levels, and for the Town’s water supply, were answered with “no adverse affects are foreseen.” They will host an open house in Sept. for a more detailed discussion with the community.

A base pay increase of $2000 was approved for Manager Robinson.

A proposal to rename an alley between Pennsylvania Ave, 3R Ave, First Ave and Walnut Ave, as Raven Alley, was tabled as a future agenda item.

The Town agreed to Tucson Audubon’s request for letters of support for two grants it is applying for, one primarily for Johnson Grass removal, from the AZ Forestry Service, and the other focusing on improving habitat for the endangered Gila topminnow, from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

If it ain’t Broke...

Dear Editor,

Maybe pandemic confinement, heat and breaking teeth are making me grumpy, but I have two dissatisfaction with the recent Patagonia street resurfacing project.

My first dissatisfaction is that we, the residents, were told this is what was going to be done to our streets, rather than being asked if this change is something we saw as needed or good for the town. It was a top-down choice, not a citizen-requested action. It was labeled as an “improvement project,” carrying the 20th-century idea that streets that are wider, cleaner, straighter, and newer are all signs of progress, modernization, economic development and general upgrading. As with advertising, word choice carries underlying beliefs along with it, and all beliefs are open for questioning these days.

My second dissatisfaction is that as a pro-funk Patagonian, always enjoying the town’s many kinds of uniqueness, eccentricity and sociability, I think this project has quietly cost us some of that charm, by removing features like road bumps and small potholes, tree branches and diverse private uses of the right of way, all of which kept the traffic slower and encouraged conversations between people walking and neighbors (or their dogs).

At slower speeds, vehicle drivers used to feel unpressured enough to stop in the middle of the road and talk with someone on foot or bicycle. With the new straightness and openness, faster driving is the natural result, and the previously normal street sociability becomes harder, because of removal of what the urban planners call “traffic-calming elements.” The street conditions used to silently say to people “Chill and look around,” but now say “Go fast.” Over the segment I live on, 25 mph would save you 7.6 seconds over 15 mph, but as with many aspects of so-called modern life, I challenge whether faster is automatically better.

Duquesne Ave. is no longer a safe, tranquil and somewhat irregular 15-mph residential street, and I view this as a loss. If asked about the desirability of this project beforehand, I’d have said “It ain’t broke. Don’t fix it.”

Robert Gay
Patagonia

Emoji in the Time of —

By Charlotte Lowe

There is no emoji to express my feeling. My body is exploding, not just my virtual head or the head of an octopus.

My arms have multiplied stretching out to hold my child, my grandchildren, my friends.

My will has melted under this weather of black death, plague, COVID-19. Armless! Frightened! (What is the best emoji for “frightened” except the silly blue one with shivering teeth?)

Missing everyone yet not as much as I miss my life that once strolled among the children, my friends.

I can’t let you in. You know I can’t let you through this door, into my home. Call me. My life is a vacant hotel. “No accommodations.” I will do what I can to find you other accommodations. See the sky. Let’s see what it might do for you.

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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By Harold Meckler

The news feed on my phone is filled with headlines of comets and meteors and newly found galaxies and bursts of radio waves and so many other bits of information that it often seems the stuff of science fiction rather than straight up science. In addition, magazines normally associated with economics and politics are diving into astronomy and theoretical physics. Countless articles discuss the positions of the planets, the behavior of black holes and the latest piece of scientific equipment sent deep into space to report back on the sun or, perhaps, an asteroid. I’ve recently seen fantastic photos of Comet Neowise taken by amateur astronomers all over the world. Astronomy is booming. It’s no longer a fringe hobby.

Strangely though, while it appears that more folks than ever are taking an interest in these otherworldly events, I’m feeling like the guy who still wants to set the F-stop on his camera. Astronomy, for me, has never been about getting ahead of my imagination. Instead, I see it as a means to confirm my appreciation of awe, of finding majesty in the never-ending number and variety of celestial objects.

For example, explanets (planets orbiting stars other than the sun) fascinate me, but I’m easily lost by the science of how they’re found. I’m astounded by the genius of those who have this stuff figured out, but what drives my interest is the simple fact that with every planet comes the chance for more life. Stream of consciousness leads me to realize that humans are not nearly the most common species on our planet. Alien spacecrafts taking a look at us with equipment we can only dream of might surmise that chickens rule our roost since they overwhelmingly outnumber us. We wonder what life is like elsewhere, but we often fail to appreciate how incredibly diverse life is right here.

So, for the past few months I’ve set my sights a little lower and a little closer to home. Slowly, I’ve been putting together a very tiny observatory, a place to park a telescope, or a pair of binoculars and a chair or two. Nothing fancy. Nothing to draw attention from our own sun and planets. Mt. Hopkins who are looking outside our solar system to better understand our own sun and planets.

