County Plans to Develop Winery District Master Plan

By Lynn Davison

Santa Cruz County intends to develop a Winery District Master Plan and Overlay District which it hopes will enable additional economic development in the wine country of northeast Santa Cruz County. On Feb. 7, the Board of Supervisors unanimously approved a request for proposal (RFP) to have a consultant prepare a market study and a winery master plan, including a land use overlay district.

There are currently 19 wineries operating in the Sonoita Elgin area. This planning effort, focused on northeast Santa Cruz County, is the first phase of a larger regional planning effort, the Southern Arizona Cuisine Tourism Initiative. The Initiative will be paid for by a $300,000 federal grant from the Economic Development Authority of the Department of Commerce. The first phase will begin in April 2023 and should be completed by April 2024.

As stated in the RFP “cuisine tourism is defined as leveraging the County’s leisure-related activities that are a natural fit with making the regional wine presence more impactful and leveraging increased tourism spending/overnight visitation. As a strategy, a cuisine tourism initiative is intended to build on the natural economic strengths and beauty of the area; this provides a strategy for resilience for Santa Cruz County, which has not captured its fair share of the growing Arizona tourism sector.”

Frank Dillon, the County’s Community Development Director, says “overlay districts are commonly used in land use as a mechanism to target and incentivize certain types of development in specified area (within a boundary), while also managing the growth, land use and other community impacts. Land use overlay districts can be used to achieve a variety of goals, such as preserving natural resources, protecting historic sites, or promoting affordable housing. In many cases, these districts are created in response to community concerns about the potential impacts of certain types of land uses or activities on the surrounding area.”

The County RFP seeks “a detailed market analysis, drawing upon qualitative survey data from local wineries and allied industries, as well as quantitative economic data, to assess opportunities for cuisine tourism. The County also seeks to create a master plan and land use overlay district, enabling local businesses and residents within the winery district and Sonoita area to...”

See Plan, p. 8

Save the Library” 25 Years Later

Doris Wenig draws attention to the plight of the Patagonia Library in 1998

By Sarah Klingenstein

It was January 1, 1998. The late Doris Wenig, President of the Patagonia Friends of the Library was standing outside the Post Office with a sign that read ‘Chocolate Chip Cookies Save the Library.’ Wenig was handing out cookies in exchange for ideas to fund the librarian’s salary, since she had been told just a week prior that the Town of Patagonia would be significantly cutting the Patagonia Library’s budget starting in February. Basic operations would still be funded, at a reduced level, but not the staff.

Recently this writer was given a packet of notes written and gathered by Wenig during the Town of Patagonia financial crisis in 1997-8. The notes tell the inside story of a wonderful joining together of local people to save something important to their community, almost exactly 25 years ago.

The story begins with a crisis, which was a critical shortfall of funds. As described in the Nov. 1997 issue of the Patagonia Press, “Patagonia was dealt...”

See Library, p. 13

Winemaking

New Business

Staying Safe
Three New Members Join PRT Board

Chip Fears

By Marion Vendituoli

The PRT welcomes three new members to our Board of Directors. Chip Fears, Bekki Jaynes and Jennifer Riehl bring a wealth of experience that will be invaluable in the continued efforts of the PRT to grow as a viable local nonprofit news organization.

Chip Fears moved to Sonoita in 2013 after living in New York City for 28 years. A graduate of NAU with a degree in geology, he worked in the oil, mining, and gas industry for five years before earning an MBA from the University of New Mexico. He then spent 25 years working in commercial banking, followed by eight years as the business manager of an Episcopal church in New York. During this time he also earned a master’s degree in history from Brooklyn College.

Chip has volunteered as a docent at the Tucson Museum of Art, and is a docent at the Empire Ranch in Sonoita. He also serves on the Board of the Santa Cruz Foundation for the Performing Arts, is a woodworker, enjoys cooking and confesses that his rescue dog, Sochi, “knows how to manipulate” him.

Chip was drawn to the PRT because he recognizes the value of a local newspaper to the community. “The fact that we have a local small-town newspaper is outstanding,” he said. “It’s one thing that makes this community special. It’s pretty impressive.”

Bekki Jaynes moved to Patagonia with her husband, Rick, in 2104, and bought the Duquesne House Inn in 2015, which they ran as a bed and breakfast for 4½ years until the pandemic hit. “It was very heartbreaking deciding to shut,” she said. They are now in the process of developing a health and fitness facility using space at the Duquesne House. When asked why she decided to join the PRT board, Bekki said that she had been looking for a way to connect with the community when she was invited to join the board. “It’s one of those things you just put out into the universe, and it arrives in your lap,” she said. “I’m excited to see what board opportunities open up for me.”

Jennifer Riehl

With the community when she was invited to join the board. “It’s one of those things you just put out into the universe, and it arrives in your lap,” she said. “I’m excited to see what board opportunities open up for me.”

Jennifer Riehl and her husband, Eric, moved to Sonoita in 2014 from Tucson, “looking for a little elbow room,” she said. After retiring from her job with the Vail school district in 2018, she then worked at the Sonoita library until last year. “I miss it a little bit,” she said.

Jennifer is a member of the Crossroads Quilters Guild, and active at Sonoita Hills Community Church. She decided to join the PRT Board because of her enthusiasm for the paper. “I love that it brings people together,” she said. “It brings attention to new businesses and events that we would otherwise not have been aware of. It’s such a huge part of the community.”

Happy 75th Anniversary, Patagonia!

By Marion Vendituoli

In January 1948, the property owners of Patagonia voted (76 to 6) for incorporation at a special election. In February 1948, the Santa Cruz County Board of Supervisors appointed Leland Wilson, William Waggoner, Frank Lamma, R C Blabon and Charles Mapes as the first aldermen for the newly incorporated city of Patagonia.

The Board elected William J. Waggoner as Patagonia’s first mayor. Waggoner had moved to Patagonia from Tucson sometime between 1940 and 1942. He ran a grocery store in town for 55 years.

In the 1960s, when Waggoner was serving his second term as mayor, he was instrumental in establishing the sewer and municipal water system in Patagonia.

A longtime resident of Arizona, Waggoner was born in 1901 in Pueblo, CO, and died at age 99 in Mesa, AZ. He served twice as Mayor of Patagonia, and was a Past Master of the Masonic Lodge in Nogales.
A History of Winemaking in Sonoita/Elgin Part 1: The Early Days

By Kat Crockett

The Arizona winemaking industry all began right here in Elgin when pioneer Dr. Gordon Dutt planted an experimental vineyard in 1973 with his partner Blake Brophy on the Babacomari Ranch.

"Many people consider Dutt a father of Arizona’s wine industry," wine historian Erik Berg told the PRT. "Aside from being the state’s first modern vineyard owner, his viticulture reports and publications helped guide and inspire a whole generation of Southwest winemakers."

Prior to Statehood and up until 1915, when Arizona amended the state constitution to ban the manufacture or use of alcohol, there were few vineyards or wineries. With the alcohol ban, speakeasies, illegal stills and bootleggers persisted, generally near mining camps and often by fermenting raisins, which produced poor quality wine. National Prohibition, enacted in 1920, diminished what little wine making was occurring, and the Great Depression finished it off. Arizona commercial winemaking died until Dutt came to Arizona in 1963.

Dr. Dutt grew up in Montana. After earning his PhD in Soil Science from Purdue University in 1960, he went to the University of California at Davis to conduct water quality research.

UC Davis is renowned for its Department of Viticulture (growing grapes) and Enology (winemaking). They introduced Dutt to the state’s winegrowing regions, and inspired his interest in the winemaking industry. When he left California and joined the faculty at the University of Arizona College of Agriculture in 1963, his research focused on arid land water harvesting and the viability of growing wine grapes in the Arizona deserts. His experiments with grapes were a side project until receiving a grant in 1976.

In 1972, Dutt planted at the UA experimental Page Ranch farm near Oracle and chose wine grapes as the test crop for his water research. Two years later, he harvested the fruit, crushing it with his bare feet and making a small batch of wine in his kitchen. In 1975, he invited a group of friends and local reporters to sample the wine, the first wine made from Arizona grapes in over 50 years. The tasters commented that the wine was drinkable and the news spread through the local papers up to the Governor’s office, planting the seed that an Arizona wine industry could be viable.

One of Dutt’s promising test vineyards was on the Babacomari Ranch in Elgin, owned by Blake Brophy. Brophy encouraged Dutt to plant in the area so the land might produce more than just cattle. When the vineyard proved a success, Dutt leased the land from the Brophys in 1979 and started Vina Sonoita Vineyard, the first commercial wine vineyard in Arizona since Prohibition. Dutt bucked the theory that climate in Arizona was too hot for vineyard, finding that higher elevations produced microclimates suitable for grape growing. Instead, he focused on the soil, which he discovered could produce red wines with intense color and acidity. Dutt went so far as to claim that our red clay soil was nearly identical to that of Burgundy, France.

Wine consumption during this period was growing quickly across the nation, fueling growth in Arizona. A young chiropractor from South Africa named Adrian Hugo Bosman was interested in helping a new wine region develop so he contacted Dutt. Soon he and his wife Rosemary, along with their in-laws Jon and Frances Harvey were volunteering their time at Sonoita Vineyards. In 1979, the Bosmans and Harveys bought their own 40 acres of land adjacent to Dutt. They were later joined by Penelope Edwards with her vineyard. All of the owners still held regular jobs, but they met on weekends and camped in the vineyards near an old, gnarled oak tree, which served as the first furrow being dug for grapes at Sonoita Vineyards.

The Legacy foundation presents a check to the Patagonia Regional Aquatics Center to help pay for a heater to extend the pool’s season. (From left) Margaret Hepburn, CEO, Legacy Foundation of Southeast Arizona, Samantha Carlson, PRAC treasurer, and Joseph Delgado, Legacy Foundation Board member.

News Release

In January 2023, the Legacy Foundation awarded Patagonia Regional Aquatics Center (PRAC) a $43,000 Innovative Grant. The Legacy Foundation awards organizations that align with their mission of “promoting population health and community wellness throughout Southeast Arizona.” PRAC’s mission is to raise funds for the operations and maintenance of the Patagonia Pool. We are responsible for the annual budget each year.

PRAC’s new and innovative idea is to heat the water and possibly extend the pool’s season. We were awarded the funds to purchase a heater, upgrade the mechanical room, and pay the cost of labor. We were also tasked to raise an additional $57,000 as a match. Thanks to very generous and enthusiastic supporters, we are nearing the completion of the match.

Operating a community swimming pool is expensive and we appreciate every generous act of participation. Additional funds will be needed to meet the annual operating budget until an endowment is in place. If you are interested in contributing your talents and/or expertise in building the endowment, please let us know (contact info below). The current PRAC group does not have the skill set needed for the next step.

We appreciate - and need - your time, in-kind contributions, and funds, and invite your participation in the many fun and fundraising events. The January Polar Plunge yielded $834 and the February Yard Sale raised over $3,000. March/April events will be announced in the PRAC’s weekly e-newsletter.

Contact info: patagoniapool1@gmail.com
facebook.com/PatagoniaPool
PRAC, P.O. Box 1052 Patagonia, AZ 85624

Propane for camper or grill now available in Patagonia

P-Town Auto & Ofroad
688 Harshaw Ave
520-394-0181
for the lack of internet connectivity. “It was supposed to go in last August, then the next month, then the next month and we just got the runaround as CenturyLink postponed the work,” said Olvera.

County Manager Jennifer St. John said in December that CenturyLink had visited the site, provided options to dedicated internet service to the building and the county would select the option. In February, however, St. John said that the County was now working with Lumen to provide broadband access.

“The Board of Supervisors approved an agreement with Lumen for broadband so we should be ready to go,” she said. “However, past experience has shown that Lumen is not quick to ‘install/turn on’ broadband services so unfortunately we still don’t have a date [for opening] but we feel as if things are moving forward.”

In March 2018, County officials proposed to close the Sonoita Court and move all judicial proceedings to Nogales. Many local residents opposed the closure, resulting in town hall discussions and numerous visits to the county complex in Nogales to speak against the proposal.

The County Board of Supervisors voted to abolish the court. Operations ceased in December 2018, leaving only the library, Sheriff’s Department offices, and County storage behind.

