New Park Celebrated

Noni Mock, shares stories about her father, Doc Mock, at the new park dedication.

By Lynn Davison

The community of Patagonia formally celebrated the dedication of Doc Mock Park on Nov. 12. An appreciative crowd of about 50 gathered around the gazebo and the Welcome Center caboose to hear remarks from the project's many partners.

Master of Ceremonies Caleb Weaver, Chair of the Town's Tree and Park Committee and ringleader of the whole endeavor, provided the history, introduced the speakers, and thanked the many contributors.

Several members of the late Doc Mock's family were present for the dedication, with some traveling from as far away as Georgia. Doc Mock's daughter Noni regaled the audience with stories about her late father, who was the general practitioner for the Patagonia area in the days when

See Park, p.4

Foes Line Up Against Ducey's Container Wall

Arizona is building a wall out of shipping containers on federal land in the San Rafael Valley near the U.S.-Mexico border. The federal government and environmental advocacy groups are fighting the $95 million project in court.

By Lynn Davison

The state of Arizona is transporting shipping containers to the U.S.-Mexico border for the purpose of filling gaps in the border wall. Governor Doug Ducey claims the U.S. government has been slow to implement its plans to fill the gaps, so in order to protect the citizens of Arizona he is stepping in with a temporary solution. The Governor has been pushing the project, most likely in violation of federal law and despite warnings from the Coronado National Forest and the Bureau of Reclamation.

According to the Governor's office, the 8,800-pound, 9 ft by 40 ft containers stand about 22 feet tall when stacked, welded together, and topped with four feet of razor wire. One month into the project, the cost to taxpayers is already $95 million, according to C.J. Karamargin, a representative from the Governor's office, who stated that the funds are coming from a state border security fund. That does not include the cost of removing them. Containers were first seen near Yuma in late summer. Now they are in the southern portion of the Huachuca Mountains near Montezuma Pass in Cochise County. Heavy equipment and trucks are tearing up the landscape to transport, stage, and install the containers. By Nov. 30, the wall of double decker containers in Cochise County extended over 2.5 miles into the San Rafael Valley.

The Huachuca Mountains are particularly biologically diverse. The Sky Island Alliance (SIA) has wildlife cameras along the border in the Huachucas to document wildlife presence and travel. Common visitors include grey fox, black bear, bobcat, coati, ringtail, mountain lion, and over 27 species of birds.

Emily Burns, Program Director at SIA, says the container construction site is less than a mile from the terminus of the national scenic Arizona Trail, which is designated a critical habitat for jaguars. And it is home to other rare and imperiled species, from ocelots to elegant trogons. Once the rains return, there is a real chance that containers will be pushed around and cause severe habitat damage.

The project has fueled two legal battles. Governor Ducey has sued the federal government, claiming the State's right to build the container wall within the 60-foot-wide strip of federal land next to the border known as the Roosevelt Reservation. At issue are the legality of the Roosevelt Reservation; who controls the land at the border; and whether the State has the authority to place the containers there. The decision in Phoenix Federal District Court is due in December.

Meanwhile, the Center for Biological Diversity (CBD) has filed a notice of intent to sue Arizona under
MISSION STATEMENT
To be a reliable and engaging source of news for the communities of Eastern Santa Cruz County - open to all views, focused on local issues, written and edited by local people, and providing a platform for community education and involvement.

WHO WE ARE
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Submissions
Do you have an idea for a story having to do with the Eastern Santa Cruz County region? It could be a person or organization who’s doing something interesting, a concern about possible wrongdoing, or a unique approach to local challenges. Send your ideas to us at prteditor@gmail.com

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Local News Matters
By Marion Vendituoli

We at the PRT are really excited to share our December issue with you. This issue is loaded with important and entertaining news stories. Be sure to read Lynn Davison’s article on the container wall at the border, Kat Crockett’s article about the County’s efforts to control the fentanyl epidemic, and the frustrations of Verizon users in Patagonia, to name but a few of the stories here. Once again, I am in awe of our citizen journalists who volunteer their time and expertise to keep our community informed. Truly, local news matters.

But we need your help, too. Although the PRT has an incredible cadre of volunteers and a hard working staff, none of this is possible without your support.

On that note, we want to share some exciting news. If you make a gift to the PRT during our News-Match campaign, now through Dec. 31, your donation will be tripled. That means that your gift of $50 could mean $150 for the PRT!

The nonprofit PRT is of the community, and by the community. As a reader of the PRT, you’ve come to depend on our reporting. And, as a nonprofit, we depend on readers like you to make this work possible. Will you consider making a donation to the PRT today? Just think of the impact that could have - not just in our newsroom, but in our community. To donate, visit patagoniaregionaltimes.org/donate.

A Gift of Music

The Patagonia Minstrels played a medley of Renaissance and Christmas music in front of the Wild Horse Restaurant on Nov. 27. (From left): Pat McNamara (flute), Janet Dodd, Christina Wilhelm, Mark Berg (melodicas) and Brett Dodd (drums).

Photo by Dave McNamara

A Gift of Music

Spirit World 100 Weekend Wheels

Through Patagonia

Racers head down Harshaw Rd. at the start of the Spirit 100 race. 250 bike riders took part in the 2022 Spirit World 100 race Nov. 5. The race started and ended in downtown Patagonia, with racers choosing between 50-, 80- and 100-mile rides. Related events included a benefit dinner at the Patagonia Lumber Company, which raised $12,500 for the AZ Trail Association.

Photo by Chuck Klingenstein
Border (Cont.) the Endangered Species Act to protect the jaguar and ocelot. The state has challenged CBD’s intervention filing. CBD has responded and the legal grappling continues.

Trucks transporting the containers have been witnessed frequently crossing the one-lane bridge in Elgin as they caravan to staging sites at the border. Drivers on Hwy 82 between Elgin and Mustang Corners have also reported heavy truck traffic.

Tess Wagner, Watershed Restoration Manager at Borderlands Restoration Network (BRN), says the containers have blocked drainages where BRN has been doing restoration work. “It’s demoralizing,” she said.

Many people who have seen the double decker container walls question their effectiveness in stopping people from crossing the border. Others believe the timing of the project suggests it was a political tactic used by the governor and the Republican party to influence the November elections. If so, it appears to have failed as the project hope Governor-elect Hobbs will end it upon taking office.

On Tuesday, Nov. 29, a group of concerned citizens and members of environmental advocacy groups staged a formal protest against the project at the container wall. Protesters blocked work on the wall as workers and an armed security officer looked on.

“At this point, all that can be done is a slowing of the process,” said Christie Brown, a Sierra Vista resident and Sierra Club member. When asked to comment, one worker said, “Ask the Department of Emergency and Military Affairs. I only answer to a higher power.” There were no counter protesters present.

Protesters planned to return to the site the next day to continue blocking the trucks. They estimated that they had blocked a quarter-mile of work the first day. The group wants to keep up the protest until Hobbs is in office.

Additional reporting by Pat McNamara

Patagonia Art Walk 2022

By Marion Vendituoli

The 20th Annual Patagonia Art Walk, held Nov 25 and 26, featured the work of 34 artists at a range of sites around Patagonia. Twenty-eight artists and organizations set up booths throughout the town park. Pine needle baskets, felted dolls, photography, jewelry, and a variety of handcrafted objects were all offered for sale. Voices from the border displayed work created by migrants, as well as two quilts that were raffled off.

Women Grow Food, a local group that meets weekly at Deep Dirt Farm in Stevens Canyon north of Patagonia, sold seedlings and baked goods. The proceeds from their booth will be used for garden improvements and seed.

Priscilla Rodriguez, from Nogales, AZ, sold her book “Nogaleria,” a collection of her poems and photography celebrating the history of Ambos Nogales.

Several other artists were selling their work at sites away from the park. Barbara Kuhns sold her ‘upcycled’ textiles at her home, where Terry Stanford had created a display to memorialize migrant deaths along the border. The Patagonia Creative Arts Center hosted artists and also showed a film during the Art Walk. Open studios included Frankie’s Silver Jewelry Studio, Mesquite Grove Gallery, Colibri Gallery, and Judith Andrew’s home studio.

Art Walk was an ‘all volunteer’ event, organized this year by Mary Sky Schoolcraft, Mary Tolena and Gisa Kreuger.

Breaking News

Robert I. Cunningham of Patagonia was arrested Nov. 7 in connection with the May, 2017 fire that destroyed Cunningham’s Ranch House Restaurant, the Sonota family business he co-owned with his two sisters.

The Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms (ATF) conducted the investigation leading to the arrest.

Cunningham was held in detention on a federal criminal complaint of “Arson of a building or other real or personal property used in interstate commerce or in any activity affecting interstate commerce.”

On Nov 21, Cunningham was granted a conditional release from detention by Judge Leslie A. Bowman.

On the same day, Judge Lynnette C. Kimmins ordered a 60-day extension on the deadline to indict, after an unopposed motion by the defendants. The parties argued that they needed the time to explore the possibility of a pre-indictment plea offer.

A more detailed PRT report on this case, including details of the ATF’s investigation and Cunningham’s conditions of release, are available at patagoniaregionaltimes.org.

Photos by Marion Vendituoli

1: Barbara Kuhns shows one of her upcycled aprons that she had for sale at the Art Walk.
2: Janie Swartz and Kim Peters check out the goods for sale in the park on Nov. 26.
3: Seedlings and seed balls for sale at the Women Grow Food and More booth in the park.
4: Judith Andrew greets guests at her studio on Smelter Ave.
5: Priscilla Rodriguez talks with a customer about her book of poetry and her other projects in Nogales.
Locals Flee Verizon for AT&T

By Sarah Klingenstein

What's the reason for the spotty reception Verizon customers are experiencing in the Patagonia area? Is it interference from new towers across the border? Is the tower on Red Mountain being overwhelmed by a bigger tower built by AT&T? Are we now getting our signal from Sonoita? Sierra Vista? Or are we just in a "less-than-optimal" service area?

Dropped calls. Zero to one bar of service in the middle of Patagonia. Needing to use wifi to make a call from one's home. Patagonians have taken to social media in recent months to ask one another whether they've learned of any possibility of improvement of their reception. The general consensus: "No." Hours of phone time on calls to Verizon's customer service have yielded conflicting information and no resolution.

Jeff Maxwell, Safety Officer for the Patagonia Volunteer Fire Department (PVFD) has been asking for a remedy since January.

"Suddenly, one day, we no longer had service we could depend on," he said. "It got to be a health and safety issue when we had a medical emergency out on a ranch and we couldn't find the address - we had zero bars. Fighting a big fire in August, we were unable to talk to one another in areas we used to have service. Sometimes we can't make a call from inside the fire station."

