Increase in Border Activity Discussed

By Marion Vendituoli

Approximately 150 people attended a community meeting, held at the Canelo Cowboy Church on March 11. The meeting was a response to concerns raised by reports that the Border Patrol Station was releasing undocumented migrants in Sonora.

Community Liaison Officer Justin Bartine, from the Sonoita Border Patrol Station, opened his remarks by saying he was unable to “put out an official statement.” He did say that they were expecting to see a “big increase” in asylum seeking immigrants along the southern border of the U.S.

He did not anticipate a large number of asylum seekers to come through the Sonoita area. Typically, he said, they enter where there are roads closer to the border, so that they can surrender themselves to authorities and claim asylum status, rather than have to cross open country. In 2018 – 2019, when there was an influx of asylum seekers, the Sonora Station housed a number of them, but these were overflow primarily from the Three Points Station, he explained.

Another difference between those years and this year is that the Border Patrol no longer houses migrants in detention centers for more than 72 hours. It is now a violation of the law, he said, and it is not the mission of the Border Patrol to be a detention facility. According to a statement provided to the PRT by Robert Bushell, Tucson sector Special Operations Supervisor, “CBP has seen a steady increase in border encounters since April 2020, which, aggravated by COVID-19 restrictions and social distancing guidelines, has caused some facilities to reach maximum safe holding capacity. Per longstanding practice, when long-term holding solutions aren’t possible, some migrants will be processed for removal, provided a Notice to Appear, and released into the U.S. to await a future immigration hearing. As the Administration reviews the current immigration process, balancing it against the ongoing pandemic, we will continue to use all current authorities to avoid keeping individuals in a congregate setting for any length of time.” See MIGRANTS, p.14

Town Marshall Resigns

By Marion Vendituoli

Town Marshall Joe Patterson announced his plans to resign at the Patagonia Town Council meeting on March 24. “I will be working on my exit from the Patagonia Marshall’s office,” he told the council members.

Patterson is resigning, after serving as Marshall since 2011, because he is tired of being “harassed,” he said in a recent interview. “There’s been one person who has filed complaints every year. At a certain point I realized I had had enough.”

Patterson had been involved in a lawsuit directed at the Town by April Rivera over a 2014 incident when he arrested Rivera. A judge ultimately determined that there had been probable cause for Rivera’s arrest and that the malicious prosecution complaint by Rivera was unfounded.

In 2019, Patterson gained notoriety when a video shot by a local twelve-year-old showed him threatening the child with juvenile detention. “It affected my life and my wife’s life a whole lot,” Patterson said. After the incident went viral on the web, Patterson said that he received threatening phone calls. “Every February it comes up again.”

On March 17, 2021 Patterson met with Town Manager Ron Robinson about a complaint that the Town had recently received, part of “a series of ongoing complaints,” according to Patterson. “I’m tired of dealing with the same complaint over and over. This was the straw that broke the camel’s back,” he said, and led to him announcing his resignation.

“I’ve said from the beginning that there will be a time when Patagonia isn’t going to want me to be the Marshall,” Patterson said. He is planning to stay on until August 1, 2021 and is working on putting together a transition plan. “I have told Ron [Robinson] that I will make sure it is seamless. I am working on the pass-on book so that the new Marshall will be able to take command.”

After he leaves the Marshall’s office, Patterson plans to work for the AZ Dept. of Corrections. At present, while continuing his duties as Town Marshall, he is working at the AZ State Prison in Tucson. He announced at the Town Council meeting that he has submitted the application for the permit for Patagonia’s 4th of July celebration.
MISSION STATEMENT

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

WHO WE ARE

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

Managing Editor: Marion Vendituoli
Assistant Editor: Nisa Stover Talavera
Bookkeeper: Cynie Murray
Administrative Assistant Ad Manager: Jared Krikorian
Contributing Writers: Bob Brandt, Alison Bunting, Francesca Claverie, Lynn Davison, Jo Dean, Cassina Farley, Robert Gay, Petra Kelly, Sarah Klingenstein, Martin Levowitz, Mary McKay, Pat McNamara, Harold Meckler, Vince Pinto, Cami Schlappy, Laura Wenzel

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Contact us at: prteditor@gmail.com
PO Box 1073, Patagonia, AZ 85624
(740) 206-9594

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In This Issue

THE ROLE OF CITIZEN JOURNALISM

By Marion Vendituoli

In this issue, we begin introducing you to our amazing group of writers here at the PRT, the people who regularly volunteer their time, effort, and talents to bring you this paper each month.

This is no small task. Each month we meet to discuss possible story topics and split up assignments. Then each member of our team researches topics, conducts interviews, writes up drafts, fact checks material and patiently responds to my nitpicking edits and questions.

When I came to the PRT, there was a small group of hard working, dedicated writers already involved with the paper. In the last four years, our group has grown exponentially and now there are an astonishing 16 regular contributors, including our newest columnist, Mary McKay, who has volunteered to write a local gardening column for us. Mary brings a wealth of experience and training in horticulture and I, for one, can use all the help I can get growing plants in this interesting climate we live in.

Speaking of interesting climates, this month the PRT reports on some difficult issues facing our communities, including the increase in drug and human smuggling, the debt falling on our local governments due to mismanagement of pension plans at the state level, the audit at the Sonoita Elgin Fire District that has turned up some disturbing overpayments to the former Chief, and the resignation of the Patagonia Town Marshall. It is our responsibility to report on these and other issues with fact checked information, not innuendo. It is your responsibility to form your opinions based on facts, not Facebook posts.

I am so proud of our writers who take this responsibility so seriously. Our columnists never fail, month after month, to provide us with commentary, insight into local history, the world around us and the stars above us, as well.

I am in awe of these citizen journalists, and to them goes all the credit for this publication. If you see them around town, please take the time to thank them for all they are doing to keep you informed and to keep local, nonprofit journalism alive and thriving here in eastern Santa Cruz County.

Lily Rose Harsh works on a project for ‘The Universe Within,’ one of the programs which received a grant from PRCF. See 2021 Grant Winners, p. 8

This month the PRT reports on some difficult issues facing our communities, including the increase in drug and human smuggling, the debt falling on our local governments due to mismanagement of pension plans at the state level, the audit at the Sonoita Elgin Fire District that has turned up some disturbing overpayments to the former Chief, and the resignation of the Patagonia Town Marshall. It is our responsibility to report on these and other issues with fact checked information, not innuendo. It is your responsibility to form your opinions based on facts, not Facebook posts.

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Our new gardening column provides tips on preparing your garden. See Garden Guide, p. 18

What is The Press Core?

Press Core is the Patagonia Regional Times monthly giving program that helps sustain the PRT’s operations throughout the year.

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Sign up for the PRT E-News Service!

As a e-subscriber you will receive an email at the beginning of each month with top stories and a link to the new issue before it is available in the stands. We are excited to announce a new feature. As we step in to carry on Clare Bonelli’s popular community newsletter, we will continue her tradition of issuing weekly updates of local events, news and items of community interest.

patagoniaregionaltimes.org/connect-with-the-prt
Meet the PRT Writers
This is the first of a series introducing the writers who regularly contribute articles and columns to the Patagonia Regional Times. Look for more profiles in upcoming issues.

Bob Brandt
A farm boy from Lancaster County, PA, after jitterbugging my way through high school, I earned B.S. and M.Ed. degrees at West Chester State College (WCSC) and the University of Pittsburgh, respectively. Never a standout athlete, I nonetheless lettered in soccer, wrestling, gymnastics and tennis. I also wrote for my college newspaper and served as its editor-in-chief my senior year. My most notable achievement in college, however, may be my selection as Miss Villanova while a freshman at WCSC.

After graduate school, I taught health and physical education and coached soccer and gymnastics at the college level before starting my public health career as the executive director of an Upstate New York chapter of what is currently the American Lung Association. I worked in public health for the balance of my career, in D.C. and Maryland where I spent the first 10 years as a public health educator before shifting to the management of public mental health programs for the next 20 years. Along the way, I played lead roles in creating two federally-funded community health centers and a community mental health center.

After retiring, my wife, Anne Townsend, and I sold our home, traveled in our motorhome for eighteen months, then settled down near Gettysburg, PA where I worked as a counselor at the county jail and volunteered at a maximum security prison.

In 2015, Anne and I moved to Patagonia where we had spent several winters volunteering at Sonoita Creek State Natural Area. Still unable to fully embrace retirement, I love my part-time work for Wildlife Corridors, LLC.

I enjoy writing, hiking, dancing and torturing listeners with my harmonica playing. Having met on the dance floor, Anne and I plan to dance until the Twelfth of Never.

Jo Dean
I moved to Elgin in 2015 with my husband of 51 years, Lance, from Elko/Spring Creek, NV where we had lived for 28 years. We came to Arizona in 1970 for graduate school at Uof A for Lance and for me to work as a Registered Nurse at TMC. I worked in the first pediatrics ICU at TMC.

During the early 1970s we lived and worked on the YWCA Rancho Los Cerros Ranch Camp and were proactive in the designation of what is now Catalina State Park. Lance’s mining jobs then took us to seven of the western states, during which time we had three children. After 17 moves, we landed in Elko, NV.

In 1987, I started the Northeastern Wildlife Rehabilitation program. Over the next 28 years, we treated hundreds of injured eagles, hawks, owls, various birds, reptiles, and mammals. I found my nursing skills, specifically in pediatrics, were beneficial in learning to treat injured and diseased wildlife.

I managed to take on every volunteer position available for any of our kids’ activities. Later I took a job at the local Great Basin Community College Certified Nursing Assistant program, as the director and an instructor for the four satellite campuses’ in Nevada.

My early years, living on my grandparents’ farm in Indiana and being raised in Colorado with horses, camping, hiking, and fishing gave me a great appreciation and environmental awareness for the earth. Today I enjoy my retirement with my husband, children, grandchildren, and friends. Living in Elgin with horses, dogs, cats, chickens, bicycle riding, traveling and writing for the PRT make life perfect.

Harold Meckler
The daughter of a second grade school teacher and a college music professor, I was born and raised in central Illinois. In this flat land of corn, soybeans and humidity, I found solace in horses...oh lordy, how I loved them. I was a barn rat at the college stables. Finally acquiring my very own horse at 14, I kept him at the county fairgrounds with the standardbred harness race horses. There I picked up more horse experience driving these racers to exercise them for their owners. I also worked and showed quarter horses for another owner and barrel raced mine. After high school, a brief, unsuccessful stint in college, a starter marriage (also unsuccessful) and hitchhiking in southern California in 1968 (peace, Dude) I found myself back home to regroup. During another attempt at college (music major this time to please my Dad) I met future husband, Dave. College attendance was a cover. I just really wanted another husband. I went with husband and new baby daughter to Indiana and being raised in Colorado with horses, camp.

Pat McNamara
PRT Writers

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Anne and I plan to dance until the Twelfth of Never.
SEFD Over-Payment Audit Received

By Kat Crockett

At the SEFD Fire Board meeting on March 22, Chair Chris Johnson announced that the audit on over-payments to Chief DeWolf was completed by Walker & Armstrong, LLP. Chief Joseph DeWolf was terminated on January 5, 2021 for directing or accepting an increase in pay of $300 per week without obtaining SEFD Board approval dating back to November of 2018. According to the audit, the direct overpayment of the unauthorized increase in pay totaled $30,550.

The rippling effect of the increase also resulted in overpayment to the Public Safety Personnel Retirement System (PSPRS) for retirement contributions and taxes paid by the department totaling $7,329. Unauthorized family medical insurance to include dental and vision came to $26,428, a cost which should have been borne by DeWolf according to his employment contract. Lastly, overpayments for the period DeWolf was on paid leave and not performing under the IGA totaled $11,146.