Over 80 residents responded to a local survey on repurposing the facility, with 75% favoring a visitor’s center, community resource center, and an indoor farmer’s market. Many also supported an outdoor park, senior exercise classes, a computer tech room, recreation center, and multi-purpose rooms.

Over three years have passed. None of the community’s proposals have been implemented. The Farmer’s Market concept was shot down by County Manager St. John in September 2021, citing a county resolution that prohibits any for-profit use at county owned facilities in Sonoita and Tubac. In contrast, the Board of Supervisors recently unanimously approved a for-profit use of county facilities at the Old Court house in Nogales and granted a lease to Arizona Minerals, Inc. owned by South32.

Callaghan’s was the only winery in Sonoita and Elgin to receive awards from the SF Chronicle this year. “I think most people have seen just how mercurial and unpredictable wine competitions are and I must agree,” Callaghan said. “But flawed as they are, they provide a platform to spread the word about the quality of wine coming out of Arizona.”

Wine tasting is subjective, and people tend to drink what they prefer. Although wine judging is always blind, people tend to drink what they prefer. Although wine judging is always blind, people tend to drink what they prefer. Although wine judging is always blind, people tend to drink what they prefer. Although wine judging is always blind, people tend to drink what they prefer. Although wine judging is always blind, people tend to drink what they prefer. Although wine judging is always blind, people tend to drink what they prefer.
Lepha Mae Emery Daniels Sumner known to all as “Susie” has left us on February 6 to take on yet another adventure. Susie was born into a Mohave County Pioneer family on October 27, 1940 to Ernest Leroy Emery and Agnes Mae Harris Emery Osterman McMullen. Her maternal grandmother was Agnes Pearl Fancher Harris.

Susie was the second child and told many stories about her brother, Ned Emery. Her favorite stories from her childhood in Kingman were of the adventures with her many friends and time spent in the Hualapai Mountains.

Susie’s first marriage brought forth three children that were with her at her peaceful passing and miss her deeply; Lynn Daniels Bileti (Jay) of Sonoita, AZ, Barbara Daniels of Prescott Valley, AZ and John Daniels Jr. of Prescott Valley, AZ.

Susie’s adventures were many, from her horseback riding days in the Hualapai Mtns. in her youth to flight lessons in Kingman in the early 80s. Susie had always wanted to learn to fly and it was a big day when she got her private pilot license and an Aerobat plane. She enjoyed many flights in that plane – rarely in a straight line!

She had a long career with United Parcel Service and talked about delivering packages to many of the ranches in the far-flung areas of Mohave County. Susie eventually was trained to drive the 18 wheelers for UPS and drove a route to Las Vegas across the original highway that crossed Hoover Dam…with double trailers…at night! After a few years she was transferred to the Phoenix hub and continued to drive the big trucks. She later became a trainer for UPS on the big trucks.

During these years she met and married James Weir Sumner. They had two interests that really brought them together – flying and trucking. Oh sure, there were other interests and they made the most of their time together traveling and making many, many friends across the country.

Susie’s family is so blessed by the photographs, art, lapidary and silversmithing work that she has left behind. Most of all, the family is blessed by the outpouring of sympathy from her lifelong connections. Her humor and caring nature live on in our memories.

Susie is survived by her husband, Jim Sumner, her three children and four great grandchildren.

A Celebration of Life will be held on March 9, 2023 at 10:00am at the Elgin Community Club in Sonoita, AZ. A second Celebration of Life is expected to be held in Kingman, AZ in April.

In lieu of flowers, please consider donating in Susie’s name to the Elgin Community Club Scholarship Fund, PO Box 124, Sonoita, AZ 85637.
Notes from the Sonoita Elgin Fire District

By Dottie Farrar

Saturday Coffee With the Chief
Sonoita Elgin Fire District (SEFD) Chief Marc Meredith will host “Saturday Coffee With the Chief” on March 4 from 10-11:30a.m. at the station. All are invited. Also, soon there will be a web-based opportunity for all residents of Sonoita and Elgin to set up a personal profile through Community Connect. More information on this will be available in the near future.

Elgin Bridge: Can SEFD Vehicles Safely Cross It?

There has been some confusion and alarm in the community caused by AshBritt truck traffic hauling the containers used to construct the container wall along the Arizona Mexico Border in recent months. The trucks had been crossing the Elgin Bridge, which has a posted weight limit of ten tons.

Residents have been concerned about the structural integrity of the bridge following the recent heavy use. At the Jan. 23 SEFD Board meeting, and in a follow-up interview with the PRT on Feb. 3, Chief Meredith clarified whether the bridge’s posted weight limit affects SEFD’s ability to operate.

“All ambulance and rescue vehicles are under the weight limit and may cross the bridge at all times,” said Chief Meredith. “The three [SEFD] fire trucks are at around 20 tons when loaded with water and are way over the limit for the bridge. They must avoid the bridge when responding to a fire. This is standard procedure for the department and does not pose a problem. While fighting the 2022 Bridge Fire, the SEFD trucks obeyed the restriction and traveled SR 82 and the Upper Elgin Road to reach the wildfire near the bridge.”

New Amendments to Fire Code

Three amendments to the International Fire Code were adopted by the SEFD Board at the Jan. 23 meeting.

“The IFC is a one size fits all, and our community, being very rural and geographically widespread, has special needs not covered by the IFC,” said Chief Meredith. “These amendments are in the best interest of our community to help keep everyone safe.”

“General Requirements, Section 307 - Open Burning, Recreational Fires and Portable Outdoor Fireplaces, Section 307.3 Extinguishment authority” was amended to read. “When open burning creates or adds to a hazardous situation or a required burn permit for open burning has not been obtained, the fire code official, fire chief or designated representative is authorized to order the extinguishment of the open burning operations.”

“Fire Service Features, Section 505-Premises Identification, Section 505.1 Address Numbers” was amended to add: “Address Numbers. New and existing buildings shall have approved address numbers, building numbers or approved building identification placed in a position that is plainly legible and visible from the street or road fronting the property. Address numbers shall be in accordance with Santa Cruz County, AZ address display requirements. Address number shall be maintained at all times.”

“Section 506-Key Boxes. Section 506.1 Where required” was amended to add: “All commercial establishments, new and existing, will comply with this requirement.” Section 506.1 Locks was amended to read. “A Knox Box lock shall be installed on gates or similar barriers if they present restricted entry, or adjacent to the primary entrance door for the occupancy, whichever would be encountered first when accessing the property unless an approved alternative location is permitted by the fire code official, fire chief or designated representative.”

“The Knox Box is the best standard for commercial properties,” said Chief Meredith. “There is one key to open all boxes. Each box contains the keys pertinent to accessing the property. There will also be an annual check-in with all commercial folks. We believe that it is in the best interest of our business folks to keep tabs on them to help keep them safe.”

Book Review

In the Sky, a Friend

By Harold Meckler

The Sky at Night
By Tim Hunter
University of Arizona Press

If you want a quick reference to the most observable objects in the sky, Tim Hunter’s “The Sky at Night” is for you. If you want some information about the brightest stars, the phases of the moon, and the most recognizable constellations, the book is for you. If you’re wondering what a medical doctor does in his spare time, Dr. Hunter’s book takes you on a tour of what he calls his “heavenly hobby.”

It is, at once, easy to read and yet filled with just enough facts and background to certainly satisfy a wide range of stargazers, from beginners to full-fledged enthusiasts.

“The Sky at Night” is a compilation of some 750 weekly “Sky Spy” columns first published in the Caliente section of the Arizona Daily Star. Ten chapters cover such topics as the moon, stars, constellations, famous astronomers and tips for purchasing one’s first telescope. A glossary of basic astronomy terms is also provided, as is a resource list. Most importantly, it is written for the backyard observer, for someone who just wants a bit of direction, some fundamental detail, and to simply look up with their own eyes and admire the night sky.

Some of us struggle, at times, to find a passion, the drive to learn about, and delve into, an activity that provides fulfillment and enjoyment and a sense of accomplishment. For Dr. Hunter, a career in the University of Arizona’s Radiology Department has been coupled with a lifelong yearning to explore the sky.

During a phone call with the author, I asked him about what I consider to be among the most beautiful objects to observe with the naked eyes, the Pleiades. His answer was completely aligned with his book. “For me,” Dr. Hunter replied, “I always want to see how many individual stars I can see. It’s called the Seven Sisters, but I often can only see six.”

As he writes in the book, astronomy is for everyone. “Anyone,” he continued, “can love and enjoy the sky.” That’s what comes through on every page. The sky offers something for all of us to admire. It’s up to each person to determine what they want and what they expect from their observations.

Amateur astronomy is for those, Dr. Hunter said, who see in the sky a friend. It’s for those who, in a few moments of observation, realize that their backyard viewing — very often without binoculars or telescopes — can be so much better than a photograph.

As part of his love of astronomy, Dr. Hunter co-founded the International Dark Sky Association in 1987. Its purpose is to limit the effects of light pollution through the use of quality, properly installed lighting. He remains committed to this goal.

For beginners, as well as those who have spent many hours under the stars, “The Sky at Night” is a wonderful tool to enhance one’s understanding and sense of wonder in the countless points of light filling the sky.

“The Sky at Night” is available for purchase at uapress.arizona.edu/book/the-sky-at-night.
Staying Safe in Mountain Lion Country

By Cholla Duir

This photo from 2018 shows two young mountain lions in a tree in the Patagonia-Sonoita Creek Preserve.

As a local wildlife expert, I get many questions about mountain lions. These elusive cats are rarely seen but can conjure up quite the scary image in our imaginations.

Not so long ago mountain lions were not the only big predators in the Sky Islands. The mountain ranges around us were also home to wolves, grizzly bears, and a healthy population of jaguars. These other large predators have all been exterminated from our landscape, leaving only the mountain lion to challenge our status as top predator. Being on the top is great but also can be a lonely existence and one that we are not fully equipped to deal with.

One thing we can all do to live safely with mountain lions is to know a little bit about mountain lions. Living with lions, 602-942-3000. Another excellent resource for learning more about keeping livestock safe is the Arizona Game and Fish Department. Call your local office or the following number for information on living with lions, 602-942-3000.

When hiking or cycling, always do so in a group. Avoid being in remote areas from dusk to dawn and make plenty of noise if you are out and about during these times. Wear contrasting bright colors and carry a hiking stick. Always keep children close to you and within sight. Keep dogs leashed or at home. On the extremely rare occasion that you encounter a mountain lion, remain calm. See Lions, p.19

Wine (Cont.)

as the base of operations. They labored to clear land, drill wells, install irrigation, and plant. Once the vines were established, the Harveys and Bosmans built a small barn-like structure to serve as a winery and storeroom. Together with Dutt and Edwards, they organized the Sonoita Vineyards Winery in 1983 as a cooperative venture, with Dutt as lead winemaker.

Challenges lay ahead. Like many states, Arizona established a three-tier regulation system post-Prohibition that divided the industry into producers, distributors, and retailers. Businesses could only be involved in one tier. Wine producers could not sell their products directly to stores, restaurants or the general public and had to rely on distributors, with unsatisfactory results. In 1981, vineyard owners and winemakers, including Dutt, joined together and organized the Arizona Wine Growers Association (AWGA), with Bosman serving as the first president. AWGA’s top priority was the passage of a farm winery exemption law similar to other states. Frank Brophy, a prominent Phoenix lawyer, and John Hayes, a state legislator, helped to introduce the Domestic Farm Winery Bill, which would allow wineries to sell direct to the public and open tasting rooms, even away from the winery. Distributors, backed by the liquor lobby adamantly opposed the bill, but winemakers appealed to the powerful agriculture lobby and eventually the bill passed in 1982 - a critical advancement for the industry and a foundation for the 120-plus wineries that exist across the state today.

Dutt was behind another major advancement when he and Blake Brophy petitioned the Federal government to place Sonoita/Elgin on the national map as an American Viticultural Area (AVA) in 1983, which was awarded in 1984. This was the first and only AVA in Arizona, until the Willcox AVA was approved 32 years later.