Nine separate Verizon work orders from the PVFD yielded as many explanations - everything from a broken piece of equipment they plan to fix this January to one representative telling Maxwell that the cell tower on Red Mountain had been taken down.

The fire department is evaluating making a switch to AT&T. AT&T holds a 25-year contract for FirstNet, a nationwide network for first responders that allows calls from emergency personnel to take precedence over other traffic during a major emergency. This network was set up following a recommendation from the 9/11 Committee that something be done to avoid the situation that occurred on that day when the New York City communication systems became overloaded.

Although Verizon offers a priority service for first responders, Maxwell was told Patagonia doesn't have adequate reception to take advantage of this option.

Some local firefighters, including Ivan Mingura, have already made the switch. "We got tired of not being able to use our phones, even right in town," he said. "Now I have fewer dead spots on the drive to Nogales or Tucson, and where I work out in the field."

Talk on the Patagonia Local Facebook page shows Mingura is not alone. Several there talk about making the switch out of frustration.

This seems to be a Patagonia problem. With some exceptions, residents in other eastern Santa Cruz County communities don't report the same issues, except when they drive through areas like River Road or along Route 82.

"I got nowhere with Verizon," said Carolyn Shafer of Patagonia. "Finally I filed an FCC complaint. Verizon called me and said that we 'are not in an optimal service area.'"

Shafer switched to AT&T, partly because AT&T is the FirstNet service provider. Shafer is a member of the Patagonia Community Emergency Response Team, a group of volunteer citizens who train and organize to assist the community during incidents or emergencies when professional first responders may not be available. This role allows her to take advantage of the prioritized service in an emergency.

Michael Young, Patagonia School Vice Principal and Behavior Specialist, got as far as corresponding directly with a representative from the Verizon Executive Relations office.

"When upgrading our phones didn't help, she sent me a range extender, which helped inside my house," he said. "But I'm not inside my house most of the day. I'm on the school campus, right in town, and directly in view of Red Mountain. After she told me that I must have trees or tall buildings interfering with my signal, I sent her a photo of my direct view of the Red Mountain tower from campus. Finally, I wrote her back: 'It is with a heavy heart that I must leave Verizon. For the past 21 years, I have lived in the same home with exceptional service.'" According to Denise Bowdon, Office Manager at South32, Verizon knows there's no signal coming from Red Mountain, and that we are receiving our signal from Sonoita. Andy Anderson, of Patagonia, has used several apps that show the power and direction of cell tower signals. He concurs with Bowdon.

The reviews from those who've switched to AT&T have been very positive. Adrienne Halpert said, "I've switched to AT&T, and the signal is strong and consistent, after 21 years with Verizon." Carolyn Shafer said she now has "a signal all the time and anywhere." Mary Tolena reported that her reception is "much, much better." As far as the cost of switching, a lot depends on the plan chosen, whether one has a phone to trade in, the value given to that phone, and more. One person switching a six-person family plan is paying about the same, with four members upgrading their phones.

There is another potential issue: interference from new towers in Sonora, MX. According to the Verizon representative interviewed by the PRT, they "will be working on it in the future." In the meantime, Patagonians are figuring it out the best they can.
META members Zay Hartigan and Bob Proctor discuss the feasibility of turning the swath of land cleared for the Patagonia fiberoptic line into a multi-use, non-motorized trail stretching from Patagonia to Sonoita.

By Sarah Klingenstein

What if you could hike, or ride a bike or a horse the 12 miles from Patagonia to Sonoita and back again, without worrying about the semis and speedy traffic along Rte 82? That is the vision of the Mountain Empire Trails Association (META), and recent events have brought that dream closer to reality. Now it will take community passion and effort to bring it across the finish line.

Phase I

In 2006, two local women, Cornelia O’Connor and Betsy McGee, set their minds to building this trail. They got grant money from the National Park Service and support from the Town of Patagonia and Santa Cruz County to begin the process. Bob Proctor, Zay Hartigan and German Quiroga signed on as manpower to convert the old rail line north of Patagonia into what is now known as the Train Track Trail (TTT). Since then, O’Connor and McGee have moved away, and Proctor, Hartigan and Quiroga have taken up the reins, handling administration and finances, and providing the bulk of the manpower.

Legal access could have presented a major hurdle to building the TTT. Usually, when a rail line is abandoned, the land remains as one parcel. In this case, there were 17 deeds, and landowners had mixed feelings about allowing access through their property. META has benefitted from agreements that the Arizona Trail Association made with HudBay and South32 as it sought to gain access for the Arizona Trail. META was brought into those agreements, and made a further agreement with South32.

Through several years of sweat equity, Phase I is now in place and in use from behind the Patagonia Post Office to Casa Blanca Canyon, comprising approximately five miles. The Roundhouse extension adds two miles and creates a loop back to town. At Casa Blanca Canyon, travelers can access the new AZ Trail connector. There is also access to trails in the Borderlands Wildlife Preserve along the way.

The work was accomplished by the core members of META, with help from fellow Patagonian Tomás Jonsson, members of the local Dirt Bags group, some Friends of Sonoita Creek, and the Hermosa Mine site, and recent promotional efforts by housing developers like Martin Short. Other small rural towns in the west have experienced similar problems. Stephanie Smith and her husband moved from Joshua Tree, CA to Arizona in 2021 and bought property in Wildlife Haven just outside of Patagonia. Smith describes the trajectory of rapid growth which began in 2010 in Joshua Tree as “initially a good idea that became a very wrong idea.” She owned three Airbnbs at one point, but sold them all when it became clear that the rapid influx of investors buying up properties for short-term rentals was fundamentally changing the character of the town. There were fewer and fewer actual residents and more and more businesses offering short-term rentals. Smith’s experience in Joshua Tree led her to enroll in a graduate program in urban planning at the U of A. She hopes her degree will give her more knowledge and skills to help her new community, Patagonia, and other communities avoid the fate of Joshua Tree.

Cholla Duir and her family moved to Patagonia from Carbondale, CO. Over a ten-year period, Carbondale grew dramatically to become a recreational community where few people actually lived full-time, but many people came for outdoor recreation and the amenities that came with it. Outside investors bought up properties in town, turning many into short-term rentals. Housing became too expensive for people in the service industry and for many long-time renters. Property owners in town, and ranchers with holdings outside of Carbondale, sold to outside investors and developers willing to pay big bucks. The culture of the community fundamentally changed. Duir sees some indications that Patagonia may be headed down a similar path.

Patagonia is certainly experiencing growth in recreational tourism. Recently, a conditional use permit has been requested for the Paseo Verde Eco-Lodge, which is proposed to include a lodge and five short-term rental cabins. According to Robinson, the Patagonia Town Council is concerned about the growth of short-term rentals.

See HOUSING, p.20

### Fly’s Exclusives Open Studio

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Combating Fentanyl in Santa Cruz County

By Kat Crockett

National alarm about growing, widespread abuse of the synthetic opiate fentanyl has risen sharply in recent months. Millions of fentanyl pills of indeterminate potency have been flooding into the U.S. from drug labs in Mexico. Overdose deaths broke U.S. records in 2020 and again in 2021. In August the federal government warned in Mexico. Overdose deaths broke U.S. flooding into the U.S. from drug labs widespread abuse of the synthetic now designated as one of 33 nation- smuggled into the United States, often chemicals purchased primarily from criminal drug networks using precursor Health Committee that fentanyl-laced seizures per week is rising.

High Drug Trafficking But Low Drug Consumption

From January to December of 2021, the DEA Phoenix Field Division seized over 9.5 million counterfeit fentanyl-laced pills. The number of pills seized per week is rising. Earlier this year Colonel Heston Silbert, Director of the AZ Department of Public Safety, told the Arizona House Health Committee that fentanyl-laced pills are manufactured by Mexican criminal drug networks using precursor chemicals purchased primarily from Chinese suppliers. These pills are then smuggled into the United States, often through Southern Arizona, which is now designated as one of 33 nationwide High Intensity Drug Trafficking Areas by the DEA.

According to Border Patrol officials, most fentanyl that is seized entering the United States from Mexico is intercepted at ports of entry and is smuggled primarily by U.S. citizens.

Santa Cruz County Sheriff David Hathaway told the PRT that although Nogales has become known as a trans-shipment point for fentanyl, Santa Cruz County (SCC) itself has a very low drug consumer problem for drugs, including fentanyl.

"For all types of drugs, we have a very low consumer problem compared to some of the big metropolitan areas like Tucson or Phoenix," Hathaway said.

Statistics from the Arizona Dept. of Health Services bear this out. While the rate of opioid deaths has increased statewide each year since 2017, SCC opioid deaths peaked in 2020 with 16 deaths and actually declined to less than ten deaths in 2021. Data for 2022 is incomplete. For the five-year period from June 2017 to July 2022, SCC recorded 48 fatal opioid overdoses and 348 suspected non-fatal opioid overdoses. Over 87% of deaths were Hispanic/Latino. Seventy-five percent were men, 25% women.

Combating Overdoses and Addiction

Accidental overdoses involving fentanyl are not uncommon. Fortunately, they can be reversed if an adequate dose of Narcan - usually administered as a nasal spray - is given right away when symptoms appear. The nasal spray is safe, and available from pharmacies without a prescription. Across SCC, emergency medical personnel administered 70% of Narcan and law enforcement 25%.

Sheriff Hathaway said that all County officers carry Narcan and are trained to identify overdose symptoms and administer the drug. Narcan usually works quickly to reverse an opioid overdose in a matter of minutes, but more than one dose may be required.

Patagonia Fire Chief Ike Isakson said his department has administered Narcan once, but it was too late to remedy the overdose and the person died.

Sonoita-Elgin Fire Department Chief Marc Meredith said his department has administered Narcan for a small number of overdoses. He added that Narcan kits are available at all Fire Departments in the county free of cost.

Sheriff Hathaway said that since fentanyl pills are not produced in a regular and recognized pharmaceutical lab, users don’t know the strength they are ingesting, whether it’s by swallowing pills, vaping, injecting, or laced into marijuana cigarettes. Small disparities in strength can mean the difference between a drug user’s usual dose and one that proves deadly. In recent tests conducted by DEA, six out of ten fentanyl-laced, fake prescription pills contained at least two milligrams of fentanyl - an amount considered to be a lethal dose.

Fentanyl overdose symptoms include pupil constriction; becoming dazed or nearly unconscious; cold and clammy skin; pale complexion; stiff or limp body; blue or purple tint to skin, lips or fingernails; vomiting; gurgling sounds; frothing at the mouth; slowed or absent breathing; coma; inability to speak; and, slow or stopped heartbeat.