Johnson filed a claim on March 23 with INSZONE, the SEFD insurance company, to recoup the $75,453 of overpayments and expects to receive their decision soon. If the claim is denied, the Board will consider contacting the Santa Cruz County Attorney’s office to inquire about other options to resolve the misuse of public funds. The Board also contacted the State’s PSPRS office to discuss possible refunds; however, Johnson said the response from the State was ambiguous and further action may be required. Additional information may be available at the SEFD Special Board meeting tentatively scheduled for April 7.

Board discussions turned to developing the draft budget for 2021-2022 and they tentatively scheduled a public meeting for discussion also on April 7. The Board’s stated goal is to not raise last year’s tax rate. They are proposing an increase in wages for the lower paid employees to $13 per hour and identified the need to replace one or possibly two 2006 ambulances incurring costly repairs.

Replacing the Fire Chief was also discussed at the meeting. The Board’s intent is to enter into an Inter-Governmental Agreement (IGA) with the Palominas Fire District to have the Palominas Fire Chief also manage the SEFD. Negotiations with Palominas are on-going; however, no action will be taken until the Palominas Chief vacancy is filled, likely by Jon Buonacorsii who is the acting chief for both Palominas and SEFD. Johnson said this would be a bridging strategy for maybe a year or more, after which they would consider a permanent fill.

The Board also discussed recruitment for the vacant board position and decided to extend the recruitment period to accept applications to the end of April.

When asked to respond to the statement that some residents believe the current/previous boards are culpable in some of the problems that occurred, Johnson replied, “Given DeWolf’s experience and longevity, the Board trusted the Chief and failed to ask key questions on the budget and his management. We thought we knew what was in certain line items but found out we were wrong. However, no matter how long it took to identify the problems, it does not negate the fact that the Chief took pay and benefits that he was not entitled to, and these were paid for with public funds.”

Local Business Burgled by Human Traffickers

By Marion Vendituoli

On the morning of March 27, Sonoita shop owner Stephanie Hubbell received a phone call informing her that her store, Cowgirl Flair Boutique, had been broken into. The owner of the Sonoita Mini-Market was alerted to the break in by a Border Patrol agent who noticed an open window and bent screen. The shop, which is located at the intersection of SR 83 and SR 82 in Sonoita, next to the Mini-Market, is just down the road from the Sonoita Border Patrol station, where three human traffickers, or coyotes, U.S. citizens, from Phoenix, had been released that morning. Their vehicle had been confiscated when they were apprehended attempting to transport two migrants that they had picked up south of Patagonia. The migrants were deported back to Mexico.

When Hubbell arrived at her shop, she found that approximately $500 had been stolen from her cash register, and three shirts and five pairs of jeans had been stolen. Two blankets and a Bose radio were stolen from Bunkhouse, the home décor shop at the rear of the boutique. Hubbell also found cigarette butts and evidence of drug use, possibly crack. The burglars started a fire outside the building in a flowerpot, burning pages out of books from the free library nook that stands in front of the store.

The burglars then walked to the Dollar General Store and purchased cell phones with the money stolen from Cowgirl Flair, which were recovered when they were arrested later that morning by Santa Cruz County Sheriff’s officers. The two men and one woman were apprehended near the Sonoita Fire Station as they attempted to hitchhike north on SR 83 and are in custody in Nogales. Hubbell was only able to recover $100 of the stolen cash.

“I’ve been in business since 2012 and I’ve never had a problem,” Hubbell said. “You let your guard down in a small community like we have. I’m hoping that we can get help from our state government because we know we’re not going to get help from Washington.” Hubbell would like to see the Governor send the National Guard to this area. “It’s a presence,” she said, “and another helping hand that the Border Patrol doesn’t have right now.”

Kathy Routledge and Stephanie Hubbell stand by the window that was used by burglars to gain access to Hubbell’s shop.
On March 25, Governor Doug Ducey rescinded all restrictions that had been put in place on businesses and residents to quell the virus’s spread. The executive order also prohibited any local jurisdictions from imposing mask mandates or limits on business operations.

In response, Santa Cruz County (SCC) Supervisor Bruce Bracker, who represents the eastern side of the county, expressed disappointment in the lifting of restrictions and protested the limitation on local control. In a statement, Bracker declared, “Last year we worked with his office to push for local determination… In fact, I would argue that the delay in granting the local determination may have prolonged the situation.

“While we are excited to see the progress at the major metropolitan areas in Arizona, the challenges remain in rural parts of Arizona, such as Santa Cruz County. We were disappointed to see that the state did not reach an agreement with FEMA for an additional 250,000 vaccines that would have gone to rural communities. “Our Governor has indicated that his decision would be driven by science and the data. Well, the data in Santa Cruz County indicates that we are about 10 days behind Maricopa County in extending vaccinations to age brackets below 65 years of age. As a border county, we are also impacted by the situation in Mexico, and although it has greatly improved, there remains uncertainty about what will happen in coming weeks. We are in the throes of Spring Break and Easter, and Mexico has been warning residents of the threat of another spike.”

In light of these concerns, the County has petitioned the Governor to reconsider the restrictions on local governments. Vaccine Allocations Increasing

Santa Cruz County’s vaccination site at the Recreation Center in Nogales has been administering 600 vaccines per day since mid-February, as allocations to the County have increased from around 800 doses per week to over 2,000. Vaccines are also being given at the Mariposa Community Health Center in Nogales. As the PRT goes to press, the County expected to receive over 4,000 doses the week of March 29. Currently, vaccinations are given Tuesdays through Fridays, with occasional weekend hours, especially when second doses are being completed.

By March 24, 30% of County residents had received at least one dose of the vaccine. Two thirds of that number have been fully vaccinated. In the three zip codes covering Patagonia, Sonoita and Elgin, approximately 1300 people had been vaccinated.

According to Jeff Terrell, Director of Public Health for SCC, the County is still vaccinating the 65 – 74-year-old group, while catching up with anyone older, as well as essential workers and teachers who are still unvaccinated. While the State recently changed eligibility statewide to 16 years of age, it is still up to each county to determine its own priority groups, whether age- or health-based. The goal is to get to the general population as quickly as possible, but the timing in Santa Cruz County is as yet undetermined. While the County has received several batches of the one-dose Johnson & Johnson vaccine, Terrell expects to continue getting mostly Moderna.

As staff continues to call to set up appointments with people who have preregistered, he reminded residents to answer any call from a Nogales number, even if unknown.

Terrell stated that people should continue to distance and wear masks, as it is unknown whether a vaccinated person can still carry enough of the virus to infect others.

By Sarah Klingenstein

Governor Lifts Restrictions While Vaccination Efforts Continue

INDUSTRIALIZED MINING IN THE PATAGONIA MOUNTAINS PUTS THE FOLLOWING AT RISK

- clean, sufficient water for human and nonhuman life
- regional ecotourism and nature-based economies
- 112 Federally endangered, threatened, and sensitive species important migratory routes for wildlife traveling to and from breeding grounds

ABOVE: SOUTH32’S OPERATIONS SOUTH OF PATAGONIA

THERE IS NO MODERN MINING

that will meet the high standards required to protect the vitality of the Patagonia Mountains—a global biodiversity hotspot—and our water resources. The well-being and economic prosperity of the region is deeply tied to the health of these mountains and Sonoita Creek, which flows into the Santa Cruz River and into a watershed utilized by over one million people.
County, Town on Hook For Pension Fund Shortfall
By Marion Vendituoli

Santa Cruz County (SCC) has been saddled with an $11 million debt due to a shortfall in the funds held in the Public Safety Personnel Retirement System (PSPRS). The system is a state-run pension system that invests funds collected from more than 200 counties, municipalities, and fire districts, manages retirement plans for law enforcement, firefighters and corrections officers. In SCC, this debt has accrued in the account that manages the pension funds for 65 active and retired members of the County Sheriff’s Department. The Town of Patagonia also has an unfunded liability of $687,572, according to the PSPRS’s actuarial valuation report as of June 30, 2020, in the PSPRS account that funds the Marshall’s Office personnel.

The PSPRS Board, which is entirely run by the state level with no input from its funders, invests the money paid into the system. Over the last several years, these investments have fallen short of their investment goals, this past year showing a return of only 0.3%. “Problems with the books at PSPRS are the latest embarrassment for a system that has less than half the money needed to pay current and future pension benefits,” according to an article in azcentral.com.

In January 2019, Governor Ducey appointed a new board to the PSPRS in response to charges of lax accounting, sexual harassment, and controversy. “They’re trying to put in safety measures to correct what happened in the past,” SCC Manager Jennifer St. John said. “But they were not in touch with their members and were using bad assumptions.”

According to St. John, this unfunded liability grows each year, partly because of this lack of return on investments and partly because contributions into the system are projected to be higher than they actually are. For example, the formula is based on a projection of payroll growth at 4%, but few funding entities have raised their payrolls in recent years. Three and a half years ago PSPRS offered counties and other entities the option of paying their shortfalls in full or having their annual contributions increased over the next 20 or 30 years. Santa Cruz County currently pays approximately $1 million annually into the PSPRS, which comes out of the general fund. 30% of the annual payment goes to the unfunded liability debt. If the County does not pay down this debt, annual payments will be $2 million and would rise to $2.7 million in 17 years, assuming that the fund does not require additional bailouts. The total amount that would be paid by SCC at the end of 20 years would be close to $21,000,000, according to St. John.

The choices for SCC and the Town of Patagonia are whether to pay the debt off in 20 or 30 years or in 26 years. ‘The option to pay off the entire debt or pay off a portion of the debt to lower future payments,’ the City of Yuma, which was looking at a $274,000,000 debt if it were to make payments over the next 20 years, opted to borrow the money to pay off its unfunded liability, as did Flagstaff. Prescott opted to raise its sales tax by 5% to cover its liability. As of June 30, 2020, there were seven active and retired members vested in the Patagonia Marshall’s pension plan, according to the actuarial valuation report.

Last year 37.54% of the Patagonia’s annual payments into the system went to pay the amortized unfunded liability, which the Town will be paying off for the next 26 years. At the end of the 26 years, these payments will total $1,082,223. The Town does have the option to try to borrow the money from another source at a lower interest rate to pay off the unfunded liability.

“I don’t like it. This is getting more of my attention right now,” said St. John. “I am dealing with it and finding out exactly where we stand,” Patagonia Town Manager Ron Robinson said. “Their mismanagement at the state level gets passed down to us. There needs to be legislation to indemnify towns, cities and counties from their mismanagement.”

“I don’t think we would borrow that money,” he added. “It is easier to make the bi-weekly payments than it would be for us to take on a loan.”

Paying the debt off does not ensure that the fund will not develop a shortfall in the future. “Do you borrow the money and hope they invest it wisely?” County Supervisor Bruce Bracker asked. Robinson echoed Bracker’s comment. “I don’t want to pay for something and then turn around and pay for it again,” he said.

The burden to fund the PSPRS will, of course, ultimately be placed on the taxpayers of the County and the Town of Patagonia, whether it be through sales tax increases, property taxes, or both. Bracker feels that the state has an obligation to help fix this problem. “What isn’t the state addressing this since they created this problem? They have $1 billion in the rainy-day fund and is talking about cutting another $1 billion in taxes because they have too much money,” he said. “This mismanagement of a critical pension fund has been an ongoing issue for years. The teachers’ pension fund does not have a shortfall. Why is it burden on local taxpayers if those entities didn’t have control? It’s an expensive problem.”

Town Looking at Revenue Crunch
By Lynn Davison

In the Town of Patagonia, state revenues, which account for two thirds of the current annual budget of $1.9 million, were down 46.5% in the quarter ending December 31, 2020. If those reductions were to continue over the next two quarters of the fiscal year, it could result in a devastating loss of over $500,000. Ron Robinson, Town Manager, is attempting to limit the losses by making some reductions now. The Library has laid off one full time staff person and the Town Marshall has not refilled a vacant full time deputy position.