In 1984, AWGA worked with Sonoita businessman Bill Letarte and the Sonoita Trade Bureau to organize the first Arizona wine festival at the Santa Cruz County fairgrounds in Sonoita, attracting about 1,400 attendees to the one-day event. The following year, the event was expanded to two days and over 6,000 attended. By 1986, a wine judging contest was added featuring 25 local wines. By 1989, Dutt’s wine went national when he provided two of his best wines to the presidential inauguration of George H. W. Bush. The industry was flourishing.

Dr. Dutt passed away in September 2021 in Tucson, but his legacy and historic vineyard lives on. Today, Sonoita Vineyards is owned by the Dutt family and Dr. Dutt’s granddaughter Lori Dutt Reynolds runs the operations and makes the wine. After earning her bachelor’s degree at UA, she urged him to make wine, saying, “You were born to make wine, girl – you can do this.” Lori, a mother of four young children, now manages the original vineyard and oldest commercial winery in the state, with the help of her husband Robi Reynolds.

“Some of my fondest memories are taking riding lessons at the Babacomari Ranch and then riding with my Grand dad out at the Vineyard,” Lori told the PRT. “I was his little shadow for many, many years. I love that each time I had a baby he came to the hospital with flowers and to sit and hold each of his great-grandchildren and talk with me.”

Moving into the early 1990s, progress in the vineyards and wineries would dramatically slow down as finances and pestilence became problematic. Look for the second part of “The History of Winemaking in Elgin-Sonoita” in the April edition of the PRT.

Note: Erik Berg, Southwest award winning historian and writer is credited with much of the content of this article derived from his publication titled “The Growth, Death, and Rebirth of an Arizona Wine Industry, 1700–2000” published in the Journal of Arizona History, Volume 59, Number 3, Autumn 2018, pp. 203-244, available online at: https://arizonahistoricalsociety.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/Eri k-Berg-project_muse_737880.pdf
Plan (Cont.)
shape land use decisions that impact them, while linking the winery district economic activity to the County’s retail, tourism and travel sectors.”

There will be a community stakeholder process to receive input from residents and business owners on the master plan and overlay district. Some winery owners are supportive of the planning process. However, some residents and other wineries are opposed to any changes an overlay district could make to the general rural (GR) zoning of Sonoita and Elgin.

Todd Bostock, one of the owners of Dos Cabezas WineWorks thinks the County’s decision to create the Winery Master Plan and Overlay District is a step in the right direction. He says “there has been some friction over time between wineries and the County concerning somewhat rigid ‘legacy’ land use regulations. A thoughtful planning process seems just the right approach.”

Bostock went on to say Santa Cruz County as a whole saw significant decreases in tourism spending during the COVID-19 pandemic, but business was stronger than ever at the wineries. He believes the County sees the opportunities to increase revenues coming from wineries and ancillary businesses and that’s why they secured funds to complete the winery master plan and land use overlay district. “I don’t see this area becoming the next Napa Valley,” he opined or a restaurant to estimate water use. This study should that the current GR zoning, allowing one house per 4.17 acres, already overtaxes the water recharge capacity in the Sonoita-Elgin area (the research showed that one house per 25 acres would be more appropriate). Schock recommends that “the County require any project proposing to build lodging or a restaurant to estimate water usage and analyze impacts on ground water recharge capacity.”

Schock said he wasn’t listened to last year and knows that neither he nor other residents of Sonoita and Elgin will be listened to this time. “The County does not want our input, they have already decided they want more development to add revenues to the county coffers.” Schock had heard nothing about the Market Study, Winery Master Plan and Land Use Overlay District before the RFP was approved by the Board of Supervisors early this month but was very clear that if the result of the process is an Overlay District allowing more development in the General Rural Zone, he is solidly against it.

Canelo resident Jim Koweek wants to help victims of the war in Ukraine.

The tragic circumstances in Ukraine have left many people feeling helpless and hoping to find a way of helping the victims of this terrible war. For Jim Koweek, of Canelo, he had a specific moment when he decided to do what he can to help Ukraine.

“I was working a re-vegetation job and they weren’t ready for me and had torn up some of my work that I had just done,” he said. “As a contractor you just don’t like to see that. And I started getting the traditional contractor red in the face, to get a little aggravated up and suddenly it just occurred to me that I’m still going to get paid, I’m still going to do the job. The job will take eight hours instead of five or four, and nobody’s bombering me and it really was specific: ‘Yeah, but I’m not in Ukraine.’ I mean, how many people in Ukraine would trade places with me in a heartbeat? And it was like, you know what, I really think we should be doing something about this.”

Koweek is organizing a free event to help the People of Ukraine in Pioneer Hall at the Santa Cruz County Fairgrounds on March 11 from noon to 4 p.m. There will be a silent auction and a live auction featuring the auctioneering talents of Dean Fish. According to Koweek, hearing Dean Fish auction should be on everyone’s bucket list. “This will be a great time for our community to get together for a common cause,” he said. “Many residents are already helping with donations and organizing.”

The Ukrainian American Society of Tucson will be providing Ukrainian food, arts, and crafts for sale. Several hillbilly bands with outstanding musicians will be playing for entertainment. The use of the Fairgrounds’ facilities is being underwritten by an anonymous donor and all proceeds will go directly to Ukraine via United24, a global initiative charitable organization set up by Ukrainian President Zelensky. It is divided into three phases: first is ammunition, second is medical supplies, and the third is for rebuilding Ukraine. Funds will all go through a 501(c)(3) account. As of December 7, 2022, more than $237 million has been raised from 110 countries.

Koweek is making a point of promoting the fundraiser as a “nonpolitical” event. “What I mean by ‘nonpolitical’ is that the event has no agenda,” he said. “It’s a serious subject, but it’s more of a gathering of friends and neighbors who want to support the Ukrainian people.”

Koweek discussed his parents and how he was raised. “My parents were big believers that this is the greatest country in the world. I really believe that, but I also believe that saying you’re great does not make you great. Doing something does, and when you look at the horrible stuff that is happening over there, to not do something to help is criminal.”

“I believe that there are a lot of people that really haven’t been able to focus on any particular thing to do right now, so let’s just dedicate this next month to doing this.”

Interested in contributing with donations or helping? Contact Jim Koweek at 520-455-5780

Fundraiser For Ukraine
A nonpolitical event to help the People of Ukraine
Santa Cruz County Fairgrounds
Pioneer Hall • March 11 Noon-4.
Silent Auction - Ukrainian Food, Hillbilly Music - Ukrainian Arts
Free admission. Whatever you can donate is appreciated. Come help out and go home with some auction treasures!
More info: facebook.com/thereasonsband/
Out of the Ashes, a New Local Bar

By Pat McNamara

May 2017 saw a fire and destruction of Cunningham’s Ranch House Bar and Restaurant in Sonoita. First established in 1978, Cunningham’s was a gathering place for local ranchers, cowboys and travelers passing through on Hwy 82.

Out of the ashes rose the new Ranch House Tavern, which opened November 2022. Local business owner and Arizona native Chris Gronlund saw an opportunity to build on the property. However, his wife, Sheree, had a more ambitious idea. She suggested that they continue the tradition of a local bar, so after a little persuading, the couple put her idea into action and the Ranch House Tavern became a reality.

Gronlund has extensive experience in construction and plumbing and was able to do much of the building and design with the help of friends and family and brought in other professionals when needed. In the process, he also was able to purchase the adjoining Van Kirk property and has remodeled that into a two separate pieces, a VRBO and an Air B&B.

Starting a new business from scratch can be a daunting endeavor and Gronlund credits the owners of the Copper Brothel for advice as to inventory, permitting, and the legal details of opening a bar. In keeping with the small-town tradition that Sonoita enjoys, the cozy interior of the bar area has a simple décor and seating for only about 20 or so depending on how ‘cozy’ one is comfortable with. The establishment also has a patio in the back with tables and chairs that can accommodate 36 or so patrons. It has space heaters for the cooler evenings and lighting to make it more festive. The front porch also sports seating for the patrons who would like to watch the traffic go by on Hwy82 as they enjoy their drinks.

“For a business to survive in Sonoita it has to offer customer service and consistency,” said Gronlund. With the help of friends, family, bar manager Sharon Morse and their part-time bartenders, the Ranch House Tavern looks forward to serving the community. Gronlund hopes to expand the business by offering his facility for private parties and weddings in the coming months.

The bar is open weekdays from 2-8p.m. and weekends from 11-8. Food trucks offer pizzas, burgers, and burritos on the weekends. The Ranch House Tavern is located at 3250 Hwy 82 just east of the crossroads. They are active on Facebook and have a website in the making.

Bostock, owners of Dos Cabezas as next-door business neighbors. They provide pizzas for the bar when needed, but they only have a license to serve wine, so Gronlund is able to offer other alcoholic choices to winery customers who walk the short distance over from Dos Cabezas. Gronlund also offers Dos Cabezas wine to his bar patrons at the same price as the winery charges. The two businesses complement and support each other in the small-town tradition that Sonoita enjoys.

Kasia Palermo displays her photography at Cowgirl Flair in Sonoita

By Pat McNamara

Photographer Kasia Palermo has found “the place where everyone is so friendly” here in Sonoita. A native of Poland, Palermo spent two years in London as a fashion model before immigrating to the United States in 1993. She landed in Santa Cruz, CA where she became versed in the art of photography. “Instead of being the subject of photographs as a model, I decided to be on the other side of the camera as the photographer,” she said. Spending the next 20 years as a professional photographer, shooting weddings and other events, along with scenes of the ocean and shoreline along California, Palermo learned the craft of applying her photos on different media, mainly wood. She found success in art shows with her newfound skill and sold out at the art fairs that she entered in that area. But California’s ever increasing cost of living forced Palermo to seek a more affordable place to live. Arizona was the answer.

“Three years ago, my fiancé came here to work on a house for his former father-in-law and he fell in love with the area,” she explained. “I came over and fell in love with the place. It’s so much cheaper and the people are so much nicer. I cannot express how nice they are.

Everybody waves to each other. Even the cops wave to you!”

Four months ago, Palermo found a place to display and sell her work at Sonoita’s Cowgirl Flair Boutique. She’s had to make a bit of a transition from her former subject of ocean scenes that was her focus in California. “Here, it’s horses and pigs,” she said with a smile in her voice.

Palermo’s medium is photos transferred to mostly recycled wood, which gives it a rustic look - although, depending on the subject, the portraits can also be quite elegant. Although most of her work is from her own photographs, she is happy to do custom pieces for her clients.

Palermo is on Instagram and currently working on putting a website together. She is normally in the shop from Thursday through Sunday. She looks forward to meeting the “very friendly people in the area” and welcomes all to come see her work at Cowgirl Flair Boutique.

Contributed Photo

Photographer Kasia Palermo has found “the place where everyone is so friendly” here in Sonoita. A native of Poland, Palermo spent two years in London as a fashion model before immigrating to the United States in 1993. She landed in Santa Cruz, CA where she became versed in the art of photography. “Instead of being the subject of photographs as a model, I decided to be on the other side of the camera as the photographer,” she said. Spending the next 20 years as a professional photographer, shooting weddings and other events, along with scenes of the ocean and shoreline along California, Palermo learned the craft of applying her photos on different media, mainly wood. She found success in art shows with her newfound skill and sold out at the art fairs that she entered in that area. But California’s ever increasing cost of living forced Palermo to seek a more affordable place to live. Arizona was the answer.

“Three years ago, my fiancé came here to work on a house for his former father-in-law and he fell in love with the area,” she explained. “I came over and fell in love with the place. It’s so much cheaper and the people are so much nicer. I cannot express how nice they are.

Everybody waves to each other. Even the cops wave to you!”

Four months ago, Palermo found a place to display and sell her work at Sonoita’s Cowgirl Flair Boutique. She’s had to make a bit of a transition from her former subject of ocean scenes that was her focus in California. “Here, it’s horses and pigs,” she said with a smile in her voice.

Palermo’s medium is photos transferred to mostly recycled wood, which gives it a rustic look - although, depending on the subject, the portraits can also be quite elegant. Although most of her work is from her own photographs, she is happy to do custom pieces for her clients.