Opiates like fentanyl are also highly addictive, creating a euphoric effect that causes users to crave rising amounts of fentanyl to avoid feeling ill or “dope sick,” Hathaway said. Use can easily turn to addiction.

There are many options for treating opiate addictions to help users regain control of their lives. Arizona Health Care Cost Containment System (AHCCCS) is Arizona’s Medicaid agency that offers health care programs to serve Arizona residents. For questions on AHCCCS eligibility, call 1-855-432-7587. Individuals must meet certain income and other requirements to obtain services. Also, for help finding treatment, go to findtreatment.gov or call 1-800-662-4357.

Rehabilitating Drug Offenders

Hathaway said there are two options for dealing with illegal drug use in a community: put users in jail, or try to encourage them to not use drugs in the first place. The County has focused on demand reduction. “It costs taxpayers a lot of money to put somebody in jail,” Hathaway said. The Sheriff’s Office has a grant from Mariposa Community Health Center for the purposes of allowing officers to identify people who need help.

If drug users do get into the criminal justice system, they have access to SCC diversion programs to avoid incarceration. Using grant funding from the Department of Justice, SCC Justice of Peace Emilio Velasquez has spearheaded a substance abuse diversion program called Recovery Court, the first of its kind in Arizona. Velasquez has also established a Behavioral Empowerment Court to address mental health issues. There are currently eight people enrolled in Recovery Court and four in Behavioral Empowerment Court.

Sheriff Hathaway said if people have been arrested for substance abuse or sales of drugs in small quantities, these programs can help rehabilitate offenders, get them back with their families and keep them employed and productive members of the community.

In 2019, Judge Velasquez also created the Substance Abuse Community Coalition, which includes Circles of Peace, Hope Incorporated (formerly Wellness Connection), and Mariposa Community Health Center, all collaborating to address substance abuse mental health solutions. Part of this grant funds SCC Jail Liaison Martin Felix, a former addict and convicted felon, who helps inmates find and maintain supportive community connections when they are released from prison.

Without this assistance, users are likely to fall right back to the same people they were hanging out with before,” said Sheriff Hathaway.

“Felix is trying to create something along the lines of a half-way house by providing contacts for various services within the community.”

In the January issue, the PRT will examine how one local nonprofit is helping people with recovery.
Peter Paul Smith
DECEMBER 17, 1947 - OCTOBER 27, 2022
UNITED STATES ARMY, RETIRED

Peter was born to John Stanley Smith and Valeria T. Smith (Brazinskas) in Gardner, MA. After graduating with the awesome class of ’65 from Gardner High School, he attended the University of Massachusetts in Amherst and Kings Point Merchant Marine Academy in New York before joining the U.S. Army in 1967. He served with the 9th Infantry Division in Bear Cat and Dong Tam, South Vietnam in 1968 with fellow high school classmate, Fred Lepkowski.

Future assignments with the Army’s Special Security Group took him to Bangkok, Thailand supporting JUSMAGTHAI and the U.S. Embassies in Bangkok and Phnom Penh, Cambodia; to Frankfurt, Germany supporting S5 Corps and the American Consulate; to Bad Kreuznach, Germany where he, his American Consulate; to Bad was with the U.S. Strategic Arms

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Limitation Treaty I delegation when the treaty was signed in Helsinki, Finland.

He would like to send special prayers to all Air America pilots and crews as thanks for a lift to Vientiane, Laos [The Purple Porpoise was a remarkable hangout] and to all of the chopper pilots who flew in and around South Vietnam.

After his military service, he received a Masters of Education degree from the University of Arizona and taught for 17 years at Elgin Elementary School in Elgin, Arizona.

He asks that everyone pray for all of the teachers in Arizona and that better support be provided to all of the schools.

He is survived by his wife Soonja Lee Smith, son Kelly Keane Smith, godson Dr. David Paul Smith of Chicago, and Cathy Smith of Hadley, Massachusetts.

Dear God, please let the energy of his soul be able to recognize his loved ones and you.

Per his wishes, he was cremated.

His funeral service was held on Thursday, November 3, 2022 at the Hatfield Funeral Home in Sierra Vista. Immediately following services there was a committal service with military honors on Post Cemetery, located on Ft. Huachuca.

In lieu of flowers, donations can be made to the Warrior Healing Center in his name.

Jeanne Byrd Witt Matthews passed away peacefully during a magnificent Arizona sunset on October 22, 2022. She left this earth in the place she loved most, her home, surrounded by her loving family.

Jeanne was born February 3, 1945 in Baltimore, MD, the youngest child of William J. Byrd and Susan Shepard.

Even as a young girl Jeanne was known as fiercely independent and determined to blaze her own trail. And that she did, while serving as a role model for her family, countless friends, and neighbors.

While she wasn’t born in Arizona, she got here as fast as she could and made it clear Arizona forever owned her heart. Here, Jeanne lived life to its fullest. She was an outstanding fast pitch softball player, racquetball champion, water skier, windsurfer, horseback rider – and avid line dancer. There was nothing Jeanne couldn’t do when she set her mind to it.

As active as she was though, it was her love of helping others and sharing her life-long passion for horses that happily filled her days when she settled into her beloved Sonoita ranch in 2000. Her life became quickly filled with friends, trail rides, line dancing, and giving back to the community that had so warmly welcomed her as one of their own.

It’s been said that one of Jeanne’s greatest passions was her animals and ensuring their needs were met. And that is certainly true. She was also incredibly proud of her family - especially her grandchildren.

Her family had scattered across the country, yet she consistently made it a priority to attend birthday celebrations, graduations, weddings, and family vacations. Being a part of the lives of her children and grandchildren and sharing her love of life with them kept Jeanne laughing and young at heart. She taught grandkids how to ride bikes and horses, to play games, and most importantly, how to not waste a precious moment and to live a life full of action!

Jeanne’s spirit, laughter, and kindness will be missed by all who knew her. She is survived by her two children, William Martin Witt and his wife Deborah, Las Vegas, NV; Lanie Witt Abbott and her husband Richard, of Bangor, Maine; her four grandchildren, Jessica Yvonne Leavitt and her husband Jordan; William Hunter Witt and his wife Karli; Lydia Witt Colson; Natalie Byrd Colson; and her two great grandsons, Radley Bert Leavitt and Thomas William Leavitt.

She was predeceased by her first husband Richard Donald Witt and second husband James A. Matthews, her parents.

She was predeceased by her first husband Richard Donald Witt and second husband James A. Matthews, and her parents.

A Celebration of her life will be held at 10 a.m., December 3 at Canelo Cowboy Church, 14 McCarthy Ln, Elgin, AZ.

Those wishing to remember Jeanne in a special way might consider making a gift to CCMA (Christian Cowboy Ministries of Arizona) camps for youth. PO Box 1324, Sonoita, Az, 85637.
Local Foundation Works to Support Rural Youth

By Marion Vendituoli

The Tucson-based nonprofit Los Charros Foundation has expanded its commitment to the rural youth of Pima, Santa Cruz and Cochise Counties with an increased scholarship budget and the recent hire of Sonora’s Kristin Tomlinson in the newly created position of Executive Director.

Tomlinson, who started in her new role last February, works with the Foundation’s 19 board members and six subcommittees to write grants, coordinate scholarships, and organize the annual September fundraiser.

“I’m the middle of the wheel, the board members are the spokes,” said Tomlinson in a recent interview. “They bring me information and I make it happen. They make my job so easy because they are so dedicated.”

Tomlinson’s extensive experience and success with local nonprofits in Southern Arizona, as well as her personal connections with rural youth organizations, have given her a solid foundation for this new job. She has served as president and a member of the board of the Santa Cruz County Fair and Rodeo Association and was chairman of the Sonora Labor Day Rodeo committee for five years in a row. She ran the Sonora Rodeo Royalty program, and was co-chair of the Santa Cruz County Junior Livestock Committee. She serves on the Empire Ranch Foundation Board and volunteered with the Junior League in Tucson.

Tomlinson leads a busy life. Her family owns and runs the Vera Earl Ranch in Sonoita, founded by her husband Ian’s grandfather Burton Beck in 1968.

“I do what needs to be done at the ranch and with the kids,” she said. As well as helping out at the family’s Vera Earl Premium Beef Store in Sonoita, she also serves on the Salpointe Parent Association Board.

The Los Charros Foundation was founded in 2015 by members of the Los Charros del Desierto, a 67-year-old organization that organizes yearly trail rides for its members in rural areas of Southern Arizona. The group, which currently has 258 members, has held rides on the Vera Earl, the Jelks’ ranch, and more recently, in Casa Blanca Canyon north of Patagonia, where the organization has purchased the Casa Blanca Ranch.

The mission of the Los Charros Foundation is to raise money and award scholarships to rural youth in Pima, Santa Cruz and Cochise Counties, to enable them to attend two and four year colleges, and trade or vocational schools. The foundation has awarded $375,000 to 77 recipients since 2015.

Fifteen scholarships for higher education were awarded in 2022, with nine coming from eastern Santa Cruz County.

Tomlinson is currently working with 37 students. “It’s my job to maintain the relationship with the kids,” she said. “They are required to maintain a 3.0 GPA. If they don’t, they can come to us and explain their situation. We’ll work with them to give them a chance to improve their grades. The goal is success, not punishment.”

The Foundation also supports 4-H and FFA members, offering funds to purchase and feed a market animal project such as a lamb or goat. As part of this program, a member of the Foundation does “a home visit with the kids, helps them get set up, and provides the animal and feed for the duration of the project,” Tomlinson explained. This past year, three of the animals at the Santa Cruz County Fair and one shown at the Cochise County Fair were donated by Los Charros.

In 2021 the Los Charros Foundation donated $10,000 to help establish welding and auto mechanics programs at Patagonia Union High School, with additional funding coming from South32. After completion of the two-year school program, students graduate as certified welders. Currently there are 11 students in the welding classes and eight taking auto mechanics.

“It gives kids an opportunity to have a marketable skill,” said Patagonia Schools Supt. Kenny Hayes. “Welding is a skill that is needed out in the world. It has provided another path for kids.”

Funding for all of these initiatives comes from ‘Dancing Under the Stars,’ an annual Los Charros event held on the second Saturday of September, open to members and non-members. For the past five years, the event has been held on the Vera Earl Ranch.

Sponsors of the 2022 event, which was attended by more than 300 guests, included Chenega MIOS, the Jack K. and Aline L. Goodman Foundation, HSL Properties and the Port of Tucson. Dinner, dancing, donations, raffles, and live and silent auctions at this year’s event raised over $230,000.