More than anything, though, the theme has been to acknowledge that stargazing takes no special skill or knowledge. Instead, with a bit of imagination and a willingness to see in a star all that we see in a new baby, backyard astronomy can be an exercise with huge rewards at minimal expense. Coaches tell their athletes to let the game, whatever it is, come to them. It’s the same with astronomy. I usually don’t look for something specific in the sky. If something stands out on a particular day at a particular moment I’ll spend some time looking at it and will follow that up with a google search.

So, this month, no suggestions from me. If the monsoon clouds aren’t too widespread and allow for even a little bit of clearing, just spend a few moments looking up at the night sky. What’s special right now to look at? Everything.

STARSTRUCK

By Harold Meckler

The insect order Coleoptera, the beetles, dominates Earth’s biodiversity. Approximately one out of every three animal species is a beetle and about one out of every four species - including all plants, animals, and fungi - is a beetle. The preponderance of these small, often-armored insects led J. B. S. Haldane, a British geneticist and evolutionary biologist, to comment that “God has an inordinate fondness for beetles.” Beetles populate nearly every environment and every nook and cranny on Earth.

Our Sky Islands region boasts a true wealth of these tiny jewels, some of which are colorfully spectacular - such as metallic wood boring beetles. Among their ranks lurk covert terrorists, living lanterns, ones that might lead to profound military innovations. But given that there are legion of other types of insects afoot, our solar system to report back on the sun and grow - emerges, which eventually forms a pupa, which in turn transforms into an adult. Adult beetles are all about mating with just enough feeding to eventually reach life’s reproductive finish line.

Monsoon season is prime time for finding and observing beetles, as many species come out of the proverbial woodwork during this wet, fecund time.

One of my favorites is the bombardier beetle. We host a number of local Sky Island species, their title bestowed upon them owing to the startling chemical explosions that they use to deter would-be predators. Generally, species are fairly small, measuring well less than a half inch. The thorax and head often have a bronze hue, while the abdomen is blackish. This posterior segment is where 2 internal chambers cloister 2 distinct chemicals that can be purposely brought together by the beetle when it feels sufficiently menaced. A slick naturalist trick is to gently touch a bombardier beetle, eliciting a rapid explosion - easily seen (a puff of smoke), heard (a distinct squeak), and even felt (registers about 2120 F). All in all, a bizarre beetle.

Anyone that grew up in wetter environments in the U.S. is likely familiar with fireflies, which you may have just guessed are beetles. We have a few local species, only some of which produce chemical light. These “flasher” species come out during monsoon season, each flashing a specific light code evolved to attract a mate. This is light produced by bioluminescence, which is chemical light produced in a specialized organ.

Luciferase, an enzyme involved in the process, is sometimes used in forensics work to detect blood. The Lucifer connection may trace back to one meaning of the name, which is “morning star” – a clear reference to light.

The name dung beetle leaves little room for doubt as to the lifestyle of these beautiful, sometimes iridescent scarab beetles. Some were revered by ancient Egyptians, as they helped to sanitize cities. The moisture of monsoon season keeps scat wet enough for various dung beetle species to gear into action. These beetles fly slowly in search of dung, which is detected by scent. Once located, males of some species fight to roll a ball out of the fresh dung, sometimes with help from their mate. The pair sequesters theirетод prize in a discreet location - dung beetles are notorious poop thieves - where eggs are laid within the fecal ball. Let’s hope reincarnation is a figment of our imagination!

We end with another aptly named set of species - the whirligig beetles. These mostly aquatic insects earn their moniker by wildly gyrating atop areas of slow water, such as ponds and pools in streams. There they use the vibrations that they generate to find hapless invertebrate prey trapped on the surface of the water. Half of each eye peers above the water, while the other half sees below the water. If threat ened, they can easily dive underwater or fly away. No doubt various countries are closely studying the military implications of these aerial, aquatic, and submersible beetles. Only in the beetle world!

Vincent Pinto and his wife, Claudia, run RAVENS-WAY WILD JOURNEYS LLC, their Nature Adventure & Conservation organization devoted to protecting and promoting the unique biodiversity of the Sky Islands region. RWWJ offers a wide variety of private, custom-made courses, birding & biodiversity tours. Visit: www.ravensnatureschool.org

A metallic wood-boring beetle

Photo by Vince Pinto

Bizarre, Beautiful and Bountiful Beetles

The insect order Coleoptera, the beetles, dominates Earth’s biodiversity. Approximately one out of every three animal species is a beetle and about one out of every four species - including all plants, animals, and fungi - is a beetle. The preponderance of these small, often-armored insects led J. B. S. Haldane, a British geneticist and evolutionary biologist, to comment that “God has an inordinate fondness for beetles." Beetles populate nearly every environment and every nook and cranny on Earth.