Palermo is on Instagram and currently working on putting a website together. She is normally in the shop from Thursday through Sunday. She looks forward to meeting the “very friendly people in the area” and welcomes all to come see her work at Cowgirl Flair Boutique.

Contributed Photo

Photographer Kasia Palermo has found “the place where everyone is so friendly” here in Sonoita. A native of Poland, Palermo spent two years in London as a fashion model before immigrating to the United States in 1993. She landed in Santa Cruz, CA where she became versed in the art of photography. “Instead of being the subject of photographs as a model, I decided to be on the other side of the camera as the photographer,” she said. Spending the next 20 years as a professional photographer, shooting weddings and other events, along with scenes of the ocean and shoreline along California, Palermo learned the craft of applying her photos on different media, mainly wood. She found success in art shows with her newfound skill and sold out at the art fairs that she entered in that area. But California’s ever increasing cost of living forced Palermo to seek a more affordable place to live. Arizona was the answer.

“Three years ago, my fiancé came here to work on a house for his former father-in-law and he fell in love with the area,” she explained. “I came over and fell in love with the place. It’s so much cheaper and the people are so much nicer. I cannot express how nice they are.

Everybody waves to each other. Even the cops wave to you!”

Four months ago, Palermo found a place to display and sell her work at Sonoita’s Cowgirl Flair Boutique. She’s had to make a bit of a transition from her former subject of ocean scenes that was her focus in California. “Here, it’s horses and pigs,” she said with a smile in her voice.

Palermo’s medium is photos transferred to mostly recycled wood, which gives it a rustic look - although, depending on the subject, the portraits can also be quite elegant. Although most of her work is from her own photographs, she is happy to do custom pieces for her clients.

Palermo is on Instagram and currently working on putting a website together. She is normally in the shop from Thursday through Sunday. She looks forward to meeting the “very friendly people in the area” and welcomes all to come see her work at Cowgirl Flair Boutique.
**POTTY HUMOR**

By Cassina Farley

When I was four years old, I descended into a world of pure misery. My parents kept me on a small wooden stand in what was called the Den, back then. The seven billion words were Greek to me, but there were illustrations too - glossy photos showing every nation's flag, and gorgeous gems and minerals and lots of other pretty stuff. So awesome were those pics to me that I cut the whole section out (with scissors I had just learned how to use) and later got the fanciest spanning of my little life.

But, oddly, I did not cut out (because I was in black and white) the image of a dung beetle, where charged, reactive substances collide, so lots of stuff on earth comes to us as dichotomy - in which you find yourself on either side. When you go to the stadium, you want your team to win. (Not caring sometimes seems some sort of sin.) In normal human dealings, we're encouraged to take sides. Those who refuse, or simply work not to get us all whisked away, since normal people take a stand and proudly declare loyalty - to red or blue law enforcement, BLM, the right to life, New Orleans Saints or racial purity - and tend to see their counterparts as the benighted foe. If you're not part of the solution, you're part of the problem, Bro.

Where therapy is practical - let's say you readjust the pH of your swimming pool - the larger focus aims to let you dive into that pool without a splash. When you succeed at ditching self, I was elated. I would finally have vindication for all my constant nagging about cholesterol. But what transpired was more than I could have imagined. We went to our physicals and for the most part all went well. As I guessed, his cholesterol was high, and a discussion was had about diet vs. heredity. Of course, Zach wasn’t exactly truthful about his steady diet of sugar and fat and left there feeling smug. I know that his arteries are lined with thick cut bacon.

We also left there with two prescriptions for Cologuard. What’s Cologuard you ask? Well it’s the new non-invasive alternative to a colonoscopy. Yep. You read that right. Since we are both pretty immature, we flipped about it for a week until the little white boxes arrived. I set them on the table and we both walked past them for a week, didn’t even bother to open them. Somewhere deep inside me I was afraid if I opened one beam of light would shine up and outside letting everyone in town know we were about to poop in a box. Ok, not really, but you get the idea right? The next thing to happen were the almost daily reminders from our friend at Cologuard. “Don’t forget to send in your Cologuard test.” “Its time to see your results.” Your doctor is waiting for the results.”

Good grief, once you agree to the “Cologuard challenge” you are pretty much at the point of no return. So, we made a plan. We would do “it” on a Sunday and have “it” all whisked away on Monday. I followed the directions for the UPS pickup and almost died of embarrassment when I realized someone was coming to my house to pick up our very obvious sample. One of the pitfalls of being a UPS driver, I guess.

On one very ominous Sunday we did it. I must have used a whole roll of tape making sure our samples wouldn’t be a terrible accident for some poor unsuspecting package handler. We stacked them by the front door and walked around them for an entire day. First thing in the morning I shoved them out on the porch and watched from my office window. When I finally saw the UPS driver enter my yard I had a pang of anxiety that evolved into relief that the boxes were finally gone.

Polarity and opposition - or so-called duality - are aspects both of nature and our lives, for good and ill. We live in a bi-polar world where everything is somewhat balanced by an opposite; by something which can seem to be its mortal enemy. Is frozen, leafless winter summer’s foe? In some ways, Yes. In others, No. Or how ‘bout predator and prey? Is night the enemy of day? The brain inclines to black and white and is less fond of gray. All “opposition” can be seen - if you step slightly farther back - as something of a timeless dance, with strife enough, of course, and yet as Underlying Source - as complement/fertility - The Basic Mating Ritual from which all blessings and misfortunes flow.

As molecules and/or planets are created from collisions full of violence and heat, where charged, reactive substances collide, so lots of stuff on earth comes to us as dichotomy - in which you find yourself on either side. When you go to the stadium, you want your team to win. (Not caring sometimes seems some sort of sin.) In normal human dealings, we’re encouraged to take sides. Those who refuse, or simply work not to get us all whisked away, since normal people take a stand and proudly declare loyalty - to red or blue law enforcement, BLM, the right to life, New Orleans Saints or racial purity - and tend to see their counterparts as the benighted foe. If you’re not part of the solution, you’re part of the problem, Bro.

In Tucson, many years ago, there was a psychotherapist who ran a class one night each month in which she talked about psychology and spirituality. When someone sought advice about a problem in their lives, the teacher very often asked, “Do you want me to answer that as your teacher or your therapist?”

The difference, as we learned to see, is that what we call therapy is meant to change and improve things; to address particular “situations” by adjusting behavior and relationship, while spirituality aims at something broader and more vaporous, akin to equanimity - which mostly calls for stepping back, eschewing reactivity, and seeing a much broader picture in which you (your so-called self) is just a tiny, speck with which you don’t identify.

Where therapy is practical - let’s say you readjust the pH of your swimming pool - the larger focus aims to let you dive into that pool without a splash. When you succeed at ditching self, you’re seeing through the larger eyes of what some folks call God. You can’t take sides or be perturbed, and four-fifths of your friends will find you odd.

**LIFE AMONG THE HUMANS**

**Best Read Aloud. Refrigerate After Opening.**

By Martin Levowitz

This piece began in response to a letter to the Editor in last month’s PRT about my column from the month before, “Jews In The News.” The writer, David Krest, quoted lines from Leonard Cohen, including: “Puppet Germans, Puppet Jews...” referring to the mechanical endlessness of history, where conflict / opposition tends to dominate the game. I know Krest tangentially, not well. He’s focused on ‘The Big Picture,’ the one you could call mystical - in which you don’t take sides because you see, or strive to see, the larger whole. One thing Krest said that makes good sense in the real world is that a victim state-of-mind and paranoid expectancy contribute in a major way to keeping things unsettled and upset: Reaction to reaction to reaction, endlessly.

When I was four years old, I discovered and fell in love with the large steady diet of bacon and Apple Jacks may not be the way to a healthy future. So, when Zach came to me and said that it was time for a physical, I was elated. I would finally have vindication for all my constant nagging about cholesterol. But what transpired was more than I could have imagined. We went to our physicals and for the most part all went well. As I guessed, his cholesterol was high, and a discussion was had about diet vs. heredity. Of course, Zach wasn’t exactly truthful about his steady diet of sugar and fat and left there feeling smug. I know that his arteries are lined with thick cut bacon.

We also left there with two prescriptions for Cologuard. What’s Cologuard you ask? Well it’s the new non-invasive alternative to a colonoscopy. Yep. You read that right. Since we are both pretty immature, we flipped about it for a week until the little white boxes arrived. I set them on the table and we both walked past them for a week, didn’t even bother to open them. Somewhere deep inside me I was afraid if I opened one beam of light would shine up and outside letting everyone in town know we were about to poop in a box. Ok, not really, but you get the idea right? The next thing to happen were the almost daily reminders from our friend at Cologuard. “Don’t forget to send in your Cologuard test.” “Its time to see your results.” Your doctor is waiting for the results.”

Good grief, once you agree to the “Cologuard challenge” you are pretty much at the point of no return. So, we made a plan. We would do “it” on a Sunday and have “it” all whisked away on Monday. I followed the directions for the UPS pickup and almost died of embarrassment when I realized someone was coming to my house to pick up our very obvious sample. One of the pitfalls of being a UPS driver, I guess.

On one very ominous Sunday we did it. I must have used a whole roll of tape making sure our samples wouldn’t be a terrible accident for some poor unsuspecting package handler. We stacked them by the front door and walked around them for an entire day. First thing in the morning I shoved them out on the porch and watched from my office window. When I finally saw the UPS driver enter my yard I had a pang of anxiety that evolved into relief that the boxes were finally gone.

Polarity and opposition - or so-called duality - are aspects both of nature and our lives, for good and ill. We live in a bi-polar world where everything is somewhat balanced by an opposite; by something which can seem to be its mortal enemy. Is frozen, leafless winter summer’s foe? In some ways, Yes. In others, No. Or how ‘bout predator and prey? Is night the enemy of day? The brain inclines to black and white and is less fond of gray. All “opposition” can be seen - if you step slightly farther back - as something of a timeless dance, with strife enough, of course, and yet as Underlying Source - as complement/fertility - The Basic Mating Ritual from which all blessings and misfortunes flow.

As molecules and/or planets are created from collisions full of violence and heat, where charged, reactive substances collide, so lots of stuff on earth comes to us as dichotomy - in which you find yourself on either side. When you go to the stadium, you want your team to win. (Not caring sometimes seems some sort of sin.) In normal human dealings, we’re encouraged to take sides. Those who refuse, or simply work not to get us all whisked away, since normal people take a stand and proudly declare loyalty - to red or blue law enforcement, BLM, the right to life, New Orleans Saints or racial purity - and tend to see their counterparts as the benighted foe. If you’re not part of the solution, you’re part of the problem, Bro.

In Tucson, many years ago, there was a psychotherapist who ran a class one night each month in which she talked about psychology and spirituality. When someone sought advice about a problem in their lives, the teacher very often asked, “Do you want me to answer that as your teacher or your therapist?”

The difference, as we learned to see, is that what we call therapy is meant to change and improve things; to address particular “situations” by adjusting behavior and relationship, while spirituality aims at something broader and more vaporous, akin to equanimity - which mostly calls for stepping back, eschewing reactivity, and seeing a much broader picture in which you (your so-called self) is just a tiny, speck with which you don’t identify.

Where therapy is practical - let’s say you readjust the pH of your swimming pool - the larger focus aims to let you dive into that pool without a splash. When you succeed at ditching self, you’re seeing through the larger eyes of what some folks call God. You can’t take sides or be perturbed, and four-fifths of your friends will find you odd.
POLITICIANS AND EDUCATION POLICY

By Jac Heiss

Whether you are a parent, teacher and/or taxpayer, polls show you are probably not happy with our public school system. As with any institution, leadership is of greatest importance.

The top education official in Arizona is our State Superintendent of Public Instruction, a job currently held by Tom Horne. Arizona is one of only 12 states where this position is filled by an at-large election. In the rest of the country, these officials are appointed by the governor, or in some states, such as Massachusetts, the State Board of Education.

I mention Massachusetts because they are perennially ranked at the top of all K-12 systems in the USA. Shortly before I retired, I heard Dr. Mitchel Chester, who was then the top educational official in Massachusetts, speak by the governor, or in some states, these officials are appointed by the governor, or in some states, such as Massachusetts, the State Board of Education.