Fortunately, a recent revenue update from the Arizona League of Cities and Towns projects that Patagonia will end this fiscal year (July 1, 2020-June 30 2021) with state revenues neutral as compared to the prior year budget. Robinson said “they are only projections and could change, but if they hold it will be very good news.”

Town Marshall Joe Patterson manages a small team: two full time deputies and a part time animal control officer. When asked what the deputy cut means, Patterson said “the same workload is spread over fewer people and if overtime is cut that leaves me, as the only salaried employee, to pick up the slack.” Patterson also said that “some believe the Town Marshall should bring money to the town coffers by issuing a lot of speeding tickets,” but he sees it differently. “Law enforcement is not about revenue generation.”

Laura Wenzel, the Town Librarian, says she’s a little scared about the future of the library. “We are a public library that does not generate our own revenue. This past year has been crazy, as the Library has moved from full closure to curbside pick up to access by appointment only and then back to curbside pickup. The library had to lay off a full-time employee. He fortunately has found other work. “We will feel his loss more acutely when the library reopens. I will be spending more of my time covering his job.” Fortunately, the nonprofit Friends of the Library, remains a stable source of funding. Wenzel estimates the Friends have raised and contributed approximately 30% of the Library’s budget in past few years, covering all book purchases and some program costs.

On the plus side, the local portion of sales tax is up 16.6%, primarily because of the Fairfield Act, enacted in 2019, which requires a portion of sales tax on goods ordered online and delivered to a Patagonia address to be shared with the Town. Enterprise Funds, or fees received for Town delivered services, like water, sewer, garbage, are up 6.7%. Robinson projects that these increases could generate as much as an additional $500,000 annually if they continue at these levels.

Another potential piece of good news is the passing of the federal American Rescue Plan, with $350 billion allocated for states, cities, towns and tribal governments that have had revenue losses due to COVID. The Arizona League of Cities and Towns projects that Patagonia could receive $208,000 from those funds, divided into two equal payments, one in FY22 and one in FY23. If the money does come, it will be in the second half of the Town’s 2021-2022 fiscal year.

Patagonia also has two grant fund initiatives that will continue in the 2021-22 fiscal year: completion of Doc Mock Park improvements and implementation of the sewage treatment plant upgrade.

Another positive, it is Patagonia’s turn to receive federal Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds. The Town receives a CDBG allocation once every three years. $437, 557 is available this coming year in our region. Southeastern Arizona Government Organizations (SEAGO) who manages the Small Cities/Rural CDBG program for our region will take 12% for administration leaving $385,050 available to the Town. There has been one public hearing in Patagonia on CDBG uses. Suggestions from those at the hearing included increases in library salaries, funding for youth center, funding for the senior center; a new fire truck; a solar power plant to reduce costs for low-income families; recreation center for kids. Robinson said the Town is also considering using CDBG funds to replace the deteriorating road bed and surface on McKeevon between 3rd and 4th Avenue. A second public hearing on CDBG funding priorities will be held on April 14, 2021 at 7pm.

Robinson is busy working now on the 2021-2022 budget. “I am not considering new taxes at this time,” he said. “I do not want to burden community members with more costs now.” He also does not want to dip into the Town’s reserve which currently stand at $969,803. Building the budget with the lack of certainty on the revenue side is a tough job, but at least the uncertainty is trending better now than a month ago.

There will be opportunities for the public to comment on the proposed 2021-2022 budget later this spring including a council workshop and a public hearing.
Third generation Sonoita native Ralph Quiroz was met by a catastrophic scene when checking his heifers on Feb. 18 on leased land off of Highway 82 in Sonoita. He found some of his cows down and others staggering from some unknown cause. He contacted Sierra Vista veterinarian, Dr. Gary Thrasher who arrived within the hour. Dr. Thrasher took blood samples to send to Texas A & M for a toxicology screen and began emergency care for the ailing cows. In spite of the treatment, seven of Quiroz’s bred, three and four year old heifers succumbed and seventeen others were affected by this unknown initiate. One carcass and the brain of a separate heifer were submitted to the U of A for necropsy. The results of the toxicology screen showed a very high concentration of lead poisoning to be the culprit. Lead poisoning causes neurological symptoms and the affected animals staggered, fell down, were blinded and ran in circles and into fences.

Quiroz and his family were devastated to witness the struggling cattle, that were part of their livelihood, suffer so intensely. Fortunately, there is a medication specifically for lead poisoning, and with treatment and supportive care the majority of this herd survived and are now thriving. One cow recently calved a normal calf and both are doing well.

The mystery as to the source of this poisoning is currently under investigation, but the preliminary results point to an old homestead in the area of the field where the cattle grazed. Soil samples showed some old, possibly mining, rocks that had leached lead into the soil. Lead has a sweet taste so the cattle could also have licked the rocks as well as the soil. There were also old paint buckets in the area that are being tested. Samples were sent to a lab in Utah and Quiroz is still awaiting confirmation of the previous analysis.

Quiroz, the son of Rafael Quiroz, works as a cowboy for various local ranchers. Rafael has been in the area for fifty-two years and was manager of the Crown C Ranch in Sonoita, where Ralph was raised and learned his skills as a cowboy. The Quiroz family resides in Elgin and depend on their cattle for part of their income, so the loss of these heifers and the ensuing treatment of the remaining cattle, diagnostics and veterinary bills were quite a financial strain. With the help of friends who started a Go Fund Me page, they are back on good footing now and look forward to a better future.
PRCF Names 2021 Grant Winners

By Sarah Klingenstein

The Patagonia Regional Community Fund (PRCF) has just announced its 2021 grants, totaling over $23,000, to six local nonprofits. These funds are part of $40,000 that has gone to support local organizations since the beginning of 2020. In contrast to last year’s grants given out by PRCF, which addressed the impacts of the pandemic on local non-profits, this year’s grants cycle includes some new and innovative programs. The following grants were awarded:

**Mat Bevel Company:** The PRCF grant will fund a locally developed curriculum to nurture creativity and STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math) skills this spring at Patagonia Elementary School (PES) and Patagonia Montessori. The students will participate in "The Universe Within," teaching elementary students about geometry and physics through characters, stories, sculptures, machines and solutions they create, according to Paula Schaper, Vice-President of Mat Bevel Company. Schaper said, "One very exciting facet of the program is the formation of The Creative Directors For Youth, which is a group of students who are videotaping providing other students their age with demonstrations, tips and advice. Our local kids are amazing in these videos!" For more information, go to www.matbevelcompany.org.

**Patagonia Creative Arts Assn:** The PRCF grant will be used to replace theater curtains in the Tin Shed Theater that were donated 15 years ago by the Patagonia Woman’s Club. “Since then, we’ve made safety and ADA improvements, like a fire exit, a handicapped exit, and assistive hearing devices,” said PCAA Director Cassina Farley. “It’s time we replaced the curtain with ones made of flame-retardant material. And this grant will pay for the bulk of that project.”

**Borderlands Restoration Network:** BRN successfully applied for a PRCF grant to develop a program to educate community members about developing mesquite as a wild food source. Denisse Ortega Lorona, Education Director for Borderlands Restoration Network, said it is happy that Borderlands will now be able to expand a program it has been developing over the past several years. Funding will pay for salaries and needed materials and will support educational activities. Building on previous mesquite milling workshops and the formation of the Mesquite Stewards, whose mission is to understand the history and potential of mesquite, and to develop skills in using mesquite as a wild food, the program will expand the applications of mesquite into various areas, including its benefits to habitat, pollinators, and soil fixing. “As we research and meet with local experts such as arborists and agriculturalists, we are learning so much about mesquite and all the ways it contributes to lives and livelihoods,” said Juliett Jivanti, BRN’s Educational Coordinator. The next series of public workshops will begin in June, and anyone interested in joining the Mesquite Stewards may contact jivanti@borderlandsrestoration.org.

**Patagonia Youth Enrichment Ctr:** On March 15, PYEC held its first in-person event in a full year, thanks in large part to their new grant from the Patagonia Regional Community Fund. That morning, a crew of teenagers spread 18 yards of topsoil over the front yard of the Center, creating a vegetable garden plot. The “Working Outside the Box” project is the brainchild of Cailtyn Coleman, PYEC Program Coordinator, and Kate Tirion, local gardening expert and former director of Deep Dirt Farms. Spending the entire year apart has been difficult and we’ve done what we could. But we’ve missed being together,” said PYEC Director Anna Coleman. “So, we had to ‘think outside the box.’ The name also refers to working out of doors, which is safer during COVID, and also healthy for all of us.” Kate Tirion will act as mentor to the group, including several teen leaders who will help oversee and organize other teens to plant, tend and harvest. The Center plans to enjoy the vegetables in their cooking projects, and share surplus with the teens’ families and possibly the community.

**Senior Citizens of Patagonia:** Since COVID, the number of people receiving lunch from the Senior Center has more than doubled to 55 meals per day. Lunches have been offered for pickup since March 2020.

Chuck Kelly, Center Secretary, said, “The funding from PRCF will go almost completely to purchasing food for the meals program. While we receive about half our needed budget from the Southeastern Arizona Governments Organization (SEAGO), it is up to us to seek the rest of the money. The Patagonia Community Regional Fund has been a supporter since around 2009.”

Lunch is the main meal of the day, the main source of nutrition, for some residents. “Our meals are prepared by our wonderful chef, and menu is approved by a nutritionist,” Kelly said. “We offer lunch Monday through Friday, but if folks need meals to sustain them over the weekend, we provide frozen meals we have set aside.”

Anyone who is 60 years old or order, or has a spouse who is, is welcome. Information at seniorcitizensofpatagonia.org.

**Whispers Sanctuary:** The impacts of COVID have affected animals, as well. At Whispers Sanctuary, Toni Leo said, “We support our animals in large part through Sparky’s Cantina, a plant-based food catering truck that we take to local festivals. This year, no festivals meant our normal income source was gone.”

“The animals, mostly equines, that we have taken on are not necessarily unwanted. Some owners have been hit so hard financially that they can no longer care for their animals. We understand that - it costs us around $300 per month to feed one horse. With the funding from the PRCF and other private donors, I’ll be able to call up my supplier in the next couple of weeks and tell him I’ve got money in the bank to order a load of hay.”

In addition to 13 horses, there are 10 donkeys, a few mules, and goats, geese, barn cats and dogs on their 26-acre property. The Sanctuary can put the equines and goats out to pasture during the summer months, but not all the animals can graze; many are old and have no teeth. There are also vet and dental bills.

PRCF’s funds are permanent endowments that support the needs of the Patagonia, Sonoita, Elgin and Canelo area. These funds grow both from donations made to PRCF and the earnings from PRCF’s long term investments managed by ACF. Those interested in donating can go to azfoundations.org/Patagonia or send a check made out to PRCF to Patagonia Regional Community Fund at 400 W Fry Blvd, Suite 6, Sierra Vista, AZ 85635.
The De La Ossa Family Story
Part 3 - Arnulfo De La Ossa

By Sarah Klingenstein

Part 3 of the PRT series featuring the De La Ossa family focuses on the mid-twentieth century life of another branch of the Antonio and Carolina De La Ossa family in the San Rafael Valley. The second child of Armida and Abel, Arnulfo (Arnie), born in Lochiel in 1938, has fond memories of his childhood in the Valley. For years, they lived in the two-bedroom “rock house” between Lochiel and Washington Camp. Such family togetherness was alleviated a bit when the three sons were deemed old enough to sleep out in a bunkhouse on their own.