After the annual fundraiser, the budget is set for the year and the scholarship committee decides how many scholarships will be granted for the following academic year. It’s a lot of work, but Tomlinson says the payoff is worth it.

“I’m just really happy that I’m in a position to directly affect kids moving on to receive an education, making their lives better,” she said. “I’m glad I have a direct impact on that.”

The Los Charros Scholarship application for high school students will be available in January, 2023. More information can be found at loscharrosfoundation.org
Borderlands Groups Celebrate Conservation Successes

By Bob Brandt

Nobel Peace Prize recipient Dr. Terry Root addresses the Wildlife Corridors/Borderlands Restoration Network gathering on November 12.

Verbal high fives and high praise punctuated the festive mood in the Sonoita Fairgrounds’ Pioneer Hall on Saturday evening, Nov. 12, as benefactors, funders, founders, staff and volunteers of Borderlands Restoration Network and Wildlife Corridors, LLC gathered to celebrate their remarkable successes in preserving threatened wildlife habitat and restoring degraded landscapes in the borderlands of Southern Arizona and Northern Mexico.

By Appointment

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Photo by Bob Brandt

By Bob Brandt

kickoff the evening’s activities by welcoming 60 guests, then reviewing an impressive list of achievements of his organization and its network partners: Wildlife Corridors, LLC; Cuenca Los Ojos; Borderlands Restoration, L3C; and Deep Dirt Farm. With a slide presentation running in the background, Vaughn acknowledged that his time at the BRN helm would soon be ending, then went on to highlight the myriad restoration and conservation programs the organization has carried out during his tenure. And to emphasize that BRN did not work alone to achieve its successes he said, “Behind every slide there’s a deeper story of collaboration, connection and change.”

Following a dinner catered by Anita Clovesko-Wharton, with desserts from the Farmers Daughter, and wine donated from local vineyards Dos Cabezas, Rune, and Deep Sky, Ron Pulliam, Wildlife Corridors founding member and Managing Partner, continued the theme of collaboration by thanking everyone for their roles in supporting the work being celebrated on this occasion. He gave special recognition to Cuenca Los Ojos founder Valer Clark whom he credited with not only restoring the natural flow of water over tens of thousands of acres of degraded borderlands ranchland but providing inspirational leadership for those who are building on her pioneering restoration work.

Pulliam then explained that Wildlife Corridors, LLC was formed in 2014 to purchase the foreclosed Three Canyons subdivision largely to set aside most of the development’s nearly 1400 acres as a wildlife preserve. That purpose was fulfilled with the creation of the Borderlands Wildlife Preserve which has already expanded to about 1800 acres and will soon grow beyond that as additional adjacent properties are purchased or placed under easements by conservation-minded owners.

Pulliam noted that the preserve now permanently protects critical wildlife habitat where approved residential subdivisions would have permitted upwards of 200 lot owners to build houses in the heart of the Sonoita Creek Wildlife Corridor, one of the most important wildlife corridors in the country.

The event attracted officials from major funding agencies and organizations as well as individual donors that enabled WC and BRN to purchase, protect and manage the parcels that now make up the preserve. A huge portion of the funds came from the U.S. Forest Service in the form of a $1,033,000 grant from its Forest Legacy Program which is administered in Arizona by the Arizona Department of Forestry and Fire Management. Laura Moser, Cooperative Forestry Program Manager for the USFS SW Region, who attended the event, indicated that more Forest Legacy funds may be available to secure protection of additional land and Matthew Jewell, who heads up the program in Arizona said ADFFM is encouraging WC and BRN to apply for those funds.

The evening’s festivities ended with a presentation on global warming by Dr. Terry Root, Senior Fellow Emerita, at Stanford University’s Woods Institute for the Environment. A longtime supporter and member of Wildlife Corridors, LLC, Dr. Root is also the recipient of a Nobel Peace Prize which she was awarded in 2007 for her work on climate change.

Dr. Root used several data charts to document the substantial challenges facing not only humanity but all species because of global warming, which she said is undeniably caused by human activity. She ended her talk on an optimistic note by telling the audience very specifically how global warming can be reversed with widespread adoption of more sustainable eating practices and electing public officials who will support policies that limit harmful emissions from all sectors of the economy. With obvious conviction, she declared, “We know how, and we can do it!”

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LIFE AMONG THE HUMANS

THE SLEEP OF REASON BREEDS MONSTERS

LIFE AMONG THE HUMANS

The world today is littered and malodorous with lies. Thanks to the gonzo Internet, this is a time of mass hysteria, when beliefs whose roaring flames are fed by fantasy, not fact.

I recall a key line in John Milton’s (dull) “Paradise Lost” where hero/villain Lucifer inveighs, “Evil, Be Thou My Good!” There is a thrill, a buoyancy, that comes from saying “Screw It!” to responsibility. Sometimes, first thing, when I wake up, there comes an oddball or compelling thought - a much-less-than-normal-rational thought. The other day, there was a sense of having narrowly escaped a grave calamity: the Brane produced this wacko thought: “O.M.G. What if we’d been born onto a planet which contained nothing to eat?” (Poor Darwin spinneth in his grave.)

In general, when I’m awake, I try to stay at least a little sane, but, while that feels normal/familiar, it sometimes seems dull. So, when my thoughts go on a tear, as when I’m stoned or just woke up, there is a lovely sense of having slipped the surly bonds of normalcy, a little like the thrill of breaking rules when you’re a kid. And, in that vein, it dawned on me: Just think how different life would be if we had hands which grew atop our heads, like stubby horns, or in the middle of our backs, instead of at the end of these convenient, limber limbs. We could not brush our teeth or tie our shoes so carelessly. I will not now enumerate the million things, both “good” and “bad,” we could not do - at least as we’re accustomed to.

And yet, despite enjoying respite from the sensible, I’m still inclined to marvel at and, frankly, to despise, the eagerness some people have to believe all the dizziest crap that they hear, especially the stuff designed to polarize and stir up fear. How ’bout that wacko caca we now know as Qanon, promoting baroque fantasies straight out of fairy tales, regarding pedophilia and the much-maligned “elites,” and claiming that such reprobates are kidnappers and even cannibals? You find that real?? Such lurid, groundless “certainties” are nothing more than waste-products of self-indulgent, drama-hungry minds. They’d rather buy into a lie than do the work to verify. It makes me think of rumors spread among the backward tribesmen in Brazil - or wherever it was - when affluent ecologists attempted to buy and protect tracts of unspoiled land. Or, when, in darkest Africa, those teams of selfless doctors risking comfort, life and limb, attempt to immunize the kids against some plague du jour. Those superstitious locals, who’ve been grossly disinfomed, are panicked and stumped by their neighbor/demagogues, who prey on ignorance and fear. The medical Samaritans are rumored to have come to kidnap, vivisect and kill the local kids. And so, they’re either chased away, or, more than likely, shot. And we have it here, too, in what we call “The modern world.” Our demagogues report that Georgie Soros and The Satanists (a heavy metal band?) have devised a nefarious plan: to kidnap your children, then harvest and market their organs for oodles of cash.

We’re wallowing in toxic, superstitious fantasies with zero basis in real fact. I love, for pure perversion and minimalist purity those flags some of my neighbors flew and may soon fly again, to wit: TRUMP WON! It feels so lovely to feel sure, no matter whether wrong or right.

Reality, be damned! Yeahaw! Good night!

MELANIE'S CAFE

Time to get real, folks. These events are just as likely to happen here as anywhere else. And they’re real. What if we’d been born onto a planet which contained nothing to eat? (Poor Darwin spinneth in his grave.)

In general, when I’m awake, I try to stay at least a little sane, but, while that feels normal/familiar, it sometimes seems dull. So, when my thoughts go on a tear, as when I’m stoned or just woke up, there is a lovely sense of having slipped the surly bonds of normalcy, a little like the thrill of breaking rules when you’re a kid. And, in that vein, it dawned on me: Just think how different life would be if we had hands which grew atop our heads, like stubby horns, or in the middle of our backs, instead of at the end of these convenient, limber limbs. We could not brush our teeth or tie our shoes so carelessly. I will not now enumerate the million things, both “good” and “bad,” we could not do - at least as we’re accustomed to.

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A DEPRESSING CHRISTMAS STORY

By Cassina Farley

Every year about this time I get a lump in my throat. I start out strong in November looking forward to the holidays only to settle into the melancholy of memories of Christmas past.

As a kid I had a strong belief in Santa Claus, fostered by my parents and grandparents. These were the days before that dreadful “elf on a shelf,” when all mom and dad had to do was mention that Santa was watching and we’d straighten up our act. My sister and I spent our December circling toys we had our eyes on in the annual Christmas Sears catalog and spending our dollars at Sprouse-Reitz in South Tucson, buying Christmas gifts for our mom, dad and little brother.

When Tammie and I were solo we slept in the same bed and would quietly sneak out of our room to see the tinsel tree — that I swear had a sound — only to find piles of presents and gift tags with handwriting that was Santa’s. In my mind’s eye I see my mom walking down the hall in her terry cloth nightgown followed by my dad in the gray velour robe we bought him on Father’s Day.

After my brother was born, we would sneak into his room on Christmas morning and gently shake his crib until we woke him and then scurry off to our room to wait for my mom to come to his rescue. If we played our cards right, she’d signal to us that it was okay to get up and we would make our way to the living room to take in all the glory.

The year we got our Cabbage Patch dolls was the same year that our rock star uncle from Hollywood showed up to my grandparents’ house on Christmas morning. I remember the feeling of excitement and joy and the oversized RATT t-shirt he brought me as a souvenir. I also remember my great-uncle sneaking into the liquor cabinet to add a little Christmas cheer to his coffee while all the adults were outside welcoming my mom’s brother and his wife. He winked at us with a finger to his lips — shhhhhh™ — certainly not the first or last time.

It was common knowledge among us kids that my mom’s brother hung the moon and one of my saddest moments was when I realized that he was in fact mortal. I have since made peace with it.

At our house we made iced sugar cookies every year, and for some reason every Christmas Eve we left out cookies, eggnog and one Bud Light. We were told that both Santa and the Easter Bunny liked Budweiser. At grandma’s house on Christmas morning, we were treated to hamburger gravy and mounds of white toast and over easy eggs that were cooked to perfection. The latter part of the day would usually include roast beef—or “roast beast” as my mom calls it—and tons of dessert.

Christmas changes as you get older for obvious and not so obvious reasons. Things didn’t exactly turn out the way I thought they would but with every passing year I try to carry on the best I can. I still make iced sugar cookies and leave out one Bud Light for Santa.