Our Sky Islands region boasts a true wealth of these tiny jewels, some of which are colorfully spectacular - such as metallic wood boring beetles. Among their ranks lurk covert terrorists, living lanterns, ones that might lead to profound military innovations. But given that there are legions of other types of insects afoot, what exactly makes a beetle a beetle? Let’s begin with the jaws. The vast majority of adult beetles possess jaws with mandibles that chew from side to side. Any intrepid school kid or naturalist has instantly felt this truth when ill-advisedly handing a larger species of beetle, OUCH!

Most adult beetles possess two sets of wings - a pair with which to fly that are delicate, translucent, and folded under the outer wing covers like parachutes, as well as the outer covers themselves, termed elytra.

Young beetles start life as a maggot-like larva that undergo complete metamorphosis into an adult. First an egg is laid, then a larva - whose function is to eat and grow - emerges, which eventually forms a pupa, which in turn transforms into an adult. Adult beetles are all about mating with just enough feeding to eventually reach life’s reproductive finish line.

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Check It Out At The Library

By Laura Wenzel

After being closed since March due to the pandemic, the Patagonia Library reopened on June 1 for curbside pickup. The library is still not open for patrons to enter.

I’m not going to sugarcoat things; it isn’t always easy to show up. There’s a lot of scary stuff going on in the world. Between standing on the brink of the next Great Depression, drastic social changes due to COVID-19, human rights violations against Black people and other POC, and an upcoming divisive presidential election, life is overwhelming. Many days my heart is heavy and much weighs on my mind, but at least I have the library. Let the library be a beacon for us all at this dark time.

You can choose how personalized you want your library experience to be. Some people prefer to use the online catalog to place reserves, others need a little more guidance. Feel free to call or email us anytime; we’re here for you. Curbside pickup is offered Monday-Friday, 10-12pm. Don’t have access to the internet? Ask us about our “What’s New List,” or grab a copy from one of the bulletin boards around town!

There are a lot of free digital resources on our website. Back in April, we became a part of the Little Libraries That Could ebook consortium. Check out or place holds on ebooks, audiobooks, and magazines without ever having to leave your house. We still offer Kanopy, our free movie streaming service. Get ten free films to stream each month, as well as access to The Great Courses lecture series and Kanopy Kids. If you’ve got extra time on your hands and want to learn a new language, or brush up on what you already know, sign up for Mango Languages. With over 70 languages to choose from, you’ll be a pro by the time everyone can travel again.

To get in touch with us or access our digital resources, call (520) 394-2010, email info@patagoniapubliclibrary.org, or go to www.patagonia-publiclibrary.org/resources.
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Glimpses Into Our Past

By Alison Bunting

The mining town of Greaterville was established around 1874 when placer gold deposits were discovered by A. Smith. Located in Pima County, about 45 miles south of Tucson, the Greaterville precinct’s population in the 1910 Census was 129; the majority of the residents were of Mexican descent. Although mining was the primary industry, residents also worked on nearby cattle ranches such as the Empire Ranch. In 1915 a disturbing case of police brutality took place when two Pima County deputies used hanging as a method of interrogation.

The seeds of the tragedy were first scattered at a wedding feast in Greaterville on Saturday, Sept. 12, 1914. Francisco Casanova shot Eulalio Yanez after announcing that he was “going to get even with him.” Yanez died and Casanova escaped to Mexico. [Arizona Daily Star, 9/15/1914]. Six months later Pima County Ranger Robert Fenter spent a week searching for Mrs. Loretta Yanez, Mr. Yanez’s widow, who was reported missing by family members about March 13, 1915. He found no trace of her but suspected that Antonio Encinas was responsible for her abduction. [Arizona Daily Star, 4/10/1915, 4/14/1915]. Encinas had produced a signed bill of sale for Mrs. Yanez’ cattle, and since she could not read or write that document was deemed suspicious. [Arizona Republic, 4/23/1915].

An arrest warrant was issued for Antonio Encinas but he managed to escape to Mexico. Deputies staked out the area near his home in Greaterville on April 13 and engaged in a gun battle with the deputies. Encinas was wounded but managed to escape again. On Monday April 19, Robert Fenter and deputy Frank B. Moore returned to Greaterville, determined to find Encinas. They went to the Leon family home in the early evening to question the Leon brothers, Hilario, José Maria, and Francisco, who were brothers-in-law of Encinas. The three men were arrested and removed from the home. The deputies then took them to an “oak thicket near Greaterville Canyon,” tied their hands behind their backs, and proceeded to hang them, one by one, from an oak tree, to persuade them to talk. [Arizona Republic, 4/23/1915]. When the brothers did not return home, family members went to a neighbor’s home the next morning and a search party was organized. They found Hilario dead and José “sitting bent under a tree, in a delirious condition.” Francisco was missing. Fenter and Moore had returned to Tucson Tuesday morning to report the “killing of the Mexicans” and “intimate[d] it was done in self-defense.” [Arizona Republic, 4/23/1915].