I mention Massachusetts because they are perennially ranked at the top of all K-12 systems in the USA. Shortly before I retired, I heard Dr. Mitchel Chester, who was then the top educational official in Massachusetts, speak at a public forum in Flagstaff. It was sponsored by a group of business and education partners who were seeking to improve schools in the region and wanted to hear from someone who excelled in that pursuit. At that time, had Massachusetts been a standalone country, it would have ranked fifth in the world in K-12 educational achievement.

I was surprised to learn that Dr. Chester had served through both Republican and Democratic administrations. Dr. Chester, who held a doctorate from Harvard in educational administration and had worked as a teacher and school administrator in various capacities, had been selected from a field of highly qualified applicants to lead the State’s public schools. Among his achievements, he advanced accountability measures for school districts and encouraged the use of charter schools to improve educational opportunities in Massachusetts. However, unlike the Wild West version we see in Arizona, charter schools in Massachusetts are carefully monitored.

During my nearly 40-year career in education in Arizona, we have elected our chief education officials from those with a diversity of backgrounds and experiences: business owners, attorneys, teachers, engineers, and even one with a degree in communication disorders. Although several demonstrated a sincere concern for public education and were quite effective, too often we have seen the position used as a stepping stone for higher office. Consider that when local school boards hire a superintendent, they strive to find someone who can inspire the confidence of the staff and community. Beyond academic preparedness, those who have demonstrated expertise within the profession are highly prized. No one is inclined to take direction from someone who lacks knowledge of their career field. What police officer would trust the judgment of a person without experience in law enforcement?

Continuity of leadership is also of great importance. Unlike Massachusetts, every four years, Arizona school districts are subject to the political whims of the newly elected State School Superintendent, not to mention new federal regulations. Changes in curriculum and testing requirements are among the most disruptive directives emanating from the Department of Education. Even when a set of relevant and meritorious academic standards are adopted, it takes time and a lot of hard work for school personnel to create curriculum and educational strategies to meet the new goals. Educators can readily tell when these changes are politically expedient rather than pedagogically sound. The prospect of relocating the goal post every four years has contributed to the mass exodus of competent school personnel from Arizona. Even Sisyphus learned to hate moving heavy rocks.

And then there is the factor of voter fatigue. E.J. Montini wrote, in a piece in the Phoenix Republic, written shortly after the election of current Superintendent Horne, “We spent so much time in recent months obsessing on the political candidates who might impact us grown-ups that we ... completely forgot about...the children.” He went on to report that during his tenure as Attorney General, Horne had been “investigated by the Arizona Secretary of State, the Arizona Solicitor General, the Citizens Clean Elections Commission, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the Maricopa County Attorney’s Office and the Yavapai County Attorney’s office.”

Even if Mr. Horne has learned from his previous stints as State School Superintendent and Attorney General, I remain skeptical he will be an inspiration for positive change. As for the forgotten children, they almost unanimously agree that longer recesses would improve our schools. I think they may be on to something.

TOXIC SPILLS, HERMOSA TRUCKS, AND US

By Chris Werkhoven

A set of recent accidents on rails and highways should serve as an urgent warning that our region is headed for an entirely preventable disaster of similar proportions.

A train derailment in East Palestine, Ohio on Feb. 3 caused a fire that burned for two days, releasing hydrogen chloride and phosgene into the air. As a result, residents within a one-mile radius were evacuated, and an emergency response was initiated from agencies in Ohio, Pennsylvania, and West Virginia. The extent of the damage to public health and the local ecology is still being determined by authorities, but anecdotal reports of strange illnesses are widespread, and the local economy is already taking what might be a death blow. Nobody wants to travel to East Palestine. And soon, no one may be able to safely live there.

Eleven days later, on Feb. 14, a truck hauling a box trailer overturned on a perfectly straight part of I-10 just south of Tucson, between Rita and Kolb Roads, spilling liquid nitric acid, a highly toxic substance. The driver was killed, the highway was shut down in both directions for nearly 48 hours and evacuation and shelter-in-place orders were issued for the surrounding area, then lifted, then reinstated and expanded.

Schools were ordered closed, and businesses were evacuated while residents and people trapped in cars were ordered to close windows and shut down air circulation equipment, a measure that would only slow down exposure, not avoid it.

With I-10 shut down, drivers used other routes, like SR83. Early in the morning of Feb. 15, icy conditions on SR83 caused two trailer trucks to jackknife. Fortunately, there were no fatalities, and there was no hazard emergency this time, only inconvenience to other road users.

But that is no reason to celebrate. Very soon, there will be trucks hauling hazardous materials driving on SR82 and SR83 - not because I-10 is temporarily closed, but because that will be their regular route. And it won’t be just a few trucks, or somebody hauling a box trailer. It will be up to 200 trucks per day, traveling on narrow, winding, unlit rural roads.

These trucks will be associated with South32’s planned Hermosa Mine operations. As I wrote in my previous PRT op-ed piece (“Hermosa Mine Trucks on SR 82 and SR 83 – Really?”, Nov. 2020), many of these trucks will be moving large volumes of toxic mine concentrates and process chemicals back and forth to a still-to-be determined rail road connection.

SR82, and SR83, which are AZDOT recognized Scenic Routes, and Harshaw Road are simply not appropriate routes for that kind of transport of hazardous material, or the volume of truck traffic that South32 is proposing. School buses, first responders, visitors to local wineries, passenger cars, motorcycles and bicycles will all be forced to share the road with South32 truck traffic. These recent accidents in East Palestine, Tucson, and on SR83 drive home why transports of toxic materials need to be regulated more stringently. AZDOT already has (only one) sign placed in Nogales recommending, not mandating, trucks use I-19 rather than SR82. Toxic spills will come our way, literally, if no drastic measures are taken to protect public safety, property value, public health and the environment.
Town Council Notes

By PRT Staff Reporters

February 08, 2023

Manager Ron Robinson reported that AZ Dept. of Environmental Quality had given approval to the Town’s Wastewater Treatment Plant, after a substantial site review, on January 28. He also mentioned that the fire-break clearing along Costello was being finished.

A study session, open to the public, was scheduled for Wednesday, March 1, at 6.p.m. at the council chambers, to discuss some changes to Chapter 14 of the Town’s Code recommended by the Planning and Development Committee.

Mary Skye and Mary Tolena spoke about the application by the Planning and Development Committee for a $5,000 grant from the Patagonia Regional Community Fund of the Arizona Community Foundation that would be used to improve public engagement and involvement in implementing the Town Plan. Mary Skye spoke of the need for discussing impacts of mining and strategies to preserve the Town’s assets. The grant would require a fiscal sponsor for grant administration, and the Town cannot offer Manager Robinson’s, or any other employee’s time from an already overcrowded schedule. The grant application was not approved. The Mayor asked if the same advocacy could be done by volunteers, with a need to reach out to young people and families, such as by incorporating the ideas into high school classes or senior projects.

February 22, 2023

The Mayor and Council approved a recommendation to the Arizona Liquor Board for a liquor license for KPUP’s annual fundraising luau on May 13 at Cady Hall.

The Mayor and Council approved Manager Robinson signing the Subdivision and Special district Opioid Settlement Agreement with Teva and Allergan Pharmaceuticals, and the Pharmacies of CVS, Walgreens and Walmart.

The Mayor and Council finished the meeting and proceeded into executive session to review Manager Robinson’s evaluation.

Letters to the Editor

Reassured by Mine

On February 3, I participated, with a big group, in the two-hour South32 Hermosa mine tour up Harshaw Rd.

I came away informed, educated, even reassured, though I am pro mining.

The tour began at South32’s Patagonia office with a very thorough, informative video presentation. We learned that within the Hermosa mine resides the largest undeveloped zinc deposit in the world. Additionally, the critical mineral manganese is battery grade from the ground (needs no processing), and has not been produced in the U.S. since the ’70s. All mining will be conducted underground. NO OPEN PIT! Tailings will be raised to the surface, deposited in an already constructed, membrane-lined, “dry stack” tailings enclosure. Dry stacking eliminates tailings ponds.

After the presentation, our group was transported in vans up to the mine site. I was impressed by the relatively small footprint the operation encompasses. One could hike across the entire area in a matter of minutes.

Mine boundaries were pointed out, as was the upper, gated limit of public access on Flux Canyon Road. Sadly, not much chance to return access to Harshaw Road, though that has been discussed.

I urge all concerned to partake in the free tour and become informed. I think you shall feel better knowing South32 is conducting a safe operation, one committed to being as environmentally aware as possible. Chris Gore Patagonia

Mearn’s Quail

Just a quick note on the article on the local Montezuma or Mearn’s quail. Several studies, going back 40 years, show that this quail digs for its food, taking bulb and root nodules. Insects are only detected as a trace in the diet of the quail.

The bulk of the diet of this quail includes phaseolus, native tepary beans, cyperus, or nutsedge and oxalis, wood sorrel. These plants grow only briefly above ground during the green monsoons and then wither away along the streams, swales and seasonally wet places. However, somehow the quail know where to dig to find the underground plant parts they prefer. Unique among quail, they have large claws well adapted to dig. Mark Stromberg Sonora

Kudos for Harold

Excellent “Starstruck” column in the January issue. I always read the PRT from cover to cover, sometimes it takes me a while. Harold Meckler’s Starstruck column is always interesting, even to someone not astronomy techy. I particularly enjoyed his January column. And I completely agree with its message.

Karen Riggs Elgin

News From Rotary Club

High school students in Nogales, Sonora put newly refurbished desks, provided by Rotary Clubs in Arizona and Sonora, to good use.

News Release

The Mountain Empire Rotary (MER) began 2023 with a recycling and shredding event for our community on Jan. 7 at the Santa Cruz County Fairgrounds. Thanks to the community members who turned out for the successful event, and also for their generous donations. Money raised at these events, like all our fundraisers, allows the Club to continue with projects supporting the needs of our community - projects like our dictionary and birthday book programs, high school scholarships, monetary academic awards, Rodeo Youth awards, support for the SCCFRA Fundraisers, Rotary Youth Leadership Camps (RYLA), and support to other non-profit community organizations.

This year MER sponsored two Patagonia High School students, Rebecca Ford and Nicholas Dekhtyar, to attend RYLA. They were joined by MER member Sue Archibald, who attended as a group leader for the event. RYLA participants, chosen for their leadership potential, attend an all expenses paid, four-day training program designed to build, strengthen, and exercise leadership skills, self-confidence and character. These students come together from communities across Southern Arizona and are also joined by Rotary Exchange students from other countries.

On Jan. 27, several MER members participated in helping deliver refurbished desks to a high school in Nogales, Sonora, as part of the Desk Project Grant with the Nogales Sonora Industrial Rotary Club. On March 11 the MER Club will travel to Nogales, Sonora for a day of working on refurbishing additional desks. Not only will that trip include MER, but also members from Clubs in Green Valley, Tucson and Sierra Vista. Students cannot attend school if there are not enough desks. This grant will provide the financial support to refurbish old desks and improve the education opportunities for the school age children in Nogales, Sonora.

In February, MER held their annual Valentine’s Day Book event for the pre-schoolers at Patagonia Elementary School. The event is the brainchild of MER member Sue Archibald and, as usual, she was on hand to distribute the free books to the delight of the children. Many thanks to the staff at Patagonia for coordinating this event.

In addition to these activities, MER members are beginning to work on the Club’s annual fundraising Golf Tournament, in partnership with the Benson Rotary Club. You will soon be seeing flyers around town, and more details in the PRT newsletter on how to participate, so SAVE THE DATE - APRIL 29, 2023! Additional information can be obtained by contacting Mike Veta at vetainsgroup@outlook.com.

MER members love supporting the community and our youth and invite anyone from the community to attend our meetings and learn more about Rotary. We meet the 2nd and 4th Thursdays of the month from 5:30p.m. - 7p.m. And remember, if you have an issue in the community that you think the Rotary can help you with, don’t hesitate to contact MER. We are here to listen and hopefully help. If you want to know more about Rotary, attend a meeting, or suggest a project, feel free to contact Keith Barth at judgebarth@gmail.com.