“Our parents, Armida and Abel, were very affectionate, especially our mother. We were well cared for and, of course, reprimanded when we were wrong. Mom’s parents lived down in Santa Cruz (Mexico) and we often piled into the truck and drove down there for family celebrations at our grandparents’ home, sometimes spending the night,” Arnie recounted.

He also recalls big celebrations in Lochiel, including informal horse racing and baseball games. A lot of activity took place under the big cottonwood tree that is known to all the family. It is where his brother Onofre’s funeral was held in 1912, and from it one can see the Lochiel Chapel and the family cemetery on the hilltop. Cemetery cleanups are held annually. According to Onofre’s wife, Maureen De La Ossa, “the De La Ossas have always looked for excuses to get together for a beer and a hot dog.” Twice a year, they can be spotted cleaning up the section of Highway 82 they adopted the year Ono died.

Of their schooling, Arnie said, “My siblings and I went to the Washington Camp School, though I went to first grade at Lochiel. Of course, we spoke Spanish at home, and our first exposure to English was when we went off to first grade. I remember Mrs. Woods, our very kind teacher for several years at the one-room schoolhouse. All our teachers treated us like we were their own. She would bring each class up to her desk, give us our lesson, then call up the next class. She walked to school just like we did, about a mile or so. The older boys would keep the wood stove stoked in the winter from a big woodpile out back.” After completing school there, the kids rode the bus into Patagonia.

“We’d cowboy with my dad. There was little fencing - the cattle could run from Washington Camp to the top of the mountain on the way to Nogales. We had to constantly keep checking on them. We spent most of our free time riding the hills, until we were old enough to get into trouble in Lochiel.” Arnie did not elaborate.

“When it was time to sell the cows, we’d drive them to the corrals and a truck would pick up the calves and the old cows and transport them to the shipping pens in Patagonia to be transported to Tombokone and beyond. There was a turntable right across from the Wagon Wheel Saloon where they’d turn the engine around,” he said.

After graduating from Patagonia High School, Arnie left for the Navy. He served in the SeaBees, the Navy’s construction brigade, in Alaska and Okinawa. They turned what had been just a landing site during World War II into an airbase, building barraks, hangars, and the first heliport base. “I loved that kind of work,” he said.

“When I returned in 1960, I hired on at the Vaca Ranch. I married Marsha Beach, who I’d met in high school, and we lived in a little house out there. I loved cowboying. At that time, there was a foreman, a handyman and me for 800 mother cows. My main job was treating screwworm, a disease that could kill the young calves. We’d ride out looking for calves kicking at their bellies, then tie them down and pour medicine on the wounds they had. We’d keep on checking on them for several days after that,” he recounted.

“Every so often we’d drive into Patagonia to get supplies, and Marsha would check out a big pile of books from the library. I knew she wanted more than what life out there could offer, that she really wanted to go to college and become a teacher. So, in 1964, we moved to Tucson, where I worked for the Department of Transportation for the rest of my career,” he said. “All those skills I got in the Navy really prepared me for that work.”

They scraped together enough to pay Marsha’s tuition, and she graduated with a degree in English, after which she taught junior high and high school English for 12 years. Marsha died suddenly after being struck by a car, while walking near their home in 1982. Their daughter, Dara, was 18 years old.

Later, Arnie met Jolene Brown, who worked, and still works, for ADOT. They were married in 1985 and have another daughter, Samantha. They live in North Tucson. Jolene was comfortable in the ranching and rodeo world, having spent summers at her grandparents’ ranch in Colorado. “I always thought my sister would be the one to marry a cowboy, but it was me,” she said.

Jolene was welcomed readily into the family. “Over the years, we’ve spent so much time in the area. For years, we were down there three times a month. Arnie participated with Maureen and Ono and their dad Abel running the roping club in Sonoita. Sam competed in 4H beef and horse events, including barrel racing and pole bending. We’d attend the yearly cemetery cleanup followed by a picnic under the cottonwood in Lochiel and family barbecues at Armida and Abel’s home in Patagonia. The family will always be a big part of our lives.”

This series has followed the De La Ossa family from 1880 to the present. One of the earliest tales in the family history is of Carolina telling Antonio she was ready to settle down right where they had landed in the San Rafael Valley, after trekking from California. This was the place! And from that decision 140 years ago, many hundreds (or more) De La Ossas have made their lives and raised their families in Santa Cruz County and beyond.
impossible. My job at the art center ceased to be and I spent a year gathering funding, planning and designing programming for a future filled with hope. A year ago, I barely knew about Zoom. Last March I was given a crash course on how to use Google Classroom. Despite the global pandemic, there were kids in school who needed art.

Online art is hard. First you figure out that not all kids have art supplies at home – in some cases not even paper. So, you plan and spend hours gathering supplies to send home. You gear your efforts towards doing projects with common household items and then you find out that for some reason or other they didn’t pick up the supplies. So now half the kids are ready, and half are not and now you’ve got to change plans. Add in the kids with no cameras, no mics or both and the bad Wi-Fi. This was just the first week. And repeat over and over for the rest of the year.

I am not a full-time teacher. I only teach art for six hours a week. I struggled every time I flipped open that laptop and entered the Land of Zoom and Gloom. I learned and hopefully some of the kids did too.

My experience has humbled me because even though I believe that art is extremely important for a well-rounded student, it is the rest of the teaching community that deserves our cheers. As someone from the outside, I watched our school transform into a triage unit for kids in our community. From day one it was about keeping the kids and community safe. They fed them, provided them with laptops, learning materials and support during one of the scariest times in their lives. Teachers, office staff janitors, cafeteria staff all pitched in. Without hesitation our local school went on educating, even though in many cases their hands were tied behind their backs.

I can’t imagine the stress of our school’s administration having to navigate the state COVID guidelines and CDC rules. Imagine trying to teach kids math while also teaching them to wear a mask and wash their hands. Just try to keep 1st graders six feet apart. It sounds impossible, but they are doing it. They are teaching science to kids in face shields and in safe rooms with dividers. They are teaching students to read aloud online without seeing their faces because the laptop they have doesn’t have a camera.

Teachers are teaching kids in school and kids at home at the same time. Cafeteria workers are making meals for kids while bus drivers are delivering school assignments and supplies. Every single school employee has gone above and beyond and as far as I can see they are handling it with grace.

As a kid I viewed school as a place I had to be. This morning when I woke up, I was excited to go to a place I wanted to be. I am extremely proud to call myself a Patagonia Lobo.

Much love and admiration to all those educators out there who have really had the hardest job this year. I appreciate you.

Happy by Cassina Farley

I woke up happy today. Happy that its spring, happy to be fully vaccinated and happy to be going back to school. This past year we’ve all been thrown out of our comfort zones. Art in a pandemic stricken world is almost

Lines of Thought by Robert Gay

I think making and studying maps is both big fun and thought-provoking. One feature of maps I always notice is that some lines are wiggly and others straight. I have come to believe that the difference between wiggly and straight lines on maps is intimately related to the way we see the world.

Ever see a line on a topographic map that was straight? Besides the flow of water, other forces of nature almost always make wiggly lines - such as the ridges of mountain ranges, the extent of a particular mineral on a geologic map, or a map of average annual rainfall. Map lines for species and ecosystems are wiggly also. In the forms made by nature and geography, straight lines are rare. To cover both living and inorganic aspects of nature, I call wiggly lines on maps “biogeographic lines.”

In our back yards a great example of wigginess is the Sonoma Creek Watershed, shown on a map published by Friends of Sonoma Creek. The wiggly edges of this blob were made by the forces of nature and geography over millennia. The watershed map of the State of Arizona is also a striking example of wiggly lines at work, such as the Gila, Salt and Santa Cruz River watersheds. The familiar outline of the state of Arizona has a bold wiggly line as its west boundary, the curvaceous Colorado River, separating us from California as it nears the end of its long flow to the Gulf of California. All other Arizona borders are straight lines made by human intent. The border

wall follows two of these segments. Its absolute straightness is quintessentially non-biogeographical.

Straight-edged parcels of land were an aid to the carving up of the American West in “The Great Westward Expansion.” History suggests that straight-line land division was but one of many interconnected forces at work in the settlement and possession of the West. The European colonists who trekked westward carried a sense of entitlement, that it was somehow their right to take and profit from whatever resources they could lay hands on.

This belief was fueled by ethnic and religious superiority that had come across the Atlantic, a sense that Western European ideas and their bearers were superior to the “primitive savages.” In 1845, the European religious doctrine of the Divine Right of Kings was rebranded as the Doctrine of Manifest Destiny, whereby people “chosen by Providence” could and should occupy and exploit anything they came to.

The values underlying the “March to the Pacific” included greed at a scale that matched the sprawling Western land itself, creating a new extractive capitalism that made a few corporate owners extremely rich and increased class separation and wealth inequity for the rest. Whether for settlement, fishing, logging, mining or grazing, land became a commodity in a feeding frenzy. Ground, and sometimes waters, became objectified as potential resources that could be claimed, owned, developed, sold or speculated upon, to either produce material for profit, or be itself sold for profit.

Net result: Instead of being respected as a fertile provider of life, Mother Earth was commodified as a resource, a profound shift of world view. Trampled in the empire-building land grab was the intimate personal contact with nature that had been the indigenous spirit and practice of hundreds of North American tribes living sustainably over thousands of years.

By arrogantly acting as if humans are masters rather than members of the web of life, global toxicification of air, water, and soil has compounded into a rapidly unfolding ecological disaster that has led the human race and all other species to the beginning of the Sixth Mass Extinction and has initiated possibly irreversible climate change.

The terrifying, unprecedented world situation demands not just new technology and energy sources, but also demands value change, toward lifestyles and technologies that restore deep daily contact with Nature and replace the seductive lure of Profit with humbler, less consumptive ways of life. The environmental activist Vandana Shiva said: “In nature’s economy, the currency is not money - it is life.”

What does all this history have to do with mapping? From an amateur cartographer’s point of view, changing the way we see and map the world could make a small contribution toward survival. Operating from nature-based values, I suggest we study land and understand nature with biogeographic maps whenever possible and make new maps as bio-intelligent as we can. I believe that visualizing and honoring the wiggly lines of nature will lead us to wise ecological action much more sure than will continuing to see land simply as a commodity most efficiently described by straight lines.

We live, eat, breathe and reproduce purely because of the miraculous wiggly nature of complex living systems at every scale, and should never, ever forget it.

By Robert Gay

Happy

I woke up happy today. Happy that its spring, happy to be fully vaccinated and happy to be going back to school. This past year we’ve all been thrown out of our comfort zones. Art in a pandemic stricken world is almost
**LIFE AMONG THE HUMANS**

By Martin Levowitz

Of body parts, the head is disproportionately influential. That’s true in social structures, too. Most humans like to feel aligned with those on top, no matter who. It’s surely not a rarity for human kids to idolize a parent when they’re young. How comforting it is to think your father/leader/deity is wise and powerful. If I have faith in someone very, very self-assured, it makes me feel more safe and more secure, and spares me the onus of having to think for myself.

Some humans yearn for royalty and even dynasty. How else explain that “W.,” a Cheney and some Kennedys, or, currently, Don, Jr. rate a following at all? Despite distinct deficiencies, such legacy celebrities are borne aloft on nothing but their brand (or family) name.

Because it seems imperiled at this point, there’s been a lot of talk about democracy of late. One troublesome trend is the income or affluence gap. “The rich get rich, the poor stay poor,” as Uncle Lenny said. We may all be equal in the eyes of the law, but that’s of little solace if your gas and power are shut off while Jamie D., your rich-ass boss, is island-hopping on his private yacht.

When I was young, my parents went to South America on a two-week cruise. What spooked them most about the trip was seeing vast disparities in wealth. They walked past shacks in someone very, very self-assured, it made me feel more safe and more secure, and spares me the onus of having to think for myself.