The Pima County Attorney and sheriff immediately went to Greaterville to investigate the matter and arrested Fenter and Moore on evidence of hanging was found on José Maria and Hilario’s body. On Monday April 26 Fenter and Moore pleaded not guilty to the charge of murder by hanging of Hilario Leon. José Maria was in critical condition and expected to die. Francisco Leon had turned up and told the county attorney “that he was the first man hung by the deputies and that he lost consciousness the third time he was raised from the ground. When he came to he was at a little distance. The body of his brother was thrown beside him he said and finally the ropes cut off of them the deputies remarking that they were dead. When Moore and Fenter had gone Francisco says he ran away.” [Tucson Citizen, 4/26/1915]. After a lengthy and contentious trial Fenter and Moore were found guilty of second-degree murder of Hilario Leon on July 16. The jury deliberated less than three hours. The county attorney announced that he was ready to proceed with a case against Fenter and Moore for the murder of José Maria Leon. [Arizona Daily Star, 7/15/1915]. Fenter and Moore decided to accept the verdict and were sentenced to a minimum of ten years in the Florence prison. [Arizona Daily Star, 7/18/1915].

By the end of the year Fenter was considered an “honor” prisoner and was allowed to spend Christmas with his family in Tucson. [Arizona Daily Star 12/25/1915]. Both Moore and Fenter were pardoned by Governor Hunt and released from prison in January 1917. [Bisbee Daily Review, 1/23/1917].
I believe Santa Cruz county government has an obligation to its residents to improve our roads and our parks, support public safety, and promote job creation. I have worked on these issues tirelessly since I took office.

RE-ELECT

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DEMOCRAT FOR SUPERVISOR DISTRICT 3

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- Be a Strong Supporter of our Quality of Life
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- Play to Our Strengths
  Our human capital is one of our great resources; our location is another. Ranching, Wine Making, Tourism and International Trade thrive here.

- Create Jobs in Santa Cruz County
  We must continue to work with local business groups to support their efforts in job creation. Recognizing their investment and commitment to our community.

BruceBracker.com
Contact Tracing in SCC

By Aisha Sander

Contact tracing is one of the most important components of the public health response to COVID-19. For decades before the current crisis, tracers were tracking exposures during the HIV epidemic, for sexually transmitted diseases (STD’s) and for other highly contagious diseases such as tuberculosis (TB). One of the most significant victories in public health has been the eradication of smallpox in 1979. The World Health Organization (WHO) attributes this achievement not because every person was vaccinated, but because of extensive contact tracing.

The job of a contact tracer is to “convince someone to trust you enough to share the names of people they may have exposed,” said Fernando Silvas, the head epidemiologist at Santa Cruz County Health Services (SCCHS). The tracer’s role when calling people who have contracted COVID-19 is “helping them realize that getting sick isn’t their fault, that there is nothing to be ashamed of, and that they are providing a public health service by aiding us in our investigation.”

After building a rapport and enlisting names of people who the infected person may have exposed, “comes the sometimes long process of reaching out to these people, informing them of the exposure while maintaining Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) compliance, educating them, listening to their story, answering their questions, and sometimes trying to persuade them to take an exposure or recommendations seriously,” said Silvas.

As of July 25, the team had made between 15,000 to 20,000 calls to contacts of confirmed cases.

“Our investigators/tracers do not tell contacts who provided the information...If the confirmed positive case grants permission, then we will mention the name and their association, but not share medical details. It is very helpful when the case allows for their name to be revealed, because then the questions can be more straightforward, allowing us to relay and obtain more accurate information.”

Silvas joined SCCHS as the lead epidemiologist in late March 2020, soon after the first case of COVID-19 had been confirmed. A University of Arizona graduate in microbiology, Silvas had spent the last nine years working in the Pima County Health Dept. in environmental health, epidemiology and most recently in TB control and prevention.

At the start of the pandemic, Silvas was the only investigator and tracer in SCCHS. As the caseload increased dramatically, particularly in late May, other staff joined to support contact tracing. Now there are 18 people working as both investigators and tracers on his team.

“In late May, through a good part of June, we were in a rough patch trying to keep up. The toughest part of the pandemic for me was trying to train a new crew while trying to manage the dramatic influx of information and phone calls coming our way. It made for some long hours and weekends,” said Silvas.

The investigators and tracers “receive in-house training which includes reading up on latest CDC guidelines and COVID-19 information, they shadow an interviewer, and are observed on calls before beginning calls on their own,” said Silvas.

The 18 staff members at SCCHS are trained to be both investigators and tracers. An investigator, said Silvas, “conducts the interview of the confirmed case, and a tracer calls and follows up with the people that may have been infected.” A tracer monitors close contacts with at least three phone calls in the first week, said Silvas.