My heart firmly lives in the ’80s when I think about Christmas. That’s where my dad lives too. He’s tucked in the warmth of that gray velour robe with the navy blue piping, emerging from the hallway on Christmas morning. The sound of the tinsel is the only thing I hear.

If we make it through December Everything’s going to be alright, I know — Merle Haggard

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Patagonia Youth Enrichment Center Continues to Flourish

News Release

Patagonia Youth Enrichment Center has been able to accomplish so many things this year! A new Food Forest on the side yard is in place and several berry bushes have been planted and are growing. The youth look forward to picking the “fruits of their labor” next year. The vegetable garden is being watered 100% by the water harvesting system that was put in place by Borderlands Earth Care Youth program. Two large cisterns, gutters, and irrigation systems make it possible for the garden to flourish. Many of the Youth Center teens are intern with BECY and have been excited to be a part of the installation process. The youth were able to harvest some of the vegetables/herbs from the garden and use the bounty in the evening meals they prepared on site.

Thanks to grants from the Patagonia Regional Community Foundation and Community Foundation of Southern Arizona, PYEC has been able to construct a beautiful covered ramada/brick patio in the backyard. This will be amazing during the hot summer months! There is an additional cistern that will be hooked up to another gutter system on the ramada, which will take care of the backyard fruit and pollinator plants that will be planted in the coming months. The youth have already been using the patio for socializing, listening to music, and BBQs.

The Youth Center continues to grow with different youth activities, year-round. In addition to the on-going meals offered, there were several art-focused workshops over the summer, as well as supporting the local “soccer under the lights” program.

Due to the generosity of our donors, PYEC was able to lend support to several high school senior and young adults through the Pathways Scholarship and Martin’s “Pay It Forward” Scholarship. It is always an honor to award these scholarships to the PYEC youth who have been a part of the PYEC program over their high school (and often earlier) years.

In September, PYEC Director Anna Coleman had the honor of being one of 19 recipients for the Santa Cruz County Most Influential People for 2022. She often tells people that she has the best job in the world, working with fantastic young people and watching them grow into responsible human beings. It truly is an honor.

The annual Fundraising dinner in October brought people from the community to the Youth Center to enjoy the youth-made enchiladas and fabulous music by The Band Wanted. Everyone was able to enjoy the event under the shade of the new structure outside.

The Youth Center is halfway through its eighth year and continues to grow. It is because of the amazing support system that PYEC is successful and can continue to provide opportunities to the youth.

Patagonia Youth Enrichment Center hopes that the community will continue to assist their mission. Not only is a donation a tax deduction, but because PYEC is a qualified 501(c)3 organization, donors can receive a tax credit ($400 for single filer/$800 for couples)! With this tax credit, each donor will receive dollar-for-dollar back on the Arizona state taxes.

The Patagonia Youth Enrichment Center extends a huge THANK YOU to everyone who has made it a success.

In Response to Brother

My name is Nancy Ochoa Droeger. I’d like to respond to my brother Ron Ochoa’s letter (“Seeking Input,” Nov. 2022) because I believe some clarification may be useful.

I moved to Patagonia in 1977 when I was 26 years old. My then-husband and I built our home on the corner of Santa Rita and Costello. We moved here from Tempe as my husband got a teaching job at Patagonia High School. My older brother David Ochoa and his wife lived in town for a few years and had a small store in Patagonia before Red Mountain Foods called La Tiendita. David and his family left Patagonia in 1979. I now find myself staying part of the year in the Northwest, but I will always consider Patagonia my home.

My husband and I moved my father here from Phoenix where he was living with his sister and where our family is from. We purchased a small home for him across town, and he lived there until his death in 1988. We buried him in the Patagonia cemetery.

In the Patagonia cemetery. Ron lives in Canada. He moved there with my mother and stepfather as a teenager. He is married to Heather Bochon, who is from Canada, and is raising their child there. He currently lives in Edmonton, Alberta and has for many years. He owns a home there and is employed by a large mining company.

Ron does not live in Patagonia, nor has he ever. He has visited here several times and recently purchased the property that he calls Paseo Verde on the site of the old landfill. He states that because he recently purchased property here that he has become a steward of native land. Would overdeveloping that land be considered stewardship? I think not. By his submitted plans, he wants to overdevelop and many, like myself, are concerned about the impact Paseo Verde may have on our community.

Nancy Ochoa Droeger

The Patagonia Regional Community Fund will begin accepting scholarship applications January 1, 2023. Scholarships are available for high school seniors or adults returning to school at community colleges, four-year universities and career or technical schools. Apply by March 1. Through one application, you will also be matched to any of the other 90 ACF scholarships for which you qualify.

Patagonia Regional Community Fund

440 W Fry Blvd, STE 6
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We’re here to help you make a difference.
Call or click: 520.439.0595
or www.azfoundation.org/Patagonia

Letters to the Editor

Very, Very Sad

I came to this area in 1947. Grew up here, went through the old schools, worked on four ranches as a teen-
ager. Worked in Nogales seven years and spent time in Mexico. Patagonia was unincorporated for some time. I believe God would shed tears if he saw the Santa Ritas. Very very sad!

Kathy Vasquez

In the Patagonia cemetery. Patagonia is a very sad place to grow up.
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New Teacher Profile: Dr. Caroline Whitehill

Dr. Caroline Whitehill, the new science and public broadcasting teacher at Patagonia Union High School, has taught for over 20 years at a multitude of colleges and universities including Vanderbilt, Stanford, and currently Pima Community College. This is her first year teaching at the high school level.

“I really enjoy teaching and living in Patagonia,” she said in a recent interview. “The students are great.”

Dr. Whitehill graduated from Louisiana State University, where she earned her Bachelor of Science in Geology/Geophysics/Archaeology. She received her Master’s in Geology/Archaeology at Vanderbilt, and earned her Ph.D. in Structural Geology and Tectonics at Stanford.

Outside of teaching, Dr. Whitehill has worked as a consulting geologist and research scientist for a wide range of projects, including a two-year turn with the United States Geological Survey in the Earthquake Hazards Group at Menlo Park, CA. She also received a Fulbright scholarship to work in Colombia, where she focused on science education, technology transfer, and computational sciences as applied to geohazards.

As an active Sky Islands Tourism Association board member, Dr. Whitehill has begun the process of starting a rockhounding, gem, and mineral club based at her shop, EARTHspace at Plaza de Patagonia. Her ultimate goal is to build a “Volcano Club” - a science and technology club - here in Patagonia. She has also been teaching the broadcasting class how to run the “Howl ’n’ Growl” broadcast that is shared with the students weekly during morning nutrition sessions.

“The past few years have made it very hard for kids all over the planet to thrive,” Dr. Whitehill said. “Our jobs [as teachers] are to approach each day with fresh eyes and bright ideas to help each of these students become the best versions of themselves.”

By Rebecca Ford

New Teacher Profile: Patricia Regan

Mrs. Patricia Regan is the new 2nd-grade teacher at the Patagonia Elementary School. It’s a different experience from her time teaching in the Tucson Unified School District.

“Patagonia offers teachers and students the unique opportunity to get to know each other,” she explained recently. “It allows teachers the opportunity to give students more individualized attention... because our class sizes are smaller than most larger schools.”

Originally from Hazlet, NJ, Mrs. Regan attended Glassboro College (now Rowan University) and moved to Arizona about three years ago. Aside from teaching, she often spends time with her family, reads, explores historical sites, and travels to visit family and friends.

“I love teaching here and serving the children of the community,” she said. “Second graders love learning and are naturally inquisitive. I love watching their faces light up when they realize they have learned something they did not know before!”

Mrs. Regan has also taught in New Jersey, Mississippi, and Florida, where, she said, “We provided each student with the education they needed, but time was definitely an issue.” So far, teaching at Patagonia has been unlike the other schools where she has taught.

“I love that I am able to really hone in on my students’ abilities and give them an education that is tailored to their individual needs while focusing on our grade-level standards,” she said.

By Rebecca Ford
Empire Ranch Festival Draws 2,000 Visitors

George Masek ropes a steer at the Empire Ranch Cowboy Festival.

By Robert Gay

On the weekend of November 5-6, the 21st annual Empire Ranch Cowboy Festival enjoyed some great Las Cienegas weather and a good turnout. Exhibits and demonstrations peppered the grounds, and buildings were mostly open for exploration, so visitors happily wandered in all directions. Centers of activity included the music stage with bale seating, a tent for "Cowboy Conversations," and another for a silent auction to benefit the event’s host, the Empire Ranch Foundation.

From bleachers at the main corral, visitors could watch a full schedule of animal demonstrations, including horsemanship, roping, management of a smart cow dog, and a mounted cavalary group. In the corral at the ranch, classic western skills being demonstrated included blacksmithing, branding, saddlemaking and silversmithing. Horse-drawn wagon tours and horseback trail rides were available.

Food and beverages came from five food trucks and could be enjoyed in a large open ramada. About 20 vendors showcased a diversity of offerings and crafts, and another 20 or so educational and non-profits were exhibiting, including Baja Arizona Sustainable Agriculture, Old Pueblo Archaeology, Patagonia Area Resource Alliance, and Save the Scenic Santa Ritas. For views upward, the Tucson Astronomy Association had scopes for safe sun viewing, and birdwatchers could be seen enjoying the frequent soaring raptors which abound at the Las Cienegas National Conservation Area.

PUHS Honors Society Students Honor Veterans

By Murphy Musick

On Nov. 9, Patagonia High School Honors Society students volunteered to help with the annual "Honor the Vets" day at the Patagonia Cemetery. This is a project of The Patagonia Museum. Nine high school students and their advisor participated in this important task.

The event started with a general trash clean up throughout the whole area. When the students were done, the cemetery had a new appearance and the litter bags were piled high. The next effort was to place new flags on the veterans’ gravesites. First, we all gathered at the main flagpole to replace the large flag there. We said the “Pledge of Allegiance” as the new flag was raised and had an active discussion of the words and meaning of this pledge.

The students then walked through the whole cemetery to replace worn or faded flags. The graveside flags are now flown on each grave year-round and need periodic maintenance.

It was great to see these young people visiting each veteran’s gravesite, look it over and then decide if the flag needed replacement. The honor students replaced 60 of the over 100 flags. When they were done, they took pride in seeing all the new and brightly colored red, white and Blue flags shining in the sun.

The Patagonia High School National Honors Society made a great contribution to the care and honor of our deceased veterans at the Patagonia Cemetery.