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**OPINION & COMMENT**

**MY TWO CENTS**

By Clare Bonelli

This last month one of my cats died. The one we’d had the longest I think. It took a few weeks. That got me thinking about that stuff. Jeffrey hung on, going outside every day, even though it was fairly cold, eating a tiny bit. I thought about letting him out. What if he didn’t come back? Well, there are worse ways to go than hypothermia. Was the decision for me or for him? When we give people - or for him? When we give people - or squash beetles. No violence. No hunger. Garden with no horn worms or aphids. I expect to be able to eat whatever I want without feeling exhausted or itchy or cramped. I expect to be able to garden with no horn worms or aphids or squash beetles. No violence. No meanness. No pain. All my loved ones, including my many pets.

So, since all that’s coming, all that’s on my bucket list is cleaning up my mess, putting things in order, and continuing to make a difference. So much to look forward to!

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**SONOITA RACES CANCELLED**

In a statement sent to its members, The SCCFRDA Board announced that they had made the decision to cancel this year's races. "Several reasons drove this decision which include but not limited to: (1) No state funding is available this year and after last year the races are just not financially viable if we have to depend solely on our own funds. (2) Fewer other racing venues are running this year which has an adverse impact on our ability to attract horses and jockeys. The Board does remain optimistic that we will be able to race in the future. The state has approved our racing dates for 2022 and 2023 and we anticipate state funds to return in 2022. Obviously this is an evolving situation and we will keep you informed."
Local Economic Study Moving Forward

By Lynn Davison

Plans are moving forward on a study of the drivers of the local economy in Santa Cruz County. The study will look at all the traditional economic sectors and will also include sectors and subsectors within the nature-based and the restorative economy. Included within the broad category of the restorative economy are tourism that builds on cultural, historic, and nature-based resources; ranching; farming, including the wine industry, and efforts to grow and distribute healthy foods locally; educational programs that prepare people to thrive in the local economy; restoration services that conserve water, restore habitat for native plants and animals, reuse and recycle waste, and expand the sequestration of carbon.

The idea for a study was conceived by a small number of residents who formed an informal planning group in Nov. 2020. From the planning group, a management group was selected to handle selection of an administrative entity, selection of the consultant team, approval of the consultant contract, and liaison with the administrative entity. Management group members are Chuck Klingenstein, Linda Shore, Jonathan Lutz, and Damien Rawoot.

South32 Awards Grants to Local Nonprofits

South32 announced the names of a dozen charitable organizations selected to receive a total of $87,000 in grants during the current cycle of the company’s Hermosa Community Fund. Included in the list are four non-profits located in eastern Santa Cruz County. The grant selection committee elected to increase the level of giving for this cycle, noting a marked uptick in applicants, especially those with COVID-related financial needs. Many of the applicant organizations either provide direct COVID relief through essential services such as meal programs, while many others sought help with basic operational costs after being unable to hold key fundraising events due to COVID precautions.

The application period for the next round of grants will open on June 7, 2021.

The South32 Hermosa Community Fund, held by the Community Foundation for Southern Arizona (CFSA), was established by South32 in May 2019 to support non-profit groups working to improve education, environment, health and welfare, recreation, civic enhancement, and arts, culture and history in the county. Grants are awarded following a review of applications by a committee comprising independent reviewers, the CFSA, and representatives from South32.

Check It Out At The Library

By Laura Wenzel

As of April 5, the library building is open to the public by appointment! Call (520) 394-2010 or email info@patagoniapubliclibrary.org to schedule a 45 minute appointment to browse our shelves, use our computers, or donate books. Please wear your mask and be prepared to social distance. Programming is still virtual, though some outdoor programs will be allowed. Print, copy, scan, and fax services are available in-person, as well as via curbside pickup. We’re here to help you file taxes or apply for unemployment benefits. Our hours are Monday through Friday from 10a.m. to 5p.m.

The library is temporarily closed on Saturdays.

Our library will receive LibraryCall, a new phone service that lets everyone in the community - even those without smartphones, computers, home internet or even library cards - have access to stories, events and/or library resources. Dial-A-Story will allow community members to listen to children’s stories over the phone. The Resource Hotline will provide information about library hours and services, COVID-19 information, and community events.

The library will receive two dedicated phone lines paid for by IMLS through Sept. 2021. Funding was provided by The Arizona State Library, Archives and Public Records for CARES Act Calling, made possible by the Institute of Museum and Library Services.

The Foreign Policy Association Great Decisions program will begin in late April or early May. This year’s topics include global supply chains and U.S. national security, Brexit, the two Koreas, the World Health Organization’s COVID-19 response, and more. Each program participant will receive a booklet of reading material and links to view the corresponding PBS documentary films. Meetings will be held on Zoom every other Thursday evening. Call or email the library for more information or to become a participant.

In partnership with Voices from the Border, Todd Miller will present his new book, “Build Bridges, Not Walls: A Journey to a World Without Borders,” on May 1 at 10a.m. In “Build Bridges, Not Walls,” Miller invites readers to join him on a journey that begins with the question: What happens to our collective humanity when the impulse to help one another is criminalized?

Limited seating will be outdoors behind Cady Hall. The event will be livestreamed via Zoom through the Friends of Patagonia Library Facebook page. Copies of the book will be available for purchase and to sign. Contact the library for more information.

Medicine Wheel Acupuncture

As humans we have a need for connection with others; it’s a fundamental part of who we are as human beings. Unfortunately, because of the Covid pandemic restrictions, we have limited access to others, and thus we can feel disconnected, which can lead into states of anxiety, worry and fear. These states of being can weaken the immune system and increase one’s vulnerability to disease.

It is our courage that can help us regain our balance. It is through our courageous determination to live in our heart, by focusing on the state of the love, compassion, and commitment to ourselves and others, that can help reign over the states of fear, worry and the uncomfortable feelings of anxiety.

Courageous Remedies

1. Meditation:
   According to the Dalai Lama: “If you develop a strong sense of concern for the well-being of all sentient beings, in particular, all human beings, this will make you happy. This is the value of compassion, on the kindness for others, of having compassionate feelings for others. Even 10 minutes or 30 minutes of meditation on compassion, that’s the way to maintain a calm and joyful mind.”

2. Mindful Breathing:
   Just as an agitated mind can make the breath short and shallow; long, slow, deep breathing can bring about a calm mind; Parasympathetic and Pranayama breathing techniques.

3. Mindful Exercise: A walk in the woods. A gentle Yoga, Tai Chi, or QiGong practice. Bird watching, Dancing and Gardening (there are antidepressant microbes in the soil).

4. Laughter: Javelina walks into a bar...

5. Acupuncture and other body work: Acupuncture and Chinese herbal medicine is highly effective for calming the mind, body, and spirit.

For assistance with any of the aforementioned remedies, or the joke conclusion, feel free to contact me.

Jeffrey Kenney, L.Ac
520-444-0819

价位 for an appointment or drop in to the clinic for chair acupuncture
Chair clinic hours. Monday and Wednesday 10pm to 3pm
Asylum seekers are screened for criminal records and for COVID symptoms before being released, according to Bartine. They are not released at night. They are allowed to make a phone call and are given masks as well as paperwork telling them when to appear for a hearing. The average stay for an asylum seeker at a local shelter is two or three days before they move out of the area.

When asked if he anticipated large numbers of migrants coming into our area, Sheriff Hathaway said “So far, there are not big waves of people and no big groups in Nogales [Sonora]. There are no mass buildups.”

“The United States is continuing to strictly enforce our existing immigration laws and border security measures,” according to a CBP Senior Official quoted in Tucson.com. “Due to COVID-19 restrictions, the border is not open, and the vast majority of people are being returned.”

The number of people attempting to cross the border has jumped significantly in the Tucson sector, which reported apprehending 4759 unaccompanied minors, (an increase of 40% over last year), 2644 family units, (a decrease of 70% over last year) and 52,795 single adults (an increase of 206% over last year). Bartine explained that the station still deports people entering the country, other than asylum seekers. He said that, on average, those detained in Sonoita are back in Mexico two hours after they are brought to the station.

There has been a dramatic increase in the number of drug and human smugglers coming through Sonoita. Bartine explained that the checkpoint on SR 83, north of Sonoita, has been moved to SR 82 in front of the Sonoita Station to monitor traffic heading east, as the checkpoint in Cochise County has been dismantled to free up agents to work along the border. The Sonoita checkpoint is now the farthest east checkpoint in the Tucson sector, he said. He also stated that Border Patrol is at present severely undermanned. “We have more traffic than we have manpower,” he said.

Bartine reported that local agents have apprehended “several vehicle loads” of drug and human smugglers at the checkpoint. He noted that the majority of the drivers of these loads are U.S. citizens. He pointed out that a photo of two men in front of a local store that was circulated on Facebook was not of two migrants released from the station but was a photo of two U.S. citizens whose cases had been declined by federal prosecutors at the Tucson AUSA office.

Bartine explained that increased Border Patrol related traffic along Lower Elgin Rd. is a result of smugglers avoiding the new checkpoint. Two recent incidents on that road have unsettled residents. On January 25, a truck crashed into the side of the bridge leading to Upper Elgin Rd. and on Feb. 12, two people traveling in a truck trying to evade Border Patrol were injured.

The meeting concluded with Nick Robbs, of Sonoita, reading a letter written by local community church leaders addressed to elected officials asking that migrants not be released into the Sonoita community. Attendees were encouraged to sign the letter and were given a list of elected officials to contact.

The Anne C. Stradling Equine Foundation is pleased to announce that college scholarship applications are now available to qualified graduating high school seniors. Applicants must reside in Santa Cruz County and attend a local public or parochial high school. Santa Cruz County residents attending high school in neighboring Pima or Cochise County, as well as home-schooled and trade school students are also eligible.

The awards are based on scholastic achievement and extra-curricular activities as well as financial need. Enrollment in an agricultural or related course of study is encouraged but not required.

Applications may be obtained from the school’s office, or by requesting a copy from the Anne C. Stradling Equine Foundation, P.O. Box 248, Sonoita, AZ 85637. Completed applications must be received no later April 16, 2021 to be considered.
Wires in the Woods: A South32 Prospecting Project

By Robert Gay

In Feb. and March 2021, Quantec Geoscience LLC, under contract to South32, conducted ground-based field work for an exploration technique that analyzes electronically collected data to produce a spatial model of underground masses that could be “minerals of interest.” This high-tech method will create subsurface modeling of the area near the Hermosa Project in the Patagonia Mountains.

Approximately five miles of electric wire was laid along upper Flux Canyon Rd. and Harshaw Rd. The three-plus mile segment on Harshaw Rd. extended south from within the Hermosa Project to Guajolote Flats Rd., then about a mile west toward Soldier Basin. Both segments of wire run through areas of several historic mines, including Flux, Humboldt, Endless Chain, and Blue Nose mines.

Quantec is an international geophysical surveying firm headquartered in Ontario that serves the mining, geothermal and gas sectors in many countries. For mineral exploration, the company’s studies are generally used to refine targets and expand deposits for future exploration, generally by core drilling. The Quantec toolbox offers ten types of ground-based geophysical survey techniques.

According to Hermosa Project’s Melanie Lawson, the method being used for South32 is called Spartan MT. Quantec describes the method as “a magnetotelluric (ground magnetism) resistivity mapping approach for both 2D and 3D geologic scenarios.” In an email, Larson wrote, “Our goal is to better understand the rock types in the area, such as limestone to volcanic, and doesn’t identify new deposits.”

Lawson stressed that Quantec’s exploration method is non-invasive: “The program allows us to do some exploring with minimal disturbance. The technology does not impact wildlife, both flora and fauna, and the areas are reclaimed after the survey is complete.” She added that the project areas lie within the company’s patented and unpatented claims (approximately 1300 claims, averaging 20 acres each). South32’s claims cover approximately 26,500 acres, extending around private inholdings, from the Forest Service boundary nearest to Patagonia to the vicinity of Duquesne Road.