“With our current staffing, our plan is for four to five investigators, with the remaining 13 or 14 as tracers...If case numbers jump, and contacts rise accordingly, making it difficult for tracers to keep up, an interviewer can assist tracers with contact follow up. In addition, Arizona Department of Health Services can take some of the contact tracing overflow as well.

At this point with the numbers dropping there are approximately five cases per staff,” said Silvas. As of now, the County does not recommend or offer testing to close contacts of an infected person. “With ideal testing capacity, testing [close contacts] between days five and seven wouldn’t be a bad idea if it gives someone some peace of mind and rules out asymptomatic positives, but it would not be a clean slate,” Silvas said. “The virus can still manifest itself up to 14 days after exposure, so I would encourage people not to assume a negative test during this time period has cleared them...they would still be asked to continue quarantine precautions for the remaining days...if an individual in quarantine develops covid-like symptoms, it is a reason to test.”

Testing is not used to determine if someone is no longer infectious. “For our purposes, when someone has ‘recovered’, it means that, based on the investigation interview, and the information they provided during follow up calls, they have met state and CDC guidelines for release from isolation,” said Silvas.

In mid-June, test results began its first testing blitzes with the expectation that results would return within 72 hours.

Silvas’ message to the county residents is “please don’t go to work, school, etc. while sick. Don’t dismiss your “mild” symptoms or try to make yourself believe it’s something else. The reports are not hype. People are getting sick, people are losing their lives to COVID-19. We all have a responsibility to help keep our communities safe. It will take all of us to get through this.”
Fall Festival Cancelled

It is with deep regret that after continued conversation with the Town of Patagonia and the Sky Island Tourism Association, we have come to a collaborative decision to cancel the 2020 Patagonia Fall Festival, originally scheduled for October 10 & 11, 2020 at the Patagonia Town Park. The community feels that postponing the festival until October 2021 is the best decision in the interest of Public Health and Safety.

Recognized as one of the finest, well-attended art festivals in Arizona, the Patagonia Fall Festival features artists, sculptors, weavers, potters, jewelry makers, crafters, and food and beverage vendors from around the region.

Plea Agreement Reached in Van Nest Case

By Marion Vendituoli

A plea agreement was entered in the case of Charles Van Nest, Jr. of Patagonia, on June 17 in Superior Court in Nogales. Previously, Van Nest had pleaded ‘not guilty’ to the charges of premeditated attempted murder, and aggravated assault after he allegedly attacked a Patagonia woman in her home on October 4, 2019.

According to evidence presented at Van Nest’s arraignment by prosecutor Greg Redente on Oct. 11, 2019, “The defendant went to this home where he was no longer living and when the victim saw he was there, she ran and he was no longer living and when the victim saw he was there, she ran and tried to lock herself in the bathroom. The defendant kicked the door open… He proceeded to stab her in the neck.”

On June 17, Van Nest changed his plea to guilty to the charge of 1st degree attempted murder and faces a 14-year sentence in a state prison.

Santa Cruz County Superior Court Judge Denneen Peterson is scheduled to accept the plea formally on August 14.

Kids and This COVID Summer

By Lynn Davison

Last summer, before COVID joined us, Patagonia was a pretty good place to be a kid. You could hang out in the park, go to the library for books, computers, and lunch, be a Borderlands Earth Care Youth Institute (BECY) intern, do summer classes at Creative Arts, go swimming at the pool, play in the school’s summer sports leagues, spend time at the Patagonia Youth Enrichment Center (PYEC) cooking food or playing pool, go to the County Fair. There were summer jobs available locally. Not bad for town with fewer than 900 people.

It’s a different story this year. For most kids, it is a hard summer. The pool, park, and library are closed as are Creative Arts, the Tin Shed, the Youth Center building. The BECY program and the summer sports leagues were cancelled. Few places are hiring summer help. And it’s NOT OK to hang out in groups with friends. Kids are bored and frustrated. Parents who already had their children at home for three months before the traditional summer break are running out of ideas and patience. The uncertainty about when and how schools will open makes it difficult to plan for teachers, nonprof- its serving children and youth, and parents.

There are some bright spots. PYEC has created a summer program, with support from the Patagonia Regional Community Fund, that provides supplies for youth to do individual projects like creating posters to promote participation in the 2020 census. Over 20 youth are participating in the program. PYEC is also distributing cooking kits with menus and ingredients to help youth demonstrate their skills by cooking meals for their families.

Alex Santos, 17, made one of the census posters that are now placed in Sonora and Patagonia. He is spending more time this summer at home painting, reading, and playing guitar. The biggest loss for Alex is not being able to hang out and play basketball in the park with his friends. “I love sports, especially basketball, and really hope we will be able to play this winter. It is my senior year. I would like to attend classes in person if it is safe, but honestly, no matter how, we have to continue with school.”