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(520) 394-2347
#Leave Message
Charlee Farley ~ Owner
Charles Poston, one of Tucson’s leading citizens toasted the arrival of the Southern Pacific railroad in Tucson in 1880: “We welcome the Railroad as the Messiah of civilization, and we welcome the road builders as the benefactors of mankind.” [C.L. Sonnichsen. Tucson, the life and times of an American city, 1982:104]

One such road builder was Victor Hugo Igo, who in 1880 contracted with the Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe Railroad to build track in New Mexico. By 1882 Victor was working on the New Mexico and Arizona railway line.

Managing crews was challenging. “A report reached this city a few days ago that Mr. Igo...had been killed by some of his men, but later reports state that he is still living, and is well and hearty.” [The Emporia Ledger, 1/29/1880]

“Fifty Chinamen who passed down the Sonoita to work for Mr. Igo, on the railroad grade, were turned back when they reached the first grading camp... The white men fell out in line and ordered the Chinamen back. The Chinamen refused... the Americans opened fire upon them. No one was hurt during the firing.” [Arizona Daily Star, 4/4/1882]

Victor Hugo Igo was born in Kentucky in 1836. His birth name was Vincent but he changed it to Victor Hugo when he was in his forties. His family relocated to Missouri when Victor was a teenager and he married Armilda Moore in 1855. The couple had nine children born between 1856 and 1866.

The 1870 U.S. Census lists Victor’s occupation as farming, but as noted above, he also worked in railway construction. Victor and Armilda most likely divorced in the late 1870s because in 1880 Victor married 23-year-old Margaret “Maggie” McCarty in Emporia, Kansas. Armilda remarried in 1882.

Victor and Maggie are listed in the 1882 Arizona Territorial Census as living in the Huachuca Mountains, and the 1893 Official Map of Pima County records the location of their ranch at the Pima/Cochise County line. Maggie’s parents, James and Ellen, and her younger siblings moved to the area about 1885 and ranching in O’Donnell Canyon.

Victor built a one-acre carp pond and planted fruit trees on the ranch, and sold the fresh fish and fruit locally. [Arizona Daily Star, 8/6/1890] In 1893 “the beautiful home in the Huachucas of V. H. Igo, the post contractor of Ft. Huachuca was destroyed by fire.” [Tombstone Weekly Epitaph, 10/15/1893]

After rebuilding the home, Victor began to advertise the ranch as a sanitorium. The Iron Springs Paradise featured “waters...mountain cool, and highly impregnated with iron, which are sought by health seekers, as they cause a ravenous appetite to those who drink them and add rapidly to their strength.” [Arizona Daily Star, 9/15/1898]

Victor and Maggie had nine children between 1881 and 1898. In 1900 a very public rift occurred in their marriage when Maggie moved to Bisbee to open a boarding house. [See the Cochise Review notice above] Victor sued for divorce in December and his petition was granted in July 1901. [The Oasis, 12/29/1900 and 7/20/1901]

Victor continued to dabble in various businesses including a lodging house and beer garden in Bisbee. [Bisbee Daily Review, 9/14/1902 and 6/26/1903]

Victor died in 1910 in Nayarit, Mexico, where he was once again building railways after selling the ranch. [Tucson Daily Citizen, 8/22/1962]

After Victor’s death Maggie lived with her eldest son John, who had a distinguished career as an interpreter in the U.S. Territorial Court and Cochise County Superior Court. Maggie and John died two weeks apart in 1939.
Strange Solstice

Skulkers

With monsoon season far in the rear-view mirror, I find myself a bit melancholic as we enter December in the Sky Islands. Pining over summer’s verdancy and its profuse wildlife and native flowers, however, is of no avail. I need a cure for the winter blues brought on by increasingly bleak local landscapes and their concurrent downturn in biodiversity. Enter winter’s weird wildlife: species that bring more than meets the eye to the natural history table. Veritable freaks of nature in some regards, sure to capture the imagination of the curious naturalist.

Number one might well be our red harvester ant (Pogonomyrmex barbatus). The second part of its scientific name is a not-so-vague allusion to the prowess of its stinger. While you are on your best behavior, and certainly make an effort to keep away from its communal housing project for various would-be predators like loggerhead shrikes and coachwhip snakes. Not only do verdins raise broods in their nests, they often also roost there in non-breeding season. No doubt this aids them in thermoregulation through the colder months.

Interestingly, other bird species will use the nest in winter to protect their diminutive bodies from becoming hypothermic as well. Black-tailed gnatchasers - equally as small and vulnerable as the verdins themselves - may huddle together in such a nest. Some birds, such as Lucy’s warbler, may reproduce in old verdin nests. Nor are mammals completely reluctant to use the solid and warm abodes. Minuscule harvest mice may commandeer a nest, climbing the parent tree with ease in part due to their prehensile tail. Thus, a verdin nest becomes a serial housing project for various wildlife species, begging the question: do several different species ever pool their bodily warmth in a nest to help survive the night?

We have barely begun to peel the onion in terms of our more outlandish winter wildlife. Antelope jackrabbits and desert cottontails who eat their own feces to make caloric ends meet. Gray bird grasshoppers - the fifth largest species on the planet - who are closely related to the plague/swarming desert locusts of the Old World and which have periodically decimated parts of the Hawaiian Islands, where they were accidentally introduced in 1964. Toads in cold storage that spend most of the year underground in a covering of mucous, awaiting the monsoon. A long list of otherworldly and improbable wildlife sure to brighten any winter day.

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 ravensnature-school.org
**LET'S GO GET STONES**

**Animus Valley**

By Keith Krizan

I was listening to Linda Ronstadt just loud enough to hear her outside on the porch as the sun set on a recent October afternoon. I was thinking about the vastness of the western sky when a falling star briefly illuminated a narrow path over the Mustangs to the east. Like the Magi, my wife and I decided to follow that star into western New Mexico. We headed off towards the Animus Valley and I wondered how that sunlit and beautiful place came to acquire such a mean and onerous name.

The valley is long and narrow. The Peloncillo Mountains begin at the border with Mexico and run low and long for over 100 miles until their terminus near Duncan, Arizona. They form the western boundary of the valley.

The Animus Mountains carry the Continental Divide on their spine for some 60 miles and form part of the valley’s east border. A small note of irony that animus and continental divide can coexist in the same sentence.

There are at least three ways to get to the Animus Valley from southeastern Arizona. The quickest and easiest is to just bite the bullet and take I-10. It is the most pedestrian route but you do get to enjoy the wonderland of granite boulders that is Texas Canyon and one can catch a civilized lunch, with local wines, in the brightening town of Wilcox.

The other, less direct, but still on hard surfaced roads, way to get there is to drive southeast on Rt. 80 to Douglas, AZ, and then go up to the I-10 on the east side of the Chiricahua Mountains. This route has the advantage of bringing you past the town of Portal, the entrance to which I have heard compared, favorably, to Yosemite in California.

I’m not certain if it is still true or not, but 20 years ago I read that Portal had the highest concentration of PhDs in Arizona. Beauty and brains.

The third way over is the slowest and the most scenic. Going due east from Douglas the road soon turns to dirt and you are on the Geronimo Trail. As you bounce along through the dust you can see the border wall - and drive up to it, if you wish - before heading north and east to get through a pass in the Peloncillos. There is the possibility of collecting some geodes and nodules beginning around two miles beyond the border into New Mexico. This ride is unpolluted and rugged as you climb up to, and then over, the pass into the Animus Valley.

Within an easy drive of the valley are three public rockhounding places. Our first visit, a few years ago, was to the Black Hills Rockhound Area, on BLM land. To get to the Black Hills site, follow Rt. 70 east out of Safford for ten miles. Turn left, northeast, onto Rt. 191. Just beyond milepost 141 is the left hand turn into the BLM land. About 1.5 miles in begins the collecting area. Fire agate, so named because when it is wetted and then sun around in the sun all sorts of colors can be seen, can be found here with some digging.

This spring we went to a second public collecting area. Rockhound State Park is 11 miles southeast of Deming, New Mexico in the Florida Mountains. There is a nicely appointed campground and numerous hiking trails on which you can wander and find Jasper, Chalcedony and Perlite.

Our most recent outing took us to Round Mountain Rockhounding Area in the extreme northwest portion of the valley where it ebbs and flows into Arizona. The road into the BLM land is 23.5 miles north of Lordsburg on Rt. 70. You turn left, west, and go through a stone wall for 6.8 miles and then turn left at the sign that announces the BLM area. At 2.5 miles, and again at five miles in, are two wonderful collecting areas that have had very few visitors over the years. Chalcedony litters the ground. Careful searching will be rewarded with red and root beer-colored fire agate. My wife found a solid, round, 3” diameter x 1.5” thick piece of carnelian quartz, called the sunset stone by ancient Egyptians. The orange and red hues of this gemstone are evidence of the iron within.

Driving out that afternoon the temperature was in the low 70s. Looking across the valley floor I was struck by the sense of space that one gets here. It made our own lovely San Raphael Valley seem like a mere watch pocket. As sure observatory and get someone to zero on “Lillian and Jack Meckler.” As sure there was a star in Auriga designated with their names. They’re up there by Capella. I have today, just as I did back then, more than faith in science. I believe it.
Borderlands Wildlife Preserve Celebration

Over 70 people gathered at the new Casa Blanca Canyon Trailhead of the Arizona Trail on the morning of Nov. 12 to celebrate the permanent protection of 1,200 acres of high value conservation land. Formerly known as Three Canyons Development, the land is now called the Borderlands Wildlife Preserve.

Kurt Vaughn, Executive Director of Borderlands Restoration Network, talked about the value of the land for conservation, restoration, education, and recreation. Matt Nelson, Executive Director of the Arizona Trail Association, introduced the new section of the Trail that passes through the Preserve. Laura Moser, Cooperative Forestry Program Manager for the US Forest Service and key partner in securing over $1 million in federal funds for the purchase of Preserve lands, discussed the value of the public private partnership.

Pastries were provided by Butter My Biscuit and several walks and tours followed the event.

By Mary McKay

Have you purchased those beautiful poinsettias, amaryllis or other tanta-lizing holiday plants but not sure how best to care for them? Follow these steps for longer lasting common holiday plants.

Poinsettia: Native to Mexico. The showy part of a poinsettia is actually not a flower but colorful bracts (modified leaves below the blossom). They don’t like to be completely dry and also don’t like to sit in standing water. Make sure to let them drain complete-ly after watering. They need bright light indoors so a south or east facing window is best. Keep away from heat sources or vents. Can be grown as a green houseplant if given enough light and houseplant fertilizer. In order to flower and color up again, the plant must receive 14 hours of complete darkness each day starting in late summer or early fall, for at least six weeks: a big commitment but doable. Put it in a completely dark closet or cabinet early in the day and remove it the next morning. For six weeks!