Near the Hermosa Project site, the only areas South32 is not entitled to explore for mineral presence, under current laws, would be the Sunnyside Project’s approximately 5220 acres and the 31 acres of the privately held Harshaw Townsite.

How does ground-based prospecting work? The electrical resistivity of the planet’s natural electromagnetic field varies from spot to spot, both above and below ground, and different densities and types of rock can be inferred from the naturally caused variations in electrical resistance. In the Spartan MT method, a temporary ground array of sensors collects electromagnetic data from many frequencies and sends it to a 10-channel recorder for storage and later analysis.

The method can “see” ten kilometers (6.2 miles) into the earth, several times deeper than South32’s currently presented model of the Clark and Taylor deposits, which bottoms out roughly 1 km (5/8 of a mile) below the Project’s surface.

Once a static 3D model is made from data acquired from a field survey like this, it can be tinted and animated to give a dramatic portrayal of mineral zones of interest. Besides guiding future drilling, the resulting still pictures and videos can be used to guide future physical explorations, inform the public, attract investors or convince government or business entities to support the project for economic reasons.

YOUR INPUT IS WELCOME

The Arizona Department of Environmental Quality (ADEQ) is in the process of reviewing a new permit for the South32 Hermosa Project in Santa Cruz County. This permit is related to proposed exploration work on South32 private property, namely pumping, treating, and discharging groundwater to safely allow for a closer look at the mineral resource. We plan to treat this pumped groundwater to surface water quality standards before discharging it to the same watershed from whence it came.

We encourage the public to participate in any and all opportunities for public participation around our permit applications. Visit south32.net/hermosa/permitting for more information from us and to access relevant links to ADEQ’s website. We are also happy to answer any questions about our current or proposed work at askhermosa@south32.net.

AQUIFER PROTECTION PERMIT (APP)

This permit is for facilities with the potential to discharge pollutants to groundwater. It requires the permittee to implement controls to minimize the discharge of pollutants.

All comments related to the permit approval should be submitted directly to ADEQ.
Glimpses Into Our Past
By Alison Bunting and Richard Schorr

Dr. Richard “Dick” Schorr, DVM, has many memories of growing up in the Elgin/Sonoita area between 1948 and the mid-1950s. Dick’s parents, Wagner and Marie Schorr moved from Pennsylvania to a ranch in Canelo in 1948 when Dick was 12. The map and photos that accompany this article illustrate Dick’s recollections of the businesses and buildings that existed at the Sonoita crossroads in 1949.

SONOITA BUILDINGS, 1949
As Recalled by Dick Schorr


B/C. Ilene Fraizer standing in the doorway of the Lunch Room, 1950s. Sam Fraizer’s garage is to the left. Present location of Sonoita Mini Mart. Courtesy of Betty Barr/Fraizer family.


I. Sonoita Boxcar Freight Depot, 1950s. Present location of 3Bar3 Feed & Tack. Courtesy of Ed and Mary LeGendre

J. Ore Loading Ramp

K. Cicero Martin Ranch (Later Art Pollard Ranch)

L. Ed LeGendre Home

M. Cerron Martin Ranch (Later Art Pollard Ranch)

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Rowdy Roadrunners

If you think that all dinosaurs became extinct with a massive asteroid strike approximately 65 million years ago, you might just be wrong. Birds are often considered living dinosaurs, feathers being evolutionary holdovers from these famous saurians.

Today, no species seems to epitomize this ancient link more than the roadrunner. April is prime-time for roadrunner watching, as their habitat - barely begun to leaf out and winter-hungry birds are on the prowl for food. While many people have certainly glimpsed this iconic species in the wild, they still hold many surprises for both the casual and seasoned observer.

One of these is that there is a second species of roadrunner. Our species, the greater roadrunner, is slightly larger than (you-guessed it) the lesser roadrunner in southern Sonora. Our species sports exotic-looking, iridescent-green plumage with a spiciness of red and blue-colored flesh directly behind the eyes. Males are slightly larger than females, but the two are otherwise difficult to tell apart. The base of the feathers on the back, as well as the skin there, is dark and aid hunch-backed, sunning roadrunners in their efforts to warm themselves on cooler days.

Roadrunners are members of the cuckoo family, as witnessed by their zygodactyl feet - two toes pointing forward and two backward. Greater roadrunners range throughout much of the arid lands of Arizona and the American southwest, spilling over into California and as far east as western Missouri and Louisiana. Throughout their range they require some open habitat with shrubs, trees, or large cacti for their nests, as well as an abundance of prey. Unlike the fantastical cartoon version (that one ate seed), roadrunners are almost exclusively predatory; so much so that they put coyotes to shame in this regard. Their running speed - up to 15 MPH - and agility are legendary and portend doom to sluggish prey.

Watching hunting roadrunners over the years led to my pondering of “living dinosaurs.” Despite their diminutive size they can take down an impressive array of species, including rattlesnakes, though admittedly mostly small and medium-sized ones. Given the fact that a venomous strike to feathers is harmless, roadrunners tend to play matador with would-be rattlesnake prey. Wings are fanned, enticing the snake to strike at the most prominent, moving target. Upon reptilian recoil our protagonist places well-aimed blows with its chisel-like beak to the reptile’s head. Soon, the snake is bludgeoned to death, eventually beheaded, and swallowed whole. I once encountered a headless Mojave rattlesnake - our most virulent species - surrounded by telltale zygodactyl prints of its feathered executioner. While greater roadrunners weigh a mere 12 ounces or so, extrapolating these predatory feats to a hypothetical roadrunner weighing 100 pounds could well place humans at great risk!

Roadrunners seem to think that they are larger than their actual size. I have witnessed desert cottontails flee in terror at the mere appearance of this avian bullyboy. One particularly ambitious roadrunner escorted a five-foot racer until the snake found safe refuge in a rock wall. It was unlikely that the racer was in any real danger, but it wasn’t taking any chances with this bold gladiator. Other, more pedestrian and regular fare includes most lizard species, small mammals, eggs, nestlings, and many invertebrates. Occasionally, some wild fruits are consumed as well.

On the flip side, roadrunners are certainly not immune to predation. As far as I can discern from various avian “crime scenes,” Cooper’s hawks are the main predators of these birds. No doubt lurking bobcats, coyotes, other hawks, and large snakes (turnabout is fair play) take their collective toll, too. Even two common ravens got in on the act at our nature preserve, feasting upon a hapless roadrunner who had likely gotten a bit complacent.

Courting males entice willing females with gifts - often a dead lizard in Arizona or a stick in Texas. They build sturdy stick nests where both parents raise up to five young. If food is scarce, they may kill a weaker nestling and feed it to its siblings.

Vocal communication between individuals consists of a dove-like downward cooing. Other birds - potential prey items - often sound the alarm with a variety of warning calls when a roadrunner makes the scene.

Roadrunner watching is sublime, but they will sometimes find you first. On numerous occasions when I’ve been quietly sitting in the wild - minding my own business - various individuals have snuck up on me, blaring a Cooper’s-hawk-like kek-kek or loudly vibrating their bill mere feet from my head. As I proverbially jumped out of my skin, it’s a good thing I wasn’t actually on the edge of a cliff!

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

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By Harold Meckler

If nothing else, we’ve gone through a year when challenging truth seemed like an Olympic sport. I’ve grown tremendously weary of it. You see, hypotheses are meant to be questioned, and skepticism as a means to be further amazed. And, it allows us beyond what we can grasp or what we have used to calm us in difficult times. But truth, once scientifically established, is truth.

I think we can use astronomy to dig deeper and try to reconcile our understandings of truth. For me, one of the best of these sights is the zodiac constellation Leo, visible throughout April. Known by its distinctive “sickle” that forms the lion’s head, it can be found by using nearby guides. The Big Dipper’s pointer stars lead to Polaris, the North Star. If you follow them in the opposite direction and for a similar distance, you’ll wind up midway between two of Leo’s primary stars, Regulus and Denebola.

With the naked eye, Regulus - Leo’s heart - shines wondrously. It is enough to marvel at its luminosity and accept that it is one of our brightest stars. The truth, though, is that, with magnification, it is the light of three stars that we see, with a fourth believed to be nearby.

Denebola, the lion’s tail, seems normal enough. However, astronomers have found that its rapid spin has caused it to flatten at the top and bottom.

The reality is that truth is sometimes frightening. It may not be what we want to see or be told. It may push us beyond what we can grasp or what we have used to calm us in difficult moments. For me, though, despite the fears, my tendency to be rather untrusting, it entices me back to the eyepiece where more truth awaits.
Garden Guides
Three Things To Do Before You Start Your Garden

Hello fellow gardeners. My name is Mary McKay. I am a devoted plant fanatic, graduate of the University of Arizona with a Plant Science degree, and also trained in landscape design.

Two years ago, I started an Instagram and Facebook page devoted to my love and addiction of plants (@patagoniaplants). It has since grown into my own backyard nursery business called Patagonia Plants. I get asked a lot of questions about gardening so I thought I might share with you some of my own gardening experience in this area. I don’t claim to know everything, but I hope to pass on a few bits of what I have learned. I would welcome any questions or comments about your own garden. Email these to kmckay810@gmail.com.

Spring is here! The gardening itch is real. If you are a seasoned gardener or new, there are a few things all gardeners need to do before planting.

1. Choose your location wisely.
   Summer vegetables in general need full sun (6-8 hours per day). Cool weather crops, such as lettuce for example need only part sun (3-6 hours of sun per day).

   The south facing part of your yard is perfect for most things. If you don’t have a southern exposure free, you can do well with the east side or west side. I have great luck with most of my garden being located on the south and east facing sides of my house.

   West exposure can be tricky. As you know if you have lived here a full year, it gets HOT on the west side of your home unless you are lucky enough to have a good shade tree or structure to help. If you do have a shade maker on the west, your garden should do fine there.

   Make sure your garden location is placed where it can be watered easily. Remember, if you live along a wash, you are in a low-lying area where cold air literally runs down the mountain sides and settles in these areas each night. There can be a 10-degree difference in temperature in these areas compared to nearby places!

2. Prepare the soil.
   Decide if your garden should be in-ground or a raised bed (or large pot). If growing in the ground, dig in good quality compost to loosen and fertilize the soil. Use composted manure or all-purpose fertilizers. Don’t use fresh manure or your plants will be burned. Follow the application instructions on the bag of fertilizer to prevent over-application. Top dress the area with mulch (after planting) but don’t mix the mulch into the soil (especially if woody material) or your plants will suffer from nitrogen deficiency.

   If you live in a rocky place, have shallow soils or gopher problems, use raised beds. Some of my most productive gardens were in raised beds. They are easier to weed and easier to harvest.

   Lay chicken wire or hardware cloth on the ground under the bed if you have a gopher problem. There are many different types of pre-bagged soil available to fill beds. It can be confusing which to buy, and they can be expensive. I recommend using your own native soil if you have it or know someone who wants to get rid of a pile of soil. It holds moisture and nutrients longer and will outlast any bagged soil.

   You can always amend it with compost and fertilizers to improve the structure and fertility.

3. Know your garden zone.
   Here in the Patagonia/Soíota area we are generally zone 8, which can be broken down further to a zone 8a and zone 8b. Zone 8a has an average minimum temperature of 10-15°F. Zone 8b has an average minimum temperature of 15 to 20°F. We will continue to see freezing temperatures through the first week of May and maybe later, so April is NOT the time for planting peppers, squash, tomatoes or any frost sensitive plants (unless you like to gamble!) Do plant herbs like chives, thyme, parsley and cilantro, or any labeled hardy above 32 degrees F. Go for peas of all types, lettuces, beets, and chard, to name a few.