Other youth are figuring it out too. Chesed Chap, 17, was a BECY intern last summer. This year she has had to create her own structure and be “more accountable to myself.” She does a morning workout and a late afternoon run every day and is taking an online math class from Pima Community College. One big disappointment is not being able to visit her grandparents on the weekends. Chesed is hoping that the upcoming school year will be in person. “I miss socializing with my friends. I really want this to be over.”

Liam Young missed the 4th of July festivities. “Basically, there is a lot less going around town,” he said. He understands the need to mindful of the risk of the COVID virus, but misses hanging out with his friends. This summer Liam is “doing nature stuff like fishing and hiking and having more family time.” He is really hoping to go back to in-school classes and to be able to play basketball and tennis.

Sydney McKay, 16, is keeping busy. She has gotten fabric from the Art Center and is sewing and distributing masks; making and selling nail polish using Instagram marketing; painting; working at Harris Heritage Farms milking the cows and gardening. Sydney’s biggest loss is “not being able to go out and see my friends.”

Jose Santos, 18, is the oldest of five children and just graduated from high school this spring. He is spending the summer helping his Mom with the family and with maintaining the house. He said the closing of the library, the pool, the park, and the Youth Center are big for all the kids.

Jose summed it up by saying “wearing the masks, the social distancing, all of it is just kind of weird.”
Open for Business
New Business News

New Salon Opens in Sonoita

By Marion Vendituoli

‘Hair By Mark Andrew’ opened its doors in the Yakobian Building on Rt 82 near the crossroads in Sonoita on July 1. Although there are still some mirrors to be hung and trim to be painted, owner Mark Costello is working full time attending to the hair needs of his clients in his light and airy new space, which Costello calls “kind of modernish.” French doors open into a small foyer which leads into a cozy and inviting room with a view of a back courtyard.

In addition to the new salon, the new owners of the Yakobian Building, T.J. Grey and Sharon Morse, are in the process of converting the old shops and offices into a corner apartment, where Costello now lives with his two dogs and two kittens, as well as three bed and breakfast casitas.

“I like this location a lot,” Costello said. He had worked at Sonoita Strands with Dee Demski for the past year and a half before taking on his own salon. We’re still friends,” he said. He was Demski that introduced him to the Sonoita area. “I didn’t know what I was getting into,” he said, about moving to Sonoita. “I had no idea I would like it so much.”

Costello, who is from Syracuse, NY, worked as a hairdresser in Boston for 13 years before moving to Los Angeles, where he worked for the next 13 years before moving to Tucson to be closer to family. He offers haircuts, conditioning treatments, permanents and a complete line of hair products. The salon is open Monday – Saturday by appointment only. To schedule an appointment, call 310-968-0341.

Trading Post Offers Local Arts and Crafts

By Sarah Klingenstein

Anne and Andy Anderson have filled their new store with the works of almost 100 artists. “We knew we wanted to be able to design and run the shop as we wished, so again, we went all in”, said Andy. The couple each brought their own business background to the task. Anne has worked in retail ever since her first job scooping Ben and Jerry’s ice cream in her home state of Vermont. Her most recent position was as wholesale buyer for one of the largest plant nurseries in that state. Andy has a degree in Business Administration and has worked as a government contract buyer for most of his career, after serving in active duty in the US Army.

Andy said, “We redesigned the store and re-invented the way artwork is acquired and marketed, as well as our business arrangement with the artists. We’ve had a wonderful time meeting new artists, some of whom have been referred by the great artists we already work with. Others just wandered in here as customers, like the couple who both retired from careers as architects. She designs copper and brass jewelry and he paints elegant frescoes on wooden panels.”

Anne explained their approach to choosing new wares for the store. “We look to the customers to guide us. They have inspired us to include many new artists and some branded items such as t-shirts and shot glasses. Each one displays one of four new Patagonia logos designed for us by local graphic designer Greg Whitcoe.”

The Andersons hope to create an experience for locals and visitors that will highlight local and regional artists and make customers feel welcome to linger. One plan they are excited about is the addition of a store entrance directly into the Gathering Grounds. They, along with Gathering Grounds owners Audrey and Brandon Doles, hope future customers will be able to grab a latte and wander over to settle into a comfortable chair next door at the Trading Post. See you there!
EVENTS/UPDATES

Aug 1: Church Rummage Sale at Harvest Church Sonoita, 7a.m. - ? Contact call/text Pastor Gardenia 602.292.1616

Aug 15 - 16: SAILA Livestock Show Sonoita Fairgrounds

Aug 22: Barrel Race 5:30-11 p.m. Sonoita Fairgrounds

Aug 5, 6, 7: Sonoita Labor Day Sonoita Fairgrounds

Aug 4: Barrel Race Sonoita Fairgrounds

Aug 29: 5:30-11 p.m. Barrel Race Sonoita Fairgrounds

Sept 4, 5, 6, 7: Sonoita Labor Day Sonoita Fairgrounds

Sept 5: 5:30-11 p.m. Barrel Race Sonoita Fairgrounds

Sept 12: Ranch Rodeo, Sonoita Fairgrounds (Date TBA): Santa Cruz County Fair Sonoita Fairgrounds

MEETINGS

The Santa Cruz County Democratic Party Meeting every 3rd Sat. of the month 9:30 a.m. at the Bowman Senior Residences located at 189 N Grand Ave, Nogales.