Live Christmas tree care: Regu-lar live pines with roots in a pot or wrapped need to have roots kept moist and cool but not soggy. Don’t place a living tree near a heat source to prevent drying and breaking of dormancy. Place ice on top of the soil in the pot to slowly melt and keep it hydrated and cool. Don’t keep indoors more than 2½ to 3 weeks, tops! Acclimate the tree to the outdoors after the holidays by plac-ing it in a sheltered shady spot such as on your porch for a week before planting.

Norfolk pine: Native to Norfolk Island in the south Pacific near New Zealand and are not actually a true pine but are conifers (produces cones). These are not cold hardy and need to be kept in a warm and brightly lit room in winter. Avoid putting in drafty areas or near heat vents or cold windows. Avoid letting it dry out completely. Don’t water this tropical pine with ice - it will not like that! Fertilize with half-strength houseplant fertilizer while actively growing.

Nativity, amaryllis are native to South Africa and will bloom naturally in spring. The bulbs must go through a cooling period of around eight weeks to bloom so the bulbs you purchase during the holiday season have been pre-chilled. Plant an amaryllis bulb in potting mix, leaving the upper third of the bulb exposed. Only water when completely dry until the shoot emerges. Once the shoot emerges, increase watering to keep the soil evenly moist but not too soggy or the bulb will rot. Keep in a bright and warm spot. After the bloom and leaves start to fade, stop watering, and allow the bulb to dry. I have successfully planted them after the holidays out in the garden or in a pot on the porch where they begin to grow again in spring. For waxed amaryllis there is no care (not even watering) except to place in a warm bright spot. After blooming, the wax could be peeled away carefully and the bulb planted in a pot.

Poinsettia: Native to Brazil, where they grow on trees or shrubs (epiphytic). They require sharply draining soil. Use a cactus or succulent mix when repotting. They need high light conditions to bloom and need high light to keep the soil evenly moist and houseplant fertilizer. In order to flower and color up again, the plant will begin to go dormant. Let it rest and keep watered every now and then until cooler temperatures arrive. Increase water as new leaves appear. Fertilize with half-strength houseplant fertilizer while actively growing.

Amaryllis: Amaryllis are native to South Africa and will bloom naturally in spring. The bulbs must go through a cooling period of around eight weeks to bloom so the bulbs you purchase during the holiday season have been pre-chilled. Plant an amaryllis bulb in potting mix, leaving the upper third of the bulb exposed. Only water when completely dry until the shoot emerges. Once the shoot emerges, increase watering to keep the soil evenly moist but not too soggy or the bulb will rot. Keep in a bright and warm spot. After the bloom and leaves start to fade, stop watering, and allow the bulb to dry. I have successfully planted them after the holidays out in the garden or in a pot on the porch where they begin to grow again in spring. For waxed amaryllis there is no care (not even watering) except to place in a warm bright spot. After blooming, the wax could be peeled away carefully and the bulb planted in a pot.

Holiday/Christmas cactus: Schlumbergera species are native to Brazil, where they grow on trees or shrubs (epiphytic). They require sharply draining soil. Use a cactus or succulent mix when repotting. They need high light conditions to bloom and keep watered every now and then until cooler temperatures arrive. Increase water as new leaves appear. Fertilize with half-strength houseplant fertilizer while actively growing.

I hope to see you around the Patagonia Plants Nursery this holiday season. I just might have a little holiday plant you might like. Happy holidays!
Major Solar Storms Ramping Up

By Kat Crockett

The current solar cycle - Solar Cycle 25 - began its 11-year cycle in Dec. 2019. Forecasters thought it would be a mild cycle, but it’s turning out to be far stronger. From the beginning of this cycle, the sun’s activity quickly ramped up and outpaced predictions by more than double. The sun’s activity will continue to increase as we near solar maximum in 2025, which could mean trouble for Earth.

During the Sun’s natural 11-year cycle, it moves from relatively calm to stormy, then back again. The most active period in the middle is called the solar maximum, producing a multitude of solar storms, which are few and far between during the solar minimum.

These storms often spew large clouds of solar plasma and embedded magnetic fields called Coronal Mass Ejections (CMEs). If Earth happens to be in the path of a CME, and the ejection is powerful, it could inflict significant damage. The power grid could go down, GPS systems could fail, satellites could short out or fall out of orbit and disintegrate on reentry, radio communications could fail, and the internet could be down for months. Financial losses could reach trillions.

Scientists from the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), along with an international panel, predicted a below-average Solar Cycle 25, like Solar Cycle 24. However, the sun has been much more active this cycle than predicted and seems more aligned with a study from a rogue team at the National Center for Atmospheric Research (NCAR), led by Scott McIntosh.

McIntosh and several of his colleagues forecast the emerging solar cycle to be one of the strongest ever recorded. Solar Cycle 24 averaged 116 solar storms a month at its peak, and the official forecast for Solar Cycle 25 predicts a similar mild cycle. But McIntosh estimates there will be 233 solar storms per month at peak, more than double the official forecast.

If the new McIntosh-led forecast is correct, it would support the research team’s unconventional theory that the Sun has overlapping 22-year magnetic cycles that interact to produce the well-known, 11-year solar cycle as a byproduct. The 22-year cycles repeat like clockwork and could be a key to finally making accurate predictions of the timing and nature of solar cycles, as well as many of the effects they produce, according to the study’s authors.

If the accelerated trend continues as forecast by McIntosh’s team, we may reach 115 monthly solar storms by the end of this year and peak two years later at over 230 monthly solar storms. Tzu-Wei Fang, a space scientist at NOAA’s Space Weather Prediction Center agrees that the official solar cycle forecast is not working out and admits that scientists’ current understanding of the factors driving the sun’s behavior is limited.

“We don’t know what is driving this strong solar activity,” Fang told Space.com. He cautioned that it is too early to make conclusions about the current solar cycle with any certainty.

While scientists struggle to predict both the length and strength of solar cycles, the potential for a “stormy” few years is certainly on the table. The uncertain science and contradicting forecasts make it particularly difficult for the average American to plan for what may be ahead, but several national agencies and various groups do have the following recommendations:

- Have a family communication plan to outline who goes where. For example, a nearby family member or friend may have a back-up generator to provide power during a blackout.
- Develop a neighborhood or community plan to share resources. Be sure to reach out to neighbors who may need assistance.
- Always keep your gas tank at least half full. A power loss may shut down the pumps at gas stations.
- Keep some cash on hand. ATMs can go down in a power outage.
- Know where your garage door manual release is.
- Prepare an emergency kit. Fill containers with water, have adequate supplies of medications and food.
- Keep extra batteries for your phone charged up. Collect matches, flashlights, candles, or other sources of light.
- Secure your home.
- Do not travel or take public transportation.
- Install surge-protectors throughout your home.
- Generally, a solar storm warning will be issued several hours in advance of a major storm. This may provide a least a day for last minute preparations and to make necessary contacts with family members.

For additional information, please see “Space Weather Threats” in the August/September 2022 PRT and “GPS, Internet Vulnerable to Solar Storms” in the November 2022 PRT.

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Want to tour the Hermosa Project?

The South32 Hermosa Project public tour season is back. Join us to learn more about this critical minerals project in the Patagonia Mountains. Ask questions, discover how our team is uniquely designing for sustainability, and get a guided view of the site from our project overlook.

Weather permitting, public tours take place the first Friday of each month and continue until monsoon season. Send your inquiry to askhermosa@south32.net. Tours fill quickly, and capacity is limited.

south32.net/hermosa
HOUSING (Cont.) rentals and will be scheduling a study session to look at the positive and negative impacts for the Town and to determine if there are tools to help mitigate negative impacts.

The State of Arizona, as a property rights state, allows few limits on what property owners can do with their short-term rental properties. In 2016, the State Legislature passed SB1350, which generally prohibited a city, town or county from restricting the use or regulation of vacation rentals and short-term rentals except for regulations meant to protect public health and safety. It also provided a mechanism to collect and remit rental taxes to the Arizona Department of Revenue.

The law has evolved since then. Hosting platforms like Airbnb and VRBO are now required to collect and remit occupancy taxes; rentals are not allowed to be used for special events that require a separate permit or license; and property owners are required to provide contact information for whoever is responsible for responding to complaints.

In August, Governor Ducey signed SB1168, giving local governments more power to enforce all applicable laws, regulations, and ordinances pertaining to vacation and short-term rentals. It allows local governments to require property owners to obtain and maintain a local regulatory permit or license, notify single family residences surrounding their property before it is first used as a short-term rental, and maintain liability insurance or advertise through an online lodging marketplace that provides coverage. Local jurisdictions can also impose a civil penalty of up to $1,000 or suspend a business license for up to 12 months for specific verified violations.

The increasing number of short-term rentals is one only factor driving the local shortage of affordable and workforce housing. Looking ahead, the current housing problems may increase dramatically in the Town and the County. South32 projects that if the Hermosa Mine moves forward, it will create 400-500 long-term jobs once the mine is operating, plus approximately 2,000 construction jobs in its development stage. Patagonia will be facing this new demand with limited land and housing stock and a population with the highest proportion of low-income households in Santa Cruz County.

Meanwhile, Santa Cruz County is developing a housing strategy to address affordable and workforce housing shortfalls. The County held forums in Patagonia and Rio Rico on Nov. 16 to get initial input from both communities on housing needs and opportunities. Hopefully, shining the spotlight on the lack of affordable and workforce housing may generate some solutions.

TRAIL (Cont.) several volunteers from The Nature Conservancy.

Phase II

Now META is looking at running the trail all the way from Patagonia to Sonoita, an additional seven miles. But they won’t have to start from scratch, or use the abandoned rail bed the whole way. META plans to set a trail that follows the swath recently cleared for the project to bring a fiber optic line to the Patagonia Schools and, eventually all businesses and homes in the town of Patagonia. The project was funded by a federal grant to the Town of Patagonia designed to bring high-speed internet to rural schools, and is being carried out by Valley Telecom.

META saw their opportunity when they noticed the route that had been cleared this fall. A trail needs a corridor and a tread. Hartigan said, “The corridor has been cleared and will require maintenance every three to five years to keep it open. Now a tread is needed; that’s the specific path you walk or ride on. If we can find the support to undertake this project, we’ll go in and define the tread. There are also eight to ten creek crossings that the trail has to descend and climb out of. To retain the livestock on the adjoining property, we will build gates at each crossing along the rest of the route.”