The Patagonia Regional Times encourages everyone to comment publicly on the events and times in which we live. Letters must be signed by the author and include town of residence. Letters are limited to 200 words. The PRT reserves the right to edit all letters for language, length, and content. Please send your letter, in MS Word, to prteditor@gmail.com.
a severe blow when it was discovered that the current financial advisor was giving bad advice. In short, no one was aware there were insufficient funds in the Town’s account and Town paychecks started bouncing… [I]t was learned that the former Town financial advisor had not balanced the books for two years. The council had relied on him to keep track of the Town’s finances and were stunned to find that he had not.

This followed a loss of funds due to embezzlement in the early 1990s and was during a period before there was a town manager.

Now, along with deep cuts in all departments but Police, Mayor Shirley Treat suggested closing the library altogether, calling it a “Cadillac we can no longer afford to pay the gas for.” The Patagonia Friends of the Library, a support organization that already provided important funding, such as books and programs, was not going to take that lying down.

So, back to the cookies. Wenig wrote, “The idea came to me from a tiny book written by Bill Holm, a visiting author, called “Chocolate Chip Cookies for Your Enemies.” Bernice Pomeroy said, ‘I’ll provide the cookies.’ I was looking for ideas from people of how to save the library. A friend from Elgin, Susan Shields, went to her pick-up, grabbed her horse feeding bucket and said, ‘Sure you need ideas, but it takes money too.’ People began to say, ‘Sure you need ideas, but why are you asking for money?’

By the time they got through the initial crisis, volunteers had spent hours in meetings, working on grants, on the phone and around the community raising awareness and money. Carolyn McIntosh, Board member at the time, said, “Doris would talk to anybody and everybody about the need to keep the library going. She had been a teacher and a librarian for 40 years and was so passionate.”

With enough to cover the first year of the librarian’s salary, the Friends (and their friends) turned their attention to more sustainable sources of income. The idea of an endowment fund came up: an investment fund set aside to earn regular revenue to support future needs and avoid crises like they had experienced. Over the next several years, they established an endowment fund through the Arizona Community Foundation’s (ACF) Patagonia Regional Community Fund. This fund has helped the Friends continue their contribution to the library’s operations. The fund still welcomes donations.

And the Town budget? It took some time to set the finances back on solid footing. The Friends covered Librarian Abbie Zeltzer’s salary from March of 1998 until June of 2000, while the Town got back on its feet. A glance through the Town Council minutes at the time show that to have been a community effort as well.

The library is currently funded jointly by the Friends, the Town of Patagonia and Santa Cruz County, as well as through grants.

Julie Holding is a part-time Patagonian who has both worked for the Patagonia Regional Community Fund and ACF, though not during those years. She shared her perspective that a town the size of Patagonia will always have to do some careful management to preserve the services that are important to its residents.

“There are many services here that are essential - water, streets, the playground, the Library, the Senior Center, the pool,” she said. “The Town Hall and the Library are both historic buildings that require upkeep. We place value on these services and that is one of the reasons the community rallied, whatever the initial cause for the need.”

It would be impossible to list all the people who organized and raised the initial funds needed and worked to develop the endowment fund. (This writer’s main source of information for who contributed was the packet of notes passed to Carolyn McIntosh by Doris Wenig, and the PRT is grateful to McIntosh kept all them these years. Apologies to anyone whose major role was not recognized.) Many of these people are no longer with us. Certainly much credit goes to the Friends Board at the time: Doris Wenig, Molly Webster, Jude Weierman, Betty Myers, Carolyn McIntosh, Maria Hoopes, Merelene Lopez, Roger Phillips, Joan Stringer, and Arlene McCaffrey. Sally Greenleaf was instrumental in the effort, including writing the appeal letter. Doris’s late husband, Don, an active member of the community in many areas, set up the endowment fund with Doris, Jack Holder and Mitchell Zucker. Matt Yelle and Roger Phillips organized the golf tournaments, and many volunteers wore out shoe leather securing sponsorships and raffle prizes.

McIntosh recalls being surprised by the number of people who came and all the logistics that were carried out. “For a town this size, you just can’t imagine it,” she said.

Fast-forward 25 years and the Patagonia Library is thriving. Community members proudly point out the award the library won as 2nd Best Small Library in America from Library Journal in 2018.

Steve Finch, Friends Treasurer and member of the Town Council, believes a large part of the library’s worth is its place as a pillar of the community. “When a town loses the bank and the gas station, as we have, the library is an anchor, a focal point in the town that is available to everyone,” he said.

Among Doris Wenig’s handwritten notes is a rough draft of what appears to be a 2004 letter thanking donors to the endowment fund. She wrote, “This is sort of a love letter to you [for your] caring for our community, for the interest you have in our library. I still smile when I recall us sitting around the table in Phoenix with the [ACF], trying to get a hold on the idea of ‘endowment.’ That was something I heard about with universities and hospitals. They raised money, big money, and had their pictures on the society page during charity drives. How can I, can we, do something like ENDOWMENT in Patagonia?”

Well, they accomplished that in the same way they paid the librarian’s salary in 1998 - with the power of community.
Mid-February’s weather has me thinking of holing up and taking refuge from winter’s resurgence. Cold, incessant winds, snow, and hard freezes have collectively conspired to send my mind inward, longing for a space devoid of the frigid onslaught. What if I could just wait out the worst that winter has to offer, simply emerging on the meteorologically nicest days that suited my personal fancy?

Sound far-fetched? Enter our freakish and fantastic fossorial fauna - a rogues’ gallery of beasts that frequently lurk below ground in an effort to survive, each in their own, unique fashion. An animal is described as “fossorial” if it is able to burrow and lives primarily underground. Mammals (of course), reptiles, amphibians, a host of invertebrates, and even one bird get in on this decidedly odd act here in the Sky Islands.

We start with the quintessential underground dweller known to many and often despised for their sneaky incursions into our gardens: pocket gophers. These semi-notorious rodents have evolved a set of traits highly adapted to life underground. In a wide range of soils, from valley floors to near the tops of our tallest mountains, they live a mostly solitary life. They form characteristic mounds as they construct their complex burrow systems. Hidden from the prying eyes of humans and predators alike, they eat, travel, sleep, and mate underground - only making cameo appearances at the surface as they plug the tops of their tunnels. So finely tuned are they to their lifestyle that they are able to excavate soil with their front two enlarged incisors with their lips closed completely behind them! Further, they possess a pair of external cheek pouches or pockets (hence their name), which serve to store and transport food - mostly roots and other plant parts. Bizarre!

Leaping to the world of amphibians, we find a number of anurans finding succor under terra firma. Prominent among them are spade-foot toads who, like the gophers, bear witness to their lifestyle in their moniker. The "spade" - located on their hind feet - is properly termed a tubercle. These small, cat-eyed toads use them to dig down into the earth, seeking more stable temperatures and greater humidity. There they wait for most of the year, entombed in a mucous casing of their own making. Come monsoon season, rain and even the rumblings of thunder may entice them skyward. Freshly formed pools of water are their breeding grounds, where males and females congregate in an unabashed mating frenzy. Their tadpole offspring exit their watery habitat in as little as ten days as tiny "toadlets," embarking on their own underground odyssey.

Among our copious invertebrates, perhaps ants take fossorial first prize. Few of the 190 or so species that call the Sky Islands home do anything other than live underground. Leafcutter ants of several species use the moist subterranean climate to grow fungal gardens - their sole source of food. Honeypot ants have a special caste of sterile workers that spend their lives as living "pots," hanging from dark chamber ceilings, their abdomens distended with the sweet liquid that lends them their name. Army ants of at least four species steal underground holes and tunnels from other ants, invertebrates, and even rodents. From there they launch their murderous assaults upon other ant species, greedily devouring their brood.

I was reminded about just how reclusive fossorial fauna can be when, several years ago, a lone desert box turtle made a cameo appearance at Raven’s Nest Nature Sanctuary during monsoon season. While the species may well breed here, I have never seen one before or since at the refuge. Soil enshrouded ghosts, these and their ilk. Blind snakes, termites, Gila monsters, ant lions, skunks, kangaroo rats, and, yes, even one bird - the burrowing owl - all have evolved their own, unique take on life underground. In fact, it seems so crowded down there that I may just stay terrestrial for the time being.

Vincent Pinto and his wife, Claudia, run RAVENS-WAY WILD JOURNEYS LLC, their Nature Adventure, Education & Conservation organization devoted to protecting the unique biodiversity of the Sky Islands region. Join Vincent at the Tin Shed Theater on March 24 for his "Biodiversity in the Heart of Sky Islands" nature documentary. Visit ravensnatureschool.org

This desert box turtle was spotted at Raven’s Nest Nature Sanctuary during monsoon season several years ago.

Photo by Vince Pinto

Fabulous Fossorial Fauna

SCHEDULE YOUR APPOINTMENT TODAY!
Vaccinations are your first line of defense against influenza.

WALKINS WELCOME APPOINTMENTS PREFERRED

520.281.1550 mapirosachc.net

GET YOUR FLU SHOT NOT THE FLU

NEWS TO DIE FOR
MURDER AND MAYHEM AT THE TUCSON INDEPENDENT
A NOVEL

ROBERT E. KIMBALL

News To Die For
by local author Robert E. Kimball
is available at The Patagonia Trading Post
and at Amazon.com
Glimpses Into Our Past

Sunnyside and the Nye Family

By Alison Bunting

This is part three of the Sunnyside story, begun in the January PRT. Roberta Nye Lamma, known as Biff, wrote “A Place Called Sunnyside” in 1982. Her account is based on stories told to her by her mother, Anna Laura O’Harra Nye and other Sunnyside residents. Biff came to Sunnyside in 1915, at a time “Arizona was considered booming and again Sunnyside dreamed a dream...of getting everyone to return...build their homes...and maybe even getting the mine going again. This dream...did not materialize...” [Lamma: 32]. The remains of Sunnyside are located on private property. For permission to visit the area contact JD Hathaway [hathaway.j.david@gmail.com].

Anna Laura O’Harra was born in Boswell, Indiana in 1872, to Henry and Almyra O’Harra. The family relocated from Indiana to western Kansas in 1877. Anna Laura, known as Laura, was an early Donnelly follower who came to the camp as a single woman. In 1895 she married Charlie Blomberg, the camp teamster who “took the ore by mule team over the mountain to Fairbank and the train.” [Lamma:11]. Their daughter, Cora Louise, was born in 1896. Charlie deserted Laura and Cora Louise and in 1901 Laura was granted a divorce. In 1909 Laura married Robert Nye, a Donnelly convert who was a gifted carpenter. Robert and Laura moved to the Phoenix area where they had two daughters: Emma (b. 1910) and Biff (b. 1914). Robert died in 1915 and Laura, Emma and Biff returned to Sunnyside. Her oldest daughter, Cora married Ralph McIntyre (see Glimpses, Feb. 2023) the same year and lived nearby.

The Donnellys convert Biff came to know included the Gattrell and Langford families, and Cyrus Cooper. Cyrus, an elderly woodcutter, who had no living family, had been the only Sunnyside resident in 1907. In 1920 he was living with the Nye family.

Edwin Langford (b. 1857) and Lucy Herrick Langford (b. 1867) had six children. Ed was a “mechanical genius” and “the majordomo of the shop.” Lucy was the community’s midwife. [Hathaway:61, 65]. In 1910 Ed was managing a sawmill in California with two of his sons while Lucy remained in Sunnyside with one son and their daughter.

Lucy became Sunnyside postmistress in 1914. “On mail day...the men mostly, from the ranches, came early to get their letters off and...stayed until the mail returned in the afternoon...and partook of a free lunch with us.” [Lamma: 35]. Ed died in 1918 in a mine cave-in near Sunnyside; Lucy died in 1921.

Albert Gattrell (b. 1844) and his wife Diane Ely Gattrell (b. 1865) remained ranching in Sunnyside after the community dispersed; around 1912 they filed a homestead claim on the 53.26 acres that comprised Sunnyside and were granted a patent for the land in 1919. Albert had primary responsibility for mine operations and Diane taught the Sunnyside children. Diane “was the last convert of Sam Donnelly...she taught school in the old way, reading, writing, and arithmetic, taught to the tune of a hickory stick.” [Lamma:12-13]. Albert died circa 1922 and when Diane died in 1925, her living will left the Sunnyside property to Laura Nye and Lucy Langford. Laura became the sole owner since Lucy had died in 1921.