Community Youth Bible Hang Out at the Sonoita Bible Church. 2nd and 4th Wed. Anderson, andeap@msn.com, 520-508-2502 or Steve Lindsey 520-559-0155

AA - Patagonia Methodist Church Fri at 7:30 pm, Sonoita Bible Church Tues 7:30 pm. For more AA meetings call 520-624-4183 (Methodist Church is closed)

SPECIAL INTERESTS

Overeaters Anonymous - Thurs. at 6:30 p.m. Fragrance-free meeting. Patagonia United Methodist Church. (520) 404-3490. Has moved online.

Al Anon (for family and friends of alcoholics) Patagonia Community Methodist Church, Wed @ 6 p.m. online on Zoom. Call (315)516-5998

NEW Adult Children of Alcoholics (ACA), Methodist Church, Tues @ 6 p.m. online on Zoom. Call (315)516-5998

CHOP (Community Homes of Patagonia, Inc.) Board meeting 3rd. Mon. at 5:30 p.m. in Town Council Hall

Patagonia Town Council, 2nd & 4th Wed. at 7 p.m. in Town Council Hall.

Rotary Club - 2nd & 4th Thurs., 5:30 p.m. at the Steak Out. Info: Sue (520) 990-4648.

Senior Citizens of Patagonia’s Board of Directors - 2nd Mon, 3 p.m. at the Senior Center. Senior Center Dining Hall is closed

The So AZ Republican Club meeting, 7 p.m. every third Thurs of the month, Sonoita Bible Church

Crossroads Quilters - 1st & 3rd Mon, Sonoita Fire Dept., 9 a.m. Info: (520)- 860-0173.

Lunch at Seniors Center Patagonia Dining Room Closed. Fresh-cooked meals, Mon - Fri, noon-1 p.m.

SOURCING TALENTS A bit of country, rock, blues, folk, pop” inspire listeners through music and conversation”

STUFFING TUBES “Today’s great songwriting talents. A bit of country, rock, blues, folk, pop”

MONDAY SHOWS “Folk Music Radio from WKSU-FM in Kent, OH”

FRI. SHOWS “Celebrate the Evening of Mushik Gusha, the Remover of All Difficulties”. Hosted by Graves

KPUP Broadcast Schedule

Mon: 7:00pm to 8:00pm: eTown repeat of Saturday’s show.

Tues: 10:00am to 12:00pm: World Jazz with Mark Berg

Wed: 7:00pm to 9:00pm: Jazz and Blues with Fred Hansen

Thurs: 7:00pm to 10pm: Sean Alexander show

Fri: 7:00pm to 9:00pm: Hook’s Sunken Roadhouse

Sat: 12:00pm to 1:00pm: “Educate, entertain and inspire listeners through music and conversation”

Sun: 10:00am: Patagonia Community United Methodist Church service

6:00pm to 9:00pm: World Magic Radio from WKDU-FM in Kent, OH

Daily Shows:

Swing Hour: 5:00pm to 6:00pm.

Best of the Oldies: 1:00pm to 2:00am.

Feature Story News (FSN.com) Mon – Fri. 8 am., 12pm and 6pm., Sat. 8am & 6pm., Sun. at 8am.

Patagonia Weather Forecast: Every odd hour.

Canelo Cowboy Church Sunday Service: 8:30 a.m.

Patagonia Community United Methodist Church is broadcasting its service to KPUP 100.5 Sunday Service: 10 a.m.

St. Therese of Lisieux Catholic Church 222 Third Ave., Patagonia Online Services until further notice.

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

Sonoita Bible Church 3174 N. Hwy 83, Sunday Service: 10:30 a.m. Youth Group: 2nd & 4th Wed.

Harvest Christian 3107 Hwy 83, Sonoita Sunday Service: 10 a.m.

St. Andrews Episcopal Church Online Services until further notice. https://www.standrewsaz.org/

Quaker Worship Group, Sundays 10 a.m. david_krest@yahoo.com, (843) 830-7184 or (760) 614-6959

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!
Email prtasted@gmail.com with any event updates you would like listed.