   If you are interested in getting plant starters grown by me, they are available at the Patagonia Farmer’s Market, my home nursery by appointment, or at the Soíota Hardware store at the end of April. I hope to keep in touch with future Garden Guides in the PRT.

Lobos Impressive in Post Season Play

By Marion Vendituoli

The Patagonia High School boys basketball team returned to post-season tournament play this March, advancing to the semi-final round of the Arizona 1A conference. Only the top 16 teams in the division are eligible to play in the post-season.

The Lobos, who were ranked #14, bested #3 ranked Leading Edge Academy in the first game, played in Gilbert on March 6, with a final score of 66-58. Leading Edge led by 10 points at halftime, but the Lobos fought back to advance to the quarter finals. “We were down pretty big in the first half,” Coach Nate Porter said, “but we dominated inside in the second half.”

The team then played #6 ranked El Capitan in Page, AZ on March 9, a ten-hour bus ride from Patagonia. “The southernmost 1A team in the state played the northernmost team,” Porter noted. El Capitan led by one point at the end of three quarters, but the Lobos pulled ahead at the end to win.

That win advanced the Lobos to the semifinals against #2 ranked Mohave Accelerated on March 13, a team which had only lost one game in its regular season. Although Patagonia lost this game, 78-71, the opposing athletic director commented that the Lobos were the toughest team they had played all year, according to Porter. “The game was close throughout,” he said.

“Since these schools are way bigger than we are, it makes this accomplishment even greater,” Porter said. “Lobos co-captains Lalo Aguilar and Julian Vasquez were great leaders throughout the year,” he added. “You don’t accomplish the season we did without great leadership.”

Vasquez felt that “the team played as a family. The team as a whole was real close and the team was very good at listening.” He credited Porter’s coaching for their success. “Coach was really skilled,” he said. He could see the weakness in other teams and that helped a lot. He’d tell us what we had to do in order to beat them.

Lalo Aguilar of the Lobos had an impressive outing in the game, scoring 40 points for the team. “We played our best this year,” he said.

Vasquez credited the improvement of the team during the season. “They started out not very skilled and at the end of the season were great and were vital to our team,” he said.

Lobos players have been singled out for regional honors. Lalo Aguilar and Santuy Aguilar have been named to the All-Region 1st Team, and Kurt Whittoe received Honorable Mention regionally. As the PRT goes to press, the statewide honors had not been released.

All told, the team spent more than 30 hours on busses travelling to post-season play. On their return home from the semifinals, the boys were escorted into town with a parade, flashing lights and cheers. “The parade showed how much support we have from our families and community,” Vasquez said.

Lalo Aguilar goes after the ball in game one of the playoffs against Leading Edge Academy. The Lobos went on to win the game 66-58.

By Marion Vendituoli

Photo by Anna Coleman
Thomas Soto Rivera of Patagonia, AZ, departed this earthly plane on Thursday, February 25, 2021. He was the youngest son born to Jose and Concepcion Rivera on September 30, 1925 in Duquesne, Arizona. He is predeceased in death by wife Virginia, son Thomas Jr., parents Jose and Concepcion, brothers Miguel, Jose, Benjamin, and Carlos; sisters Angela, Dolores, Mary Lou, Mercedes, Clara, Concepcion, and Carmen.

Thomas spent much of his young life living in Washington Camp and Duquesne area. He learned to be responsible for himself at a very young age and one of his favorite memories was working for the Green Cattle Company in San Rafael Valley when he was 15 years old. He was a ranch hand and a driver, responsible for driving their large cattle truck all over Arizona, New Mexico, and Texas to either pick up or deliver cattle. He was very proud of the fact that his employer trusted him at such a young age to have such an important responsibility.

Thomas married Virginia (Corrales) on March 16, 1956. They had three children: Selma, Thomas Jr., and Richard and created their home in Patagonia, AZ. They enjoyed a 52-year marriage until Virginia’s death in 2007. Thomas lived a life on his terms. He loved his family, his friends, music, and cars. Thomas was a talented musician. He was self-taught and played many instruments “by ear” as he didn’t read music. He played the accordion, guitar, banjo, organ, keyboard, mandolin, and piano.

His greatest joy was playing music with family and friends for hours at a time. He was known for his love of cars and owned many throughout his long life. He continued to hold a driver’s license and was still driving up until the day of his death.

Thomas was a U.S. Army Veteran and was very proud of his service. He was stationed at Fort Lawton, WA and Japan before receiving an Honorable Discharge in 1950. Following his military service, Thomas worked as a Federal Government employee at Fort Huachuca, AZ, retiring after 29 years of service.

Within his immediate family, Thomas is survived by daughter, Selma (Jorge), son Richard, beloved grandchildren Antonio, Richard, Cristina, and Sienna, great-grandchildren Lillie (Richard), Catalina Lylann (Antonio), Scarlett, and Noah (Cristina). He is also survived by many nieces and nephews and other extended family.

Thomas will be missed by his family, friends, and the community of Patagonia where he lived for the majority of his life. His passing also marks a milestone and closing of a chapter for the Rivera Family. Thomas was the last of the “Original Riveras” and his absence in the family will be keenly felt.

At this time, services for Thomas will be delayed until the risks presented by COVID-19 are diminished significantly to allow for a family gathering to celebrate his life.
This month the PRT continues a series of profiles of the PUHS senior class of 2021. Look for more profiles of these talented and interesting young people in upcoming issues of the PRT.

Hannah Woodard

Participation in school clubs and sports: Volleyball, Basketball, Softball, FFA, and Student Council.
Extra-curricular activities outside of school: Red Mountain Foods Employee
Plans for next year: To attend the University of Arizona to study Pre-Business.
Favorite teachers: Mr. Porter, Mr. Young and Ms. Nelie.
Favorite subjects: English and Financial Algebra
Which one memory will you remember forever about your time here? I will never forget prom freshman year, I was surrounded by so many amazing people the whole night and had such a great time.
What has been the highlight of your high school years? Playing sports and spending time with my friends. We take that for granted and don’t realize how much we enjoy it.
Where do you imagine yourself in ten years? In ten years I can see myself as a creative director for a company or magazine, living in California with the love of my life and two children.

Brianna Young

Participation in school clubs and sports: FFA for 4 years, gaining national rankings and state championships.
Extra-curricular activities outside of school: Showing livestock and jackpots with my horses.
Plans for next year: Moving to Tucson to attend the University of Arizona where I will emphasize my studies in animal science.
Favorite teacher: My favorite teacher is my sophomore year agriculture teacher, Amanda Zamudio. She is such an inspiration and incredible teacher. I can confidently say that I would not be the person I am today without her guidance.
Favorite subjects: My favorite subject would definitely be AG. It has taught me so many life lessons and has allowed me to create connections that will benefit me in the future.
Which one memory will you remember forever about your time here? One memory I will always cherish is when Gabe got this great idea that he should ask Carolina to be his girlfriend on Valentine’s Day in front of the entire school with a microphone. Unfortunately, the answer was no. This might have been one of the funniest days of my life.
Where do you imagine yourself in ten years? I honestly have no idea, but if I have to guess it would be somewhere on a ranch just livin’ life.

Chesed Chap

Participation in school clubs and sports: Soccer, tennis, student government, yearbook, National Honors Society, steel band.
Extra-curricular activities outside of school: Writing and producing my show “The Catcher in the Rye: a Gluten-Free Play” at Tin Shed, and interning for Borderlands Earth Care Youth.
Plans for next year: Going to New Haven, Connecticut to major in Theater and Performance Studies at Yale University.
Favorite teachers: Can’t choose a favorite, I love them all.
Favorite subjects: Creative writing, music, and history.
Which one memory will you remember forever about your time here? Getting to play my tenor pan with about 100 other steel drum players at Field of Steel in Tucson was magical.
What has been the highlight of your high school years? I will be forever grateful for my time with the soccer team, everything my coaches taught me, and all the laughs we shared on the pitch.
Where do you imagine yourself in ten years? Hopefully working as a director, actress, or playwright.

Abelardo Aguilar

Participation in school clubs and sports: Soccer, Basketball, Baseball, Chess, Tennis
Plans for next year: Attend New Mexico State University
Favorite teachers: Mr. Porter, Mr. & Mrs. Hayes, Mr. Melanson, and SJ
Favorite subjects: Ag Science, History, English
Which one memory will you remember forever about your time here? Beating The Gregory in the first round of state my junior year.
What has been the highlight of your high school years? Sports.
Where do you imagine yourself in ten years? Live in Wyoming while living my best life working as a wildland firefighter.
Sophia Lattanzio

Participation in school clubs and sports: Pomline, Drama club, Dance club, Cat club
Extra-curricular activities outside of school: Theater, ballet & competitive dance
Plans for next year: Move to a big city and chase my dreams of becoming a Broadway actress
Favorite teacher: Ms. Hayes
Favorite subject: English
Which one memory will you remember forever about your time here? Meeting and making new friends even through COVID/online class.
What has been the highlight of your high school years? Learning to do what I love and expressing myself in ways that I love (dance, making friends, playing sports)
Where do you imagine yourself in ten years? I imagine myself to be on stage at the biggest theater in New York City living my dream and learning new things everyday.

Eugene Neustadter

Participation in school clubs and sports: Basketball.
Extra-curricular activities outside of school: Working at a job
Plans for next year: College
Favorite teacher: Mrs. Hayes
Favorite subjects: Math, English, all because of Mrs. Hayes
Which one memory will you remember forever about your time here? Poetry and short story class.
What has been the highlight of your high school years? Meeting all my friends that I call family.
Where do you imagine yourself in ten years? In the military and traveling the world.

Yamiletee Montano Cortez

Participation in school clubs and sports: Volleyball and Student Council freshman year.
Extra-curricular activities outside of school: Working at In-N-Out my sophomore and junior year and working at Copper Brothel Brewery my senior year.
Plans for next year: Army
Favorite teachers: All of them
Favorite subjects: Math and English
Which one memory will you remember forever about your time here? How many times I fell!
What has been the highlight of your high school years? The friends that I have made.
Where do you imagine yourself in ten years? I imagine myself to be on stage at the biggest theater in New York City living my dream and learning new things everyday.

Dylan Fox

Extra-curricular activities outside of school: I did quite a bit of art outside of the class time, and field trips were always a fun extracurricular activity Like when my astronomy class went to a real observatory.
Plans for next year: I’m not too sure what plans I have for next year, but I know that I’ll be working on getting through college, I’ll finally get my license to drive, and maybe even move out into an apartment somewhere.
Favorite teachers: All the teachers at Patagonia have been kind, helpful, and just overall great people to talk to and get taught by.
Favorite subjects: Science, mainly my current chemistry class, different varieties of biology and art interest me the most.
Which one memory will you remember forever about your time here? I’m not sure what one memory I’ll remember forever. There are so many memorable moments I’ve experienced that the place itself will just be one big memory.
What has been the highlight of your high school years? My highlights have, and always will be, my friends. They all make getting through these hard years more bearable and way more fun.
Where do you imagine yourself in ten years? I’d be almost done, or maybe even done, with college, working my dream job in the medical field. I’d be living out of my parents’ home with a dog and maybe even have a partner if I get lucky enough.
**Events**

- **Apr. 1:** Patagonia Creative Arts Center - Kids Rock After School for Ages 9 and up. Learn to play various instruments with Mr. Zach. Space limited: Thursdays 3:30-5:00p.m. Call 520-216-0358 or email to register.

- **Apr. 3:** Sonoita All Breed Circuit Show 8:30a.m.- 6:30p.m. [www.sonoitafairgrounds.com/horse-shows 2021]

- **Apr. 3:** Grasslands Band - Music at the Twisted Union Winery in Elgin 1p.m.-3:30p.m. playing outside on the back patio. Twisted Union Winery is located at 370 Elgin Rd.