Laura became the postmistress and “sold houses, took in boarders, fed the government hunters, rented houses to health seekers, and sold scrap iron by the truckloads...somehow she kept Sunnyside in the black...” [Lamma: 39]. Laura could no longer live at Sunnyside and sold the property to Will and Mary Lucille Hathaway (see Glimpses, Feb. 2023). Biff married Francisco “Frank” Lamma in 1933 and lived in Patagonia. Laura moved to Patagonia where she died, age 92, in 1965. Frank and Biff were married 53 years until Frank’s death in 1986, age 74; Biff died, age 92, in 2007.

Let’s Cook

The Patagonia Community United Methodist Church in 1917

This year is the Centennial for Patagonia Community United Methodist Church, which still serves the community in this original historic building on the corner of McKeeown and 4th Avenues.

The first ministers that served the Patagonia area came in 1859 and were Methodist “circuit riders” – pastors on horseback. A building for a church was not built until over 50 years later. The walls were one-foot poured concrete, mixed by hand, mostly by a father and son who would work every weekend mixing and pouring the concrete and hoisting it up themselves 16 feet or higher. The building, finished with wood floors and clear glass windows, was not completed until 1923.

An interesting fact not known to most Patagonians is that the church was also used as the area’s first high school.

Students were traveling to Nogales for high school in 1925, when the school trustees selected Patagonia as the site for a new high school and voted to lease the church until building could start. Classes started on September 8, 1926 in the church after necessary remodeling.

Hamburger Mushroom Delight

By Linda Jade Fong

This year is the Centennial for Patagonia Community United Methodist Church, which still serves the community in this original historic building on the corner of McKeeown and 4th Avenues.

The first ministers that served the Patagonia area came in 1859 and were Methodist “circuit riders” – pastors on horseback. A building for a church was not built until over 50 years later. The walls were one-foot poured concrete, mixed by hand, mostly by a father and son who would work every weekend mixing and pouring the concrete and hoisting it up themselves 16 feet or higher. The building, finished with wood floors and clear glass windows, was not completed until 1923.

An interesting fact not known to most Patagonians is that the church was also used as the area’s first high school.

Students were traveling to Nogales for high school in 1925, when the school trustees selected Patagonia as the site for a new high school and voted to lease the church until building could start. Classes started on September 8, 1926 in the church after necessary remodeling.

Let’s Cook

With the Elgin/Socona Cowbelles

Hamburger Mushroom Delight

“...This quick, easy recipe has been a long-time family favorite. No need for a last minute dash to the market since the ingredients are staples in most kitchens.” Betty Barr, Cowbelle with Farm Girl roots

Ingredients:

1 lb. Ground chuck 1/4 cup butter
2 T chopped onion 1/2 lb. mushrooms
2 tsp. steak sauce 1/2 tsp. Cornstarch
1/2 tsp. each salt and pepper 1/3 cup dry sherry

Combine first five ingredients. Shape into patties. Fry in 2 T butter for three minutes on each side. Keep warm. Saute mushrooms, stir in cornstarch and sherry. Simmer, stirring for 2 minutes, add patties for a few minutes and serve.
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.
LET'S GO GET STONES

Rolling Stones
By Keith Krizan

It’s the dead of winter. The temperature here in Elgin has been running well below average for several weeks now and I don’t feel much like going out to look for rocks. I guess I’ve become totally acclimatized to southeast Arizona weather. The below-average highs have been running in the 50° range. Back in pre-retirement Connecticut, 50° in January used to feel as if one of the four horsemen of the apocalypse had paid a visit, but in a good way. Then it would have been an occasion to strip down to short sleeves. Out here it just causes confusion.

For the time being, during these cool and breezy months, I have decided to embark upon a new area of interest: Rock Tumbling. Rockhounding’s afterthought. Rock tumbling is the art of taking a low-lustered, sharp-edged and rough-surfaced rock and making it shiny and smooth. The tumbler itself comes in two varieties: vibratory and rotary. Both methods require a mix of water and grit into which the rocks are submerged. In all steps of the process, it is important to use rocks of various sizes but of similar or equal hardresses. I use a four-step process that employs silicon carbide grit of increasingly finer size. 80 grit, then 220 grit, then 600 grit, washing the rocks with dish detergent between changes to insure no contamination takes place. My barrel is always 50% to 75% full, which translates to 9 to 12 pounds of rocks at the onset. The ratio of rock weight to grit is approximately 10:1 initially and adjusts down to 7.5:1 for the final three tumblings. I’ve been going seven days with each grit. Since the biggest changes and best chances of eliminating any flaws, divots and rough spots comes from the first grind, it may take two, or more, tumblers at the 80 grit level to get things really smoothed out. The final polish of cerium or tin oxide lasts only 72 hours.

Tumbling is an easy answer to the question of what to do with all the rocks that are collecting around the house. On the porches. By the gate at the end of the driveway. In the garage. On shelves, on half walls, on window ledges.

In order to tumble and open up this whole other world of rocks I will need some tools, so I drive down to Tucson, to Kent’s Jewelry and Lapidary Tool Store. After a short walk through the store, where there is an eye catching display of unique mineral formations, crystals and petrified woods, I do some quick mental calculations and arrive at the conclusion that my own, extensive, home invading collection, gathered over many hours and with great effort, bounding over slippery waste rock piles and having too close an encounter with raw slithery nature, is worth, maybe, many tens of dollars. But I’m not in it for the money.

I pick out a decent sized 10 lb. tumbler and head for home.

Besides slowing the growth of my at-home inventory, and to some extent shrinking it, tumbling might satisfy another curiosity. I have an urge to see the macro within the micro. In a polished rock one can more clearly see the dividing lines between the different components of the rock and maybe catch a glimpse into how it was formed.

Thin layers of alternating color? Perhaps a sedimentary rock from some long-ago stream or ocean bed that reveals what was once captured by the water only to precipitate out and eventually harden. I am looking at a rock only an inch in height that has over a dozen such episodes locked within it. Am I looking at a rock only in time or only a season? Or is it 10,000 years? A million seasons?

Another rock has the unmistakable bluish green of chrysocolla and the rust reds of iron. How long ago did this hot flow of molten rock intrude and force itself into the fissures and crevices of even more ancient limestone and granite and bring with it the copper so urgently needed for our electrified civilization? In some of these polished rocks it is easy to see a microcosm of the photos now being sent back from the James Webb Space Telescope. But instead of balls of gas, or star factories and exploding super novas, or a map of the Big Bang that are many parsecs and light years across, I am holding a view of the universe only inches in length that I am certain would be equally spectacular if I was a consciousness that only inhabited the space of a mere electron.

Back at home it takes about 30 days of grinding. In the end I have some shiny rocks. Some are translucent, others are opaque. They all hint at their mysterious origins in an aesthetically pleasing way. If nothing else, it is a month closer to spring.

The author tumbled and polished this starburst jasper he had collected.

STARSTRUCK

Procynon and Friends
By Harold Meckler

One of the sky’s largest constellations and probably its most recognizable, Orion, is not just easy to see. It’s a must see. It is, for me at least, like the Grand Canyon. I never tire of its glory. Throughout March in the early evening it will be prominent to the southwest. This month, it is the perfect celestial object to focus upon. However, as easy as it might be to lose oneself within its enormous frame, and to dwell upon the bright stars that encircle its famous star nursery, it’s also very useful as a tool to zero in on a splendid nearby star, Procyon.

Astronomy is many things. Author and amateur astronomer Tim Hunter (see my review of his book, “The Sky at Night” on p. 8) says the sky can be like a friend. That is, perhaps, the best description one can give. A friend occupies a place where solace and comfort and laughter gather, where connections are not just maintained, but also increased. Orion, like the good friend it is, leads us to Procyon.

Mythologically, Orion is a hunter holding his shield aloft while his faithful dog, Canis Major, stands nearby. I tend to see Orion as an hourglass. Its "bottom" lies furthest to the west. Its "top" is anchored by the enormous red star, Betelgeuse, and by the not quite as bright Beltraxus, a blue giant.

Draw a line from Betelgeuse to Beltraxus and continue on for twice that length and you will reach Procyon, the white-yellow primary star of Canis Minor, the Lesser Dog. I’ve often overlooked it for the spectacular Sirius, the brightest star in not just Canis Major but also in the entire sky.

Procyon is a binary system, with a smaller star, a white dwarf called Procyon B, orbiting it and adding to its luminosity. Both are just over 11 light years from us, relative neighbors. Just as we often do with special sites that are close to home, we frequently pass them by for the more famous tourist traps hours away. Like many "second-place," Procyon doesn’t get the attention it rightly deserves.

It is the eighth brightest star in the sky and about twice the size of the Sun, while nearly seven times brighter. It was regularly used as a navigational tool by seafarers before modern technology took over.

Now, go back to the line you drew from Betelgeuse to Procyon and turn it 90 degrees to the right, or north. You quickly come to Castor and Pollux: Gemini. Surrounded on three sides by the Twins, Orion, and Sirius, it seems all too easy to discount Procyon and the tiny constellation it inhabits. And yet, throughout time, stargazers from around the world have created numerous legends about it. Those tales would surely have grown if they had known that Procyon was really two objects and not just one.

Procyon B’s status as a white dwarf means that its best days are long gone. It is estimated that over one billion years ago, it used up its hydrogen and grew exceedingly large before blowing off most of its mass. It’s hotter than Procyon A, but considerably dimmer. It takes 40 years for it to orbit its companion at an average distance comparable to that of the Sun and Uranus. All this month when I take a glance at Procyon I will think about the two stars that carry one name. I will think of their connectedness that has lasted nearly 2 billion years through much travail, and I will be reminded yet again of the wonder that exists in space.

Indeed, if anything, I will ask myself why all of us down here can’t be a little more like these ancient beauties circling above us, thriving in their timeless friendships.
Take a Hike!

PRT contributor Robert Gay has created a series of trail maps for Patagonia and surrounding areas. This month we are sharing his map with directions to the trailheads in and around Patagonia.

YOUR LOCAL INSURANCE TEAM

Call for a bundle quote today!

Gordon Purvis, Agent
Gordon Purvis Agency Inc

gpurvis@amfam.com
(520) 298-3900
7429 E 22nd St
Tucson, AZ 85710

Contact Me
Local Scholarship Opportunities Available

Stradling Foundation Scholarship Applications

The Anne C. Stradling Equine Foundation is offering scholarships for students graduating in the Class of 2023 who attend public or parochial high school, trade school, or are home schooled in Santa Cruz County. County residents who attend high school in neighboring Pima or Cochise County are also eligible to apply.

Santa Cruz County Cowbelles Scholarship Applications

Two - $1000.00 scholarships/available for eligible graduating seniors from Santa Cruz County. Applications are due April 15, 2023. Contact: vensel4755@gmail.com for more information and applications.

AZ Community Foundation Scholarship Applications

The Arizona Community Foundation scholarships are available to students in Patagonia and surrounding communities attending postsecondary schools. Scholarships are available for high school seniors, current college students, graduate students, or adult re-entry students attending accredited two-year and four-year colleges and universities, as well as career and technical schools anywhere in the United States. Each award has its own deadline, with some closing as early as March 1 or as late as May. Visit azfoundation.org/scholarships to access scholarship awards and learn more about scholarships available through ACF.

Los Charros Foundation Scholarship Applications

We welcome scholarship applications from all students no matter their grade point average or the high school they attend. We focus on recipients that are in financial need, but we also support students from all demographics. We have received scholarship applications from youth with varying backgrounds. We also award scholarships to students already enrolled in college or trade/vocational programs. To apply, visit: apply.mykaleidoscope.com/scholarships/LosCharrosFoundation

Lions (Cont.)

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

Interested high school seniors may apply online at: https://tinyurl.com/Stradlingscholarship2023 before April 17, 2023.

Jim Harrison at the Wagon Wheel

By Richard Schinnow

Jim Harrison sits in the side yard of the Wagon Wheel Tavern and drinks vodka with chasers of red wine.

His shirt is off so the sun can soothe his shingles and he squints with his good eye through the lingering smoke of another cigarette.