**HELP WANTED**

ARE YOU A COMPASSIONATE AND QUALIFIED CAREGIVER AND LOOKING FOR WORK?
Please contact Patagonia Assisted Care Agency 520-604-8179
or fill out an application online at www.carepatagonia.com

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

**MISCELLANEOUS**

SONOITA SELF STORAGE+RV/BOAT STORAGE RENTALS
5x10, 10 x 10,10x 20. 520-455-9333 or 520-455-4641.

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Hand and surface sanitizer, face shields also available
Cell or text: 520-678-4926

**Classifieds**

**AVAILABLE FOR ADOPTION**

Santa Cruz Humane Society
232 E. Patagonia Hwy (Rt. 82)
Nogales, AZ 85621 (520) 287-5654

Jackson is a male lab mix who is 2.5 years old. He gets along great with everyone and any dog. He is very sweet and knows basic commands.

Kahlia is a 4 month old female Tortoiseshell. Very playful and beautiful markings!

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Molly Anderson - M.D.

Timothy R. Penniston F.N.P.
CROWN C EQUESTRIAN ESTATE
MLS # 22000162 62.93 ACRES
COMpletely REMODELED! Rammed earth construction. Updated kitchen and baths, hardwood floors, new A/C. Barn w/14 stalls. BARBARA HARRIS 602 826-4026

$825,000

AUTHENTIC NAVAJO HOGAN
MLS# 21920191 716 REDROCK AVENUE
Built in 2002 under Navajo supervision. Cozy w/ wood stove, full kitchen. Separate bathroom, 1 storage sheds. Fully fenced. Owner financing. JEAN MILLER 520 508-3335

$159,000

PRICE REDUCED! CROWN C ESTATE
68 DRY CANYON RD. 44.58 PRISTINE ACRES
Private w/WOW views. 5425 spacious sq. ft. w/18d/8ba, sunroom, Rec room, full downstairs living quarters. Private well. JEAN MILLER 520 508-3335

$725,000

UNIQUE ELGIN WINE COUNTRY HOME
MLS # 2209962 15 FENCED ACRES
Views in every direction. 3571 sf home w/3bd/3ba plus a 2400 sf shop w/full bath. Pipe fencing, horse facilities, private well, indoor pool. LARRY DEMUN 520 732-9179

$527,500

ELGIN RANCH ON 216 ACRES
MLS# 21917475 5670 SF, luxuriously remodeled. Land is dividable, w/no HOA. Direct access to Nat. Forest. Great for horses, vineyard, or nature lovers. JEAN MILLER 520 508-3335

$1,395,000

BISCUIT VIEW BEAUTY - ELGIN
MLS # 21926459 10 ACRES
1399 sf, 2bd/2ba with fabulous views. Direct access to BLM land and plenty of room for horses. New Pella doors. Completely furnished. CHERYL VOLK 520 975-7277

$375,000

NEW CUSTOM HOME ON THE MESA
MLS # 22000349 4+ ACRES
BREATHTAKING VIEWS over looking Patagonia. Luxurious 3bd/2.5ba home w/2 car garage. Open Great Room, gourmet kitchen, high ceilings. JEAN MILLER 520 508-3335

$479,900

PATAGONIA TINY HOUSE ON LARGE LOT
MLS# 22017296 588 1St Avenue
Built in 2018. Cute as a button 458 sf home w/18d/3ba. & loft. Energy efficient. Private location with room for a garden and chickens. BARBARA HARRIS 602 826-4026

$189,000

LAZY RR CUSTOM HOME
MLS # 21917028 20 ACRES
Artistic home weloads of modern green features. AAC/Adobe, radiant floor heating, mini-splits. 2bd/2ba w/lg studio. Room for guest house. JEAN MILLER 520 508-3335

$525,000

PRIME LAND JUST NORTH OF PATAGONIA
MLS # 22001000 6.01 ACRES
Penny Lane Lot 18, off Stevens Canyon Ranch Rd. Gentle rolling grasslands, lovely views, mature trees, Nat. Forest access, shared well. CAROL FORD 520 604-0162

$105,000

NEW PATAGONIA HOME
COMING SOON! 149 ROADRUNNER LANE
1263 sf, 2bd/2ba, granite counters, high ceilings & 2 car garage. On double lot w/great views. Great in-town location & not in flood plain. JEAN MILLER 520 508-3335

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COUNTRY LIVING WITHIN TOWN LIMITS
MLS # 21915705 .58 ACRES
38d/28a Mf: home just steps from Montessori School. Room for a horse, workshop, garden or hobbies. Private well, nice views, easy living. JEAN MILLER 520 508-3335

$159,000

PATAGONIA: 325-A Mckeown Ave., next to Gathering Grounds 520-394-2120
SONOITA: Corner of Hwys 82 & 83, next to Post Office 520-455-5235
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