- **Apr. 5:** Patagonia Public Library will be reopening the building for browsing and computer use by appointment. Call (520) 394-2010 or email info@patagoniapubliclibrary.org to schedule a 45-minute appointment. Please wear your mask. New hours will be M-F 10a.m.-5p.m. Call for more info.

- **Apr. 7:** Patagonia Creative Arts Center Art Makers After School with Ms. Tammie. Wednesdays 3:30p.m. - 5:00p.m. Drop in donations accepted. Bring your mask.

- **Apr. 18:** SCFPA presents Emily Chao violin, Yasmin Alami, piano. Concerts are virtual and can be accessed at www.scfpapresents.org/performance-sched

- **Apr. 7:** Patagonia Creative Arts Center - Overeaters Anonymous: Thurs 6:30p.m. Fragrance-free meeting. Patagonia United Methodist Church. 520 404-3490. Has moved online. AA: Alcohols Anonymous In person meetings weekly Tuesdays at 7PM at The Sonoita Bible Church 3174 N. Highway 83, Sonoita. Social distancing honored This meeting is also on Zoom at 544 376 9576 (no password required)

- **Apr. 18:** Overeaters Anonymous: Thurs 6:30p.m. Fragrance-free meeting. Patagonia United Methodist Church. 520 404-3490. Has moved online.

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

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

**Meetings**

- **AA: Alcohols Anonymous**
  - In person meetings weekly
  - Tuesdays at 7PM at The Sonoita Bible Church 3174 N. Highway 83, Sonoita. Social distancing honored This meeting is also on Zoom at 544 376 9576 (no password required)

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

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

**Special Interests**

- **Easter Church Services**
  - **Sonoita Hills Community Church:** Apr. 2 - Good Friday Service 6p.m. Easter Sunday Service 10a.m.
  - **Canelo Cowboy Church:** Sunrise Service 5:45a.m. Breakfast will be served after Church Service 8:30 - 9:30a.m. Sunday School 10 - 11a.m.
  - **St. Therese of Lisieux Catholic Church:** Service 10:30a.m.
  - **Our Lady of the Angels Mission Church:** Service 8:00a.m.
  - **Patagonia Comm. United Methodist:** 10a.m. service in person or via KPUP
  - **VIN Estrella:** 10a.m. Cafe Connect, 10:30 Worship Service, 12:00 Kids Easter Egg Hunt, 12:30 Teen Egg Scavenger Hunt.
  - **Sonoita Bible Church:**
    - Easter Brunch 9a.m.
    - Easter Service 10:30a.m.
  - **St. Andrews Episcopal Church**
    - Apr. 2: Good Friday Stations of The Cross at 12:00p.m.
    - Easter Sunrise Service 6a.m.
    - Easter Service 10a.m. in the prayer garden

- **Lunch for Seniors:** Dining Room Closed. Fresh-cooked meals Available to pick up, Mon - Fri 12p.m. - 1p.m. At the Patagonia Senior Center.

- **Santa Cruz County Native Plant Society (SCCNPS) resumes in March. Meetings held on the 3rd Thurs. of the month. 6:00p.m. - 7:30p.m. Zoom meetings for now. Meeting ID is: 874 9175 9629. Questions or considerations, email Robin at crobilt60@gmail.com

- **Sonoita Farmers Market:** Saturday 9a.m.- 12p.m. Located at post office parking lot, NW corner Hwy 82 & 83.

- **Easter Church Services**
  - **Sonoita Hills Community Church:**
    - Apr. 2 - Good Friday Service 6p.m.
    - Easter Sunday Service 10a.m.
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  - **St. Andrews Episcopal Church**
    - Apr. 2: Good Friday Stations of The Cross at 12:00p.m.
    - Easter Sunrise Service 6a.m.
    - Easter Service 10a.m. in the prayer garden

- **Church Services**

  **Churches are practicing social distancing.**
  - **Canelo Cowboy Church:** 14 McCarthy Lane, Elgin 520-604-6990
  - Sunday Service: 8:30a.m.
  - Sunday School: 10a.m.

  **Patagonia Community United Methodist Church**
  - In person Sunday service 10a.m. Services will continue to be broadcasted to KPUP 100.5 as well. Several other services are being offered throughout the week. Call or email church office for more info. 520-394-2274 patagoniaumc@gmail.com

  **St. Therese of Lisieux Catholic Church** 222 Third Ave., Patagonia. In Person Service resumed. Call for time & schedule 520-394-2954

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

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

  **VINE Christian Church**
  - 3107 Hwy 83, Sonoita. Sunday Service: 10a.m.
  - Cafe, 10:30a.m. service

  **St. Andrews Episcopal Church**
  - 969 W. County Club Dr. Nogales Services are weekly, however times changes frequently. Visit standrewsaz.org for additional info.

  **Quaker Worship Group**,
  - Meets via Zoom. Contact Janice Pulliam if interested 706-614-6959

  **Our Lady of the Angels Catholic Church**
  - 12 Los Encinos Rd., Sonoita 520-394-2954 Sat 9a.m.-12p.m.
  - 11:30a.m. Distribution of fresh vegetables at the senior Center in Patagonia through vegetable season.

  **Sonoita Produce on Wheels:**
  - Every 3rd Saturday of the month, 7a.m. - 10a.m. VINE Church (previously Harvest Christian) Contact Gardenia for more info 602-292-6161.

  **Patagonia Museum:**
  - Regular hours to resume Thursday, March 4. from 2p.m.-4p.m. Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays. www.thepatagoniamuseum.org for more info.

  **Crossroads Quilters:**
  - No meetings until further notice. Info: 520-880-0173.

**Updates you would like listed.**

**Email prtasted@gmail.com with any event updates you would like listed.**
AVAILABLE FOR ADOPTION

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

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

WHISPER’S SANCTUARY IS SEEKING EXPERIENCED ANIMAL CARETAKERS
Couple with RV preferred. 520-455-9246. Start date negotiable.

WANTED: PERSON OF QUALITY, INTEGRITY AND RELIABILITY
Seeking household managerial or horse caretaker position to include room and wage. Part-time caretaker negotiable. Contact prrwnd@yahoo.com

BARN HELP WANTED 4-5 DAYS A WEEK:
Feed hay, water, pick up manure for 2 horses. Approx. 1 hr./day $20./day. Located in Sonoita 1 mile south of Fairgrounds. Call: 520-975-9920.

FOR RENT

TRAILER FOR RENT
Trailer for Family in Patagonia $300/month
520-394-2007

PATAGONIA $800 / MONTH INCLUDES ALL UTILITIES
Furnished, Very Clean and available now. Easy In and easy out.
520 678 1011

MISCELLANEOUS

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

HELP WANTED

Gala is a 1 year old Chihuahua that is very loving, however she does not get along great with cats. She likes dogs, kids and people. She weighs 10 lbs and is looking for her forever home.

Carmelita is a 4 year old DLH Calico cat that is super sweet, very loving but likes to be the only queen in the house. She loves everyone she meets and is a great lap kitty.

Family medicine
Daily pharmacy delivery
All insurances welcome
Eligibility and enrollment assistance (please call for an appointment)

KPUP Broadcast Schedule
Spring 2021

Mon: 7:00pm to 8:00pm: eTown repeat of Saturday’s show.
Tues: 10:00am to 12:00pm: World Jazz with Mark Berg
7:00pm to 9:00pm: Jazz and Blues with Fred Hansen
Wed: 3pm: Jackson’s 10 Songs
7:00pm to 10pm: Sean Alexander show
Thurs: 7:00pm to 10:00pm: Possibility Explorers. “Celebrating the Evening of Mushkil Gusha, the Remover of All Difficulties.” Hosted by Graves
Fri: 7:00pm to 9:00pm: Hook’s Sunken Roadhouse
Sat: 12:00pm to 1:00pm: eTown - “Educate, entertain and inspire listeners through music and conversation”
Sun: 10:00am: Patagonia Community United Methodist Church service
6:00pm to 8:00pm: Acoustic Café “Today’s great songwriting talents. A bit of country, rock, blues, folk, pop”
8:00pm to 10:00pm: Folk Alley “Folk Music Radio from WKSU-FM in Kent, OH”

Daily Shows:
Swing Hour: 5:00pm to 6:00pm.
Best of the Oldies: 1:00pm to 2:00am.
Feature Story News (fSN.com) Mon – Fri. 8 am., 12pm and 6pm., Sat. 8am & 6pm., Sun. at 8am.
Patagonia Weather Forecast: Every odd hour.

Appointments: 281-1550 • 101 Taylor Street • mariposasbc.net

Patagonia Community United Methodist Church
614 Broad St. Nogales, Az 85621
520-287-2838

Molly Anderson - M.D.
Timothy R. Penniston
FNP-C
CROWN C MOUNTAIN VIEW ESTATE
MLS # 21930138  44+ ACRES
Privacy with WOW views. S/A units. Sunroom, bonus room, courtyard, garage, loads of storage. Phone well. JEAN MILLER 520-508-3335

TOP OF THE WORLD VIEWS ON 18 ACRES
MLS # 22100804 18.01 PRISTINE ACRES
Spectacular land with 360 degree views! High on a ridge with several lovely building sites. Private, with no HOA, gentle deed restrictions. SAMANTHA SHORE 602-749-7883

PATAGONIA CUSTOM HOME
JUST LISTED! .81 ACRES
ESTATE SALE. This beautiful home features custom Mexican rustic doors, hand-painted vanities, island kitchen, 3bd/2ba, 2 car garage. JEAN MILLER 530-508-3335

PANORAMIC VIEWS — LAKE PATAGONIA
MLS # 21622738  41.7 ACRES
379 circular Montana. Bring your horses! Next to State land with gorgeous views of Sonoita Creek marshland. Private, well, electricity at lot line. JEAN MILLER 520-508-3335

COMMERCIAL OPPORTUNITY
MLS # 22104300  316 NAUGLE AVENUE
Great Location w/high visibility in center of Patagonia. Ideal for retail/business. Back apt w/2bd/1ba can be rented separately. SAMANTHA SHORE 602-749-7883

PATAGONIA FIXER-UPPER
MLS # 22102521  426 DUQUESNE AVE.
Quaint 2bd/1ba house with separate workshop. High ceiling & hardwood floors in living rm. Office, screened porch. Full town lot. BARRABA HARRIS 502-829-6026

BRAND NEW HOME IN PATAGONIA
MLS # 22019085  149 ROADRUNNER LANE
Double lot, out of the floodplain with views of Red Mtn. 2bd/2ba, split floor plan, island kitchen, granite counters, high ceilings, 2 car garage. JEAN MILLER 520-508-3335

ELGIN WINE COUNTRY ACREAGE
MLS # 22007964  9.42 ACRES
11 Camino De Coral, just off Elgin’s wine row. Fenced on 3 sides, solar gate. Several possible building sites, out of the flood plain. JEAN MILLER 520-508-3335

MINER’S CAVIN IN WASHINGTON CAMP
MLS # 21815882  BUILT IN 1910
9 W. Bagley Drive. Remote location in Patagonia Mtns. 1379 sq. mu adobe cabin w/186/1ba. Charming rock studio, & outbuildings. BARRABA HARRIS 502-829-6026

PATAGONIA: 327 Mckeown Ave., next to Gathering Grounds 520-394-2120
SONOITA: Corner of Hwys 82 & 83, next to Post Office 520-455-5235

www.buysonoita.com

Jean Miller
Co-Owner, General Manager
Direct 520-508-3335
jeanmiller@longrealty.com

Carol Ford
Co-Owner, Designated Broker
Direct 520-604-0162
cford@longrealty.com

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