To keep travelers from having to cross the highway where the fiber optic does, the group plans to finish the route with its own trail up the south side.

Bob Proctor, who is spearheading the project, says, “Most of the route is pretty good. What it’s really going to take are volunteers to build and maintain these trails.”

German Quiroga, who handles the finances for this shoe-string organization, sees the project as a great support to the recent uptick in recreation in the area, especially biking.

“When it’s done, it will be an important addition to our nature-based tourism economy,” he said. “It would be wonderful to get some governmental support for the project. And we are out there now recruiting Rotary Clubs, Tucson Audubon, The Nature Conservancy, the Sky Islands Tourism Association, among others.”

Hartigan hopes to organize work parties, perhaps on Saturdays, when people would have the day off. “There are people who would be happy to pitch in. Hopefully, we can get some bikers to help out.”

Anyone interested in getting involved, whether it be through donation, writing grants, organizing or working on the trails is invited to email Bob Proctor at sonoitacreek@gmail.com.

Rotary Casino Night Raises Funds for Service Projects

Jake and Sarah Pacheco, Rotarians from Sierra Vista, dressed as characters from ‘Game of Thrones’ for the Rotary casino night fundraiser in Sonoita.

News Release

Mountain Empire Rotary Club held its last fundraiser of the year, a Game of Thrones themed Casino Night on Nov. 5 at the Santa Cruz County Fairgrounds. Tickets to the event included food, with a special dish of paella, prepared by members of the Nogales Sonora Industrial Rotary Club, who are currently partnering with Mountain Empire on a school desk refurbishing project.

Attendees enjoyed a night of fun and games, and a silent auction, while surrounded by the furs and trappings of the Game of Thrones setting. Attendees were encouraged to dress in white tie or in ‘Game of Thrones’ attire. Some came in full costumes to make the evening even more festive.

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Dec. 5, 7p.m. “Hansel and Gretel” Theatrical performance by the Patagonia Creative Arts Association Club Theater After School program. Free. Donations accepted.

*Dates and Times Subject to Change*

If you would be interested in sponsoring upcoming events, please contact Cassina Farley at 520-394-9369. Visit www.patagoniacreativearts.org or 394-9369 for more information.

El SurCo - A Benderly Concert

Maxi Larrea, guitarist and composer, Jennie Gubner, violinist and vocalist join guest artist Andrés Pantoja, guitarist/charango player from Chile, for a South American folk music concert.

Please join us on December 4th at 3PM at the Benderly-Kendall Opera House. Reception to follow in the courtyard. Tickets are $25 online and $30 at the door the day of the concert.

www.scfpapresents.org

Santa Cruz Singers Holiday Event - A Community Concert

The Santa Cruz Singers - our Community Chorus is celebrating its 20th year of offering well-rehearsed choral music of the highest caliber.

These singers are your neighbors and friends, both longtime residents of Patagonia and the newly arrived, whose appreciation for the community is only exceeded by their love of singing together.

The event is on Sunday December 11th at 3 PM at the Benderly-Kendall Opera House 348 Naugle in Patagonia. Tickets are $10 and are available online or at the door.

www.scfpapresents.org

LET’S COOK FOR THE HOLIDAYS WITH THE
ELGIN/SONOITA COWBELLES

SOFT OATMEAL COOKIES
(Makes a Large Batch)

“I get this recipe about 35 years ago. It is my favorite oatmeal cookie recipe. It makes enough to eat, fill the cookie jar, share with neighbors and friends and put some in the freezer.”

Marie Pyeatt, Ranch Woman and Cowbelle

Ingredients:

- 2 cups raisins
- 2 cups water
- 1 ¼ cups shortening
- 2 cups white sugar
- 1 cup brown sugar
- 4 eggs
- 2 tsp. vanilla
- 5 cups oatmeal

- 1 cup chopped walnuts
- 5 cups flour
- 1 tsp. baking powder
- 2 tsp. baking soda
- 2 tsp. salt
- 3 tsp. cinnamon
- 1 tsp. nutmeg
- 1 tsp. allspice

Boil raisins and water together for 10 minutes.

Cream shortening and sugar. Add eggs, vanilla and raisin mixture. Sift dry ingredients together and add to creamed mixture. Add oatmeal and nuts. Mix well.

Drop by spoonful on greased or parchment lined cookie sheet. Bake at 350 degrees until lightly browned, about 10-12 minutes. Cool before placing in containers.

ENJOY AND SHARE!

THE BOCKS AND THEIR BOOKS

Carl and Jane Bock are retired Professors of Biology. Carl is an ornithologist and well known conservation biologist. Jane is a plant ecologist and an internationally recognized expert in the use of plants in criminal investigations.

Now largely retired from academic life, the Bocks have turned their creative efforts toward fiction writing, and are co-authors of two ongoing mystery series, the Arizona Borderlands Mysteries and the Florida Keys Mysteries.

Visit the Bocks’ website: carlandjanebock.com
Visit our website to find events on our new community calendar page. patagoniaregionaltimes.org/events

SPECIAL INTERESTS

Lunch for Seniors: Fresh-cooked meals. In-house dining only 11:30a.m. - 12:30p.m. Patagonia Senior Center.


The Nature Conservancy’s Patagonia-Sonoita Creek Preserve: Wed. - Sun. 6:30a.m. - 4p.m. Masks required in restrooms.

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

Patagonia Farmers Market: Thursday - 9a.m. - 82 & 83 Located at post office parking lot, NW corner Hwy 82 & 83

Patagonia Flower Farm’s Monthly Market: 12p.m. In front of Red Mountain Foods

Patagonia Town Council: Meets 2nd & 4th Weds. of the month. 6p.m. Public invited. CDC Guidelines will be followed.

Rotary Club: 2nd & 4th Thurs. 5:30p.m. has moved online. Info: Sue 520-990-4648.

Senior Citizens of Patagonia’s Board of Directors: 2nd Mon. 3p.m. at the Senior Center.

The Constitutional Conservatives of Southern AZ Club Meeting: 6:30p.m. every 3rd Thursday of the month, Sonoita Bible Church. All are welcome.

The Santa Cruz County Democratic Party Meeting: every 3rd Sat. of the month, 10:30a.m. NOW hybrid. In person at 32 Morley Ave, Nogales or www.assantacruzdem.org/meetings

Canelo Cowboy Church: 8:30 - 10a.m. R, Tubac Sunday: 8:30 - 10a.m. tubabcowboychurch@gmail.com for more info.

Patagonia Museum: Open 2 hours 2p.m. - 4p.m. Wed., Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays. www.thepatagoniamuseum.org for more info.

Patagonia Library: Wed - Sat 10a.m. - 5p.m. Call for more info. 520.394.2010

AA: Alcoholics Anonymous:
Patagonia Methodist Community Church
Fridays at 7p.m. 387 McEwen Ave., Patagonia Contact Dave at 207-249-8302.

Overeaters Anonymous: to find a meeting go to www.oasouthernaz.org. Contact Adrienne H. for more info 520-404-3490.

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Calling all Local Businesses!
The PRT is Excited to Announce Our New Sponsorship Program.

Make the intelligent choice, align your brand with the Patagonia Regional Times – a name that is synonymous with quality and excellence, and reinforce your commitment to the communities of Eastern Santa Cruz County.

When you sponsor the Patagonia Regional Times, our loyal readers will know that your company makes their favorite news source possible.

We're hyperlocal, and we never publish sensational stories outside of our coverage area just for clicks. That's why, as a PRT sponsor, your brand will reach an engaged, targeted audience that cares about all things Eastern Santa Cruz County. Our mission is to improve civic and political understanding in Eastern Santa Cruz County by publishing and sustaining in-depth, educational, rigorous, timely, and ethical journalism that all residents can access free of charge.

Individuals, businesses, and other organizations interested in sponsorship opportunities, please contact Patrick O’Neal, at prtads@gmail.com
HELP WANTED

TECH HELP WANTED IN PATAGONIA
I’m looking for a tech savvy, computer network, IT person with light electronic assembly skills. Part time to start. If you have these skills, please call Jeff at 541.390.5142.

BARN HELP WANTED
Fri. Sat. Sun: Feed hay, water, pick up manure for two horses. Approx. 1 hr/day $20/day. Located in Sonoita 1 mi. south of Fairgrounds.
Call: 520-975-9920.

PATAGONIA COMMUNITY UNITED METHODIST CHURCH SEeks KEYBOARDIST
For worship services/choir rehearsals; 3 hrs/week, 1-2 Sundays/month. Salary based on education/experience. Send resume with cover letter to Kay.Pitt@nau.edu.

FOR SALE

ESTABLISHED PATAGONIA-BASED BUSINESS FOR SALE
Available beginning January 2023.
Contact Ken @ (520) 604-6939, or email kensshuttleservice@gmail.com.

MISCELLANEOUS

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

Receive Breaking Local News Sent Straight to Your Inbox
Sign up for the PRT E-Newsletter!
patagoniaregionaltimes.org/connect-with-the-prt

KPUP Broadcast Schedule - Fall / Winter 2022

Mon: 5pm to 6pm: Swing Hour
7pm to 8pm: eTown repeat of Saturday’s show
Tues: 10am to 12pm: World Jazz with Mark Berg
7pm to 9pm: Jazz and Blues with Fred Hansen
Wed: 5pm to 6pm: Swing Hour
7pm to 10pm: Sean Alexander show
Thurs: 7pm to 10pm: Possibility Explorers.
"Celebrating the Evening of Mushkil Gusha, the Remover of All Difficulties." Hosted by Graves
Fri: 7pm to 9pm: Hook’s Sunken Roadhouse
Sat: 12pm to 1pm: eTown - “Educate, entertain and inspire listeners through music and conversation”
Sun: 10am: Patagonia Community United Methodist Church service
6pm to 8pm: Acoustic Café “Today’s great songwriting talents. A bit of country, rock, blues, folk, pop”
8pm to 10pm: Folk Alley “Folk Music Radio from WKSU-FM in Kent, OH”
Daily Shows: Best of the Oldies: 1pm to 2pm/ BirdNote: 6am and 10am/ Growing Native with Petey Mesquitey:MWF at 7am, Sunday at noon/ Feature Story News (FSN.com) Mon – Fri. 8am, 12pm and 6pm, Sat. 8am & 6pm, Sun. at 8am / Patagonia Weather Forecast: Every odd hour.
PATAGONIA: 327 McKeown Ave., next to Gathering Grounds  520-394-2120
SONOITA: Corner of Hwy's 82 & 83, next to Post Office  520-455-5235
www.buysonoita.com

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