

## About Us

### MISSION STATEMENT

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

### WHO WE ARE

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

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PRT's current issue can be found at Patagonia Library, Patagonia Community Center, Patagonia Market, and at other locations in Patagonia and Sonoita

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# A Boost For Patagonia's Ecotourism

Patagonia's economy will soon benefit from an infusion of \$100,000, thanks to the Patons, and to Tucson Audubon (TAS), current curator of Paton Center for Hummingbirds. TAS submitted a grant request to Artplace, one of the largest national philanthropies dedicated to creative *place making*. For those not familiar with this current catchword, Wikipedia defines it as: "a multi-faceted approach to the planning, design and management of public spaces. Place making capitalizes on a local community's assets, inspiration, and potential,

with the intention of creating public spaces that promote people's health, happiness, and well being."

Chosen along with 37 other applicants from 1,300

Santa Cruz County's popularity as an ecotourism destination is projected to bring in 21.2 million dollar annually, including 6.7 million dollars in salaries and wages....

grant requests, the grant was awarded to Tucson Audubon, the University of Arizona School of Architecture,

Patagonia Creative Arts Association, and Borderlands Restoration, and will be used to strengthen Patagonia's identity as an arts and nature destination. The grant, which will be used to enhance the visitor experience at the center, is expected to greatly increase tourism and economic opportunities for the community, while improving the health of the ecosystem, wildlife, land, and people.

Santa Cruz County's popularity as an ecotourism destination is projected to bring in 21.2 million dollars, including 6.7 million dollars in salaries and wages, and Patagonia is a leading beneficiary. The Paton Center for Hummingbirds' world renown makes it an ideal tourist attraction. Along with The Nature Conservancy, Patagonia Lake State Park, Native Seed Search, Arizona Trail, and Borderland Restoration, Paton's helps to define Patagonia as a unique and ap-

pealing confluence of wildlife, terrain, and environmental awareness.

The grant was proposed by UA faculty member, Anne S. Kurtin, and TAS Paton Center Coordinator, Keith Ashley. Kurtin and her colleague, Siri Trumble, will lead architecture students in the design of a new viewing pavilion. Patagonia Creative Arts Association will create interpretive signage, while Borderlands Restoration will develop media to promote awareness of their Earth Care Youth Institute (BECY).

"It is an extraordinary opportunity to bring together and foster cooperative relationships while demonstrating how important birding and bird watching - quite literally in the backyard - can be to a local economy. We are excited by the possibilities," commented Karen Fogas, Executive Director for Tucson Audubon Society.

## Spotty Cell Service?

A lot of Verizon's customers in our area have noticed that they have been getting poor or spotty cell service reception recently.

According to Raul Mavis, IT Director for the County, Verizon's service is coming from the Red Mountain communication site. Several years ago they invested nearly one million dollars to install utility power to the site, and a few years ago they upgraded the site to support 4G/LTE service.

Mavis says that the current degradation of service could be attributed to the recent construction of a new communications tower, which was erected close to the time that reports of diminished quality of service began. The tower is likely causing interference with their antennas.

He said that Verizon is working in partnership with the tower owner/operator (GovNet). Once the tower construction is completed, Verizon intends to install their antennas on the tower, thus improving the quality of service. The work is expected to be completed in about two months.

If you would like to register your concern about current cell service through Verizon, you can call them at 866.892.7957



Artwork by Lee Katzenbach