But when I sit down at his table he is gone, fleeting across the desert valley like the shadow of a raven.

The bard has left and we have only birds and rivers to remind us that he was ever here.

Birds and rivers and an annoyed croaking heron lifting off the shoreline. Those who knew Jim know that voice.

He is certainly in the trees or tailing in the Big Hole River and all the streams he ever knew and in the river he left us filled with words.

Patagonia Plants

Growing roots in Patagonia

Mustang 4-H Club Reaches 100 Members

The Mustang 4-H Club, based in Sonoita, hit a milestone of 100 members in February. "We have more projects, more leaders, more club members than any time in recent history, and we are planning on having an even bigger fair this year," said Mustang Club chairperson and organizer Cami Schlappy.

The Mustang 4-H Club reaches 100 members. (Photo by Marion Vendituoli)
Senior Spotlights

This month the PRT begins our series of profiles of the PUHS senior class of 2023. Look for more profiles of these talented and interesting young people in upcoming issues of the PRT.

Jose Manuel Beltran

Participation in school clubs and sports: Manager of the basketball team all four years.

Extracurricular activities outside of school: Working out at the gym.

Plans for next year: Attending a trade school and studying to be an electrician.

Favorite teachers: Mrs. Hayes, Mr. Porter, and Mr. Gudenkauf

Favorite subjects: Auto Shop and Poetry

Which one memory will you remember forever about your time here? I will always remember the field trip down to the canyon when Alec, Ayssa, and I all fell in the mud. It was really funny.

What has been the highlight of your high school years? Going to state for basketball two years in a row.

Where do you imagine yourself in ten years? Owning and running my own business.

What is one piece of advice you would give to underclassmen? Don’t care what other people say, be yourself.

Oskar M. Gomez

Participation in school clubs and sports: I played basketball and soccer.

Plans for next year: I will be attending the Universal Technical Institute.

Favorite teachers: My favorite teachers are Mr. Porter and Mrs. Hayes.

Favorite subjects: My favorite subject is welding.

Which one memory will you remember forever about your time here? One of my memories that I will remember forever is basketball practice. I will miss my teammates and coach.

What has been the highlight of your high school years? One of my highlights of high school was being able to spend time with my classmates.

Where do you imagine yourself in ten years? I imagine myself in ten years with my own house and a family.

What is one piece of advice you would give to underclassmen? To keep your head up and to never give up on life because school goes by fast.

Isaias Gonzalez

Participation in school clubs and sports: I played basketball all four years.

Extracurricular activities outside of school: Team roping with friends and family.

Plans for next year: I want to be a wildland firefighter or get my CDL.

Favorite teachers: Mrs. Hayes

Favorite subjects: Financial Algebra

Which one memory will you remember forever about your time here? When we went to state for basketball in 2021.

What has been the highlight of your high school years? The highlight of my high school years has been playing all four years of basketball.

Where do you imagine yourself in ten years? I will be a wildland firefighter.

What is one piece of advice you would give to underclassmen? Get good grades!

Elizabeth Urias

Participation in school clubs and sports: Four years of volleyball, four years of basketball, two years of softball, three years of STUGO, and two years of National Honors Society.

Extracurricular activities outside of school: Student docent at Patagonia Museum my Junior year and working at the Gathering Grounds.

Plans for next year: I plan on attending either a community college or a university to pursue a career as a sonographer.

Favorite teachers: My favorite teachers are Mr. Gudenkauf and Mrs. Hayes

Favorite subject: Art

Which one memory will you remember forever about your time here? Going to super regionals for volleyball and basketball in the 2022-2023 school year.

What has been the highlight of your high school years? The highlight of my high school years have been the sports that I have played, especially my favorite sport, basketball.

Where do you imagine yourself in ten years? Working a job that I love and living in my own house.

What is one piece of advice you would give to underclassmen? A piece of advice I would give to the underclassmen is enjoy your time in high school. It all may seem so dumb now but you will never get this back. You won’t have any more homecoming games or dances after you graduate high school, so take advantage of the things you have now before they are gone.
What Is That??
Curios From the Patagonia Museum

By German Quiroga

Another interesting item at the Patagonia Museum that is asked about quite frequently is this contraption that was donated by the Dr. Mock family. I thought that it might be some kind of anesthesia device since Dr. Mock was an anesthesiologist. I was able to convince a few museum visitors of that until recently one of our docent volunteers, Murphy Musick, researched this machine and was able to identify it as a Jones Motor Basal metabolism tester. It was invented in 1937 and it measures the amount of energy expended per day by a person or animal at rest. Thank you Murphy!

March 24, 6p.m. “BIODIVERSITY IN THE HEART OF THE SKY ISLANDS” This film will illustrate the unique biodiversity of all of the Sky Islands area with a focus on the Patagonia Mountains and along Sonoita Creek. The film’s narrator is Wildlife Biologist/Naturalist/Ethnobotanist Vincent Pinto, a renowned expert on biodiversity. He has been inspiring people from all walks of life about the natural world since 1987, particularly in the Sky Islands region. PARA Fundraiser: $20 per person

*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 394-8369 for more information.

The Santa Cruz Foundation
For The Performing Arts
Benderly-Kendall Opera House, 344 Naugle Ave., Patagonia, AZ

MARCH Schedule

Updated health protocols: Proof of vaccination is required for first-time attendees. Mask wearing inside the venue will be optional though strongly recommended. SCFPA reserves the right to alter its safety policies at any time, based on the latest information and advice.

March 5: 3p.m. The Sky Islands Trio, Evan Kory, piano, Juan Mejia, cello, and Emily Chao, violin, along with guest artists Laura Cázar, violin, and Rafael Lizama, cello. Reception to follow in the courtyard.
$30 Prepay online / $35 at the door

March 26: 3p.m. The Tango Project Maxi Larrea, Andrés Pantoya and Bin Hu represent the new tango generation. Performing tango and folk music combined in a classical and contemporary style. The program will feature works by Pedro Laurenz, Sebastian Piana, Adrian Lacruz and Astor Piazzolla. Reception to follow in the courtyard.
$25 Prepay online / $30 at the door

April 2nd: 3pm. Pianist Mari Tomizuka and Cellist Emil Miland in a special event. Reception to follow in the courtyard.
$30 Prepay online / $35 at the door

Advance payments can be made online using Paypal or a credit card through Paypal or by sending a check to SCFPA PO Box 875, Patagonia AZ 85624. Please give us aheads-up if you plan to mail a check so we can reserve the seats for you.

Visit www.scfpapresents.org for more information

Cera Lynn L.Ac., LMT Aesthetician
Acupuncture, Integrative Care
Skin Care, Aesthetics, Medical Massage
Lymphobiology, Pain Syndromes
520/398-9886
www.spazen.net cerafina1903@hotmail.com

The Ponytail Hair Salon
241 S. 3rd Ave ~ Patagonia, Arizona
Wed. ~ Thur. ~ Fri. * By Appointment
(520) 394-2347
*Leave Message
Charlee Farley ~ Owner
MEETINGS

Church Services

Patagonia Community United Methodist Church
Sunday service 10:00am. Call/email church office for info. 520-394-2274 patagoniaumc@gmail.com

St. Therese of Lisieux Catholic Church
Patagonia
222 Third Ave., T, Th, Fri 9 a.m. (Oct - March, 8 a.m. April - Sept.), Sat 5:30p.m., Sun 10:30a.m.

Our Lady of the Angels Mission
Patagonia
6:30p.m.

Canelo Cowboy Church
14 McCarthy Lane, Elgin
520-604-6990. Sunday Service: 8:30a.m. Sunday School: 10a.m.

Patagonia Farmers Market
Located at post office parking lot, NW corner Hwy 83, Patagonia

Patagonia Museum
Open hours 2p.m. - 4p.m.

Sierra Vista Farmers Market
In front of Red Mountain Foods

Sonoita Farmers Market
Saturdays 9a.m. - 12p.m.

Patagonia Senior Lunch for Seniors
November - March.

Creek Preserve:
The Nature Conservancy's Patagonia-Sonoita Preserve, Mon - Fri for seniors & disabled by appointment.

Patagonia Senior Thrift Shop
Mon - Fri for seniors & disabled by appointment.

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

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. Learn More at www.santacruzdem.org/meetings.

The Santa Cruz Community Democratic Party Meeting:

TerraSol

To thank our Generous Sponsors of the PRT

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

The Patagonia Regional Times is able to offer its many services to Eastern Santa Cruz County thanks to the support of sponsorships and donations. Our sponsors support coverage of local news and events and encourage discussion of important topics in our community.

Sponsors offer significant support at several levels and in a variety of ways to sustain our operations and our programs. Each Sponsorship package is tailored to the mission and objectives of the corporations, foundations, donor advised funds and individuals who offer extremely meaningful support for the PRT.

We are able to thank our Sponsors in several ways:
*Home Page and Topic Page hyperlinked Logo boxes on our website.
*Inclusion on the Sponsors’ Page on the PRT website with a link to your website.
*Sponsor Spotlight! Feature in our weekly e-Newsletter, where we offer thanks to those who support us.
*Sponsor recognition in our monthly print issue of the PRT. *Invitation to special events.

The nonprofit Patagonia Regional Times offers several tax deductible sponsorship opportunities that are suited to your needs. Interested in becoming a sponsor? Want to learn more? Contact Patrick at prtads@gmail.com and we can design a package for your level of support and recognition needs.
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.

LAKE PATAGONIA RENTAL (APRIL AND MAY)
For qualified renter in sprawling 2400 sq foot home with 360 views and spectacular sunsets. Lake and hiking routes nearby. $2500 per month. 518 788 7822

FOR RENT
Trailer for family in Patagonia. $300

LOOKING FOR ONE YEAR UNFURNISHED RENTAL
For two people and one standard poodle. Looking to move in April. Please call or text Charlene, 480-277-7530

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

Visit our website to post your events on our new community calendar page patagoniaregionaltimes.org/events

KPUP Broadcast Schedule - Winter/Spring 2023

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.
BRAND NEW HOME IN LAKE PATAGONIA
MLS #22231411  9.52 ACRES
$625,000

SONOITA HOME WITH HORSE FACILITIES
MLS #22303314  37 WAGON WHEEL LANE
Panoramic mountain views! Cozy 1BD/1Ba bungalow on 0.325 acres. New flooring, 2" wood blinds. New painted. 1059 sf. Horse facilities. BARBARA HARRIS 602-826-4026
$349,000

CUSTOM HOME ON THE MESA
MLS #22230887  4.13 ACRES
Spectacular views from this new 2158 sf custom home in gated community. 3BD/2.5Ba, office/den, island kitchen, 2 car garage. Private well. JEAN MILLER 520-508-3335
$695,000

THE CAFÉ IN SONOITA
MLS # 22229036  3280 HIGHWAY 83
Your chance to own Sonoita’s well loved eatery. Ready to go with kitchen equipment, furnishings, & supplies. Solar, lots of parking & storage. CHERYL VOLK 520-975-7271
$392,000

LAKE PATAGONIA RANCH ESTATES
MLS # 22107278  5.74 ACRES
Build your dream home tucked into the hillside and out of the wind. Lovely mountain views, paved roads, electricity and phone at the lot line. JEAN MILLER 520-508-3335
$34,000

VIEW LOT IN SONOITA
MLS # 22303300  2.27 ACRES
Big building site ready to go! Fantastic mountain views. Close to wineries and Elgin School. Approx. 4 miles to Sonoita Crossroads. SAMANTHA SHORE 602-743-7833
$24,900-$28,000

ELGIN GRASSLANDS
MLS # 22303515  4.79 ACRES
Flat, useable acreage with lovely mountain views bordering a large private ranch. Underground power at the lot line. Nice building site. CHERYL VOLK 520-975-7271
$75,000

ELGIN WINE COUNTRY LAND
MLS # 22211176  7.35 ACRES
$120,000

3 LOTS IN A ROW—LAKE PATAGONIA
4-5+ ACRES EA.  48,50,54 LADO de LOMA
Buy 1, 2, or all 3 depending on your land needs. Electricity & phone at the paved road. Good building sites. Great location & views. BARBARA HARRIS 602-826-4026
$24,900-$28,000