



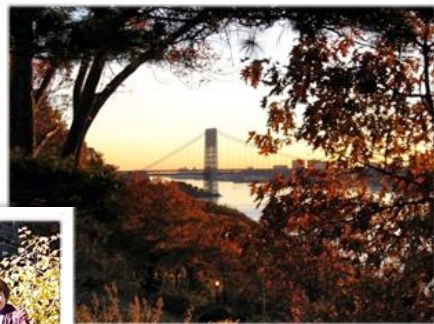
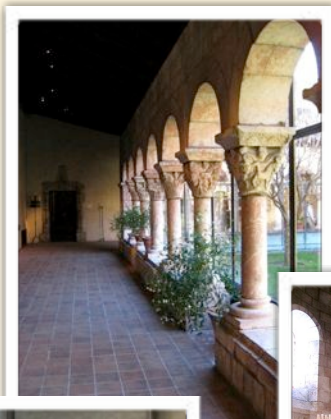
# LA CONCHA

Newsletter of American Pilgrims on the Camino

[www.americanpilgrims.com](http://www.americanpilgrims.com)

December 2010

## Finding the Camino in New York



The destination of our pilgrim journeys came to the U.S. in November. The Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York featured the Romanesque Cathedral of Santiago, medieval Spain, and the Camino in events commemorating the famous cathedral's 800th anniversary.

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## Chair's Message – November 2010

Medieval pilgrims often carried an object that symbolized the motivation for their journey. In September, when I walked ten days on the Camino, I had two such objects in my pack: a dress tie and an award plaque.

Let me explain. The American Pilgrims Board asked me to meet once again with the Xacobeo Director, Ignacio Santos Cidrás, believing there is no substitute for face-to-face meetings to maintain the special relationship we have with the Xacobeo. Any meeting with the Xacobeo is important, but showing respect is especially important when meeting with its Director. Therefore, the tie was in order.

I also wanted to have something special to present to Don Ignacio that would remind him of American Pilgrims on the Camino. So I commissioned a small plaque engraved with the American Pilgrims logo and a simple message of thanks that I planned to give him.

After walking out of Oviedo to Pola de Allende, I went by bus and train to Melide so that I would get to my meeting in Santiago on time. I walked from Melide to Santiago. Typical Camino. I endured heat, rain, forest fire smoke, rugged terrain, closed albergues, extra unplanned distances, isolation, blisters, and tendonitis. Through it all, the tie and plaque sat quietly in my pack.

My meeting with Don Ignacio was excellent. Once again, he was generous with his time and a gracious listener. We talked about the plans each of our groups has for the future and sought ways to collaborate further. I felt semi-presentable in my tie.

The key moment was at the end of the meeting.



*American Pilgrims Chair Jim Eychaner presents plaque to Xacobeo Director Ignacio Santos Cidrás*

I told Don Ignacio that I wanted to personally thank him for his support and encouragement. I presented him with the plaque. It had been with me for 10 days on the Camino, and I told him I hoped that it now carried something of the spirit of the Camino. Don Ignacio was pleased and enthusiastically agreed to a photo of the two of us. "You carried this," he exclaimed, "just like the original pilgrims would carry something symbolic." I cherish the photo of that moment.

I also cherish the lessons I learned on my modest walk. The biggest lesson is how extraordinary you, the members of American Pilgrims, really are. You have walked or cycled in all seasons, from France or Portugal into Spain, often alone, enduring all the things I did, and more. You are truly extraordinary. It is my privilege to represent you.

*Thank you all!  
Jim Eychaner, Chair*

### Student Dues Reduction!

Effective immediately, annual dues for student memberships are reduced from \$25 to \$15. This membership category is available to full-time students who must provide the name of their educational institution to qualify. We hope this will encourage more students to become active members, participating at Gatherings, contributing to *La Concha*, and serving as hospitaleros. ♦



## Puget Sound Chapter News

### Green Lake Walk

The Puget Sound Chapter holds regular walks and potlucks to keep members connected and introduce new people to the Camino. On September 18, 2010, our walk was organized and hosted by eight-time Camino veteran, Jim Stelljes. Twenty pilgrims walked around Seattle's Green Lake and returned to Jim's home for tapas and wine. Each walk draws new people. We were happy to have six pilgrims from Oregon join us and hope a new chapter will grow out of their meeting here.

### Puget Sound Hospitalero Training

American Pilgrims on the Camino welcomed 18 new volunteer hospitaleros in a ceremony under bright October skies. This was the second training to take place away from the National Gathering and members came not only from Washington state, but also Oregon, Alaska, Arizona and Connecticut.



*Photo by Rebecca Andrews  
Seattle WA*

Camp Brotherhood in Mount Vernon, WA provided an albergue-like setting complete with bunk beds. Trainees received an unexpected Camino blessing from Father Treacy, one of the original founders of the camp whose mission is to promote understanding among faiths.

Shared meal preparation and a Saturday night bonfire complemented the training sessions. The trainers created a warm experience that embodied the philosophy of housing and feeding pilgrims along the Camino. Kathy Kennerly coordinated all the meals, while Francisco Chacon reminded new hospitaleros that they are joining a tradition of



*Photo by Jim Green  
Seattle WA*

hospitality that has been part of the Camino for over a thousand years. Jeanette Lansbergen's handmade chocolate scallop shells were a parting gift for participants.

Thanks to Puget Sound members Myrna Aavedal, Martha Crites and Jim Limardi, Dick and Jane Carter, Carol and Jim Green, Becky Andrews and Scott Shane and for their hard work in arranging the training, as well as furnishing and setting up the kitchen at Camp Brotherhood. Thanks also to the [Spanish Table](#) for their donation of food for the training.

Congratulations to our new hospitaleros: Myrna Aavedal, Becky Andrews, Dave Clemens, Carol Dragoo, Roy Dragoo, Carol Green, James Green, Susan Hooker, Margarita Jones, Dawn Lindholm, Linda Lindholm, Max Lindholm, Karen Montieth, Tannis Moore, Scott Shane, Marcia Shaver, Barbara Stahler and Greg Vargo. ♦

## 2011 - 14th Annual Gathering of Pilgrims

We hope you'll join us in beautiful Santa Barbara CA in March for our 14th Annual Gathering of Pilgrims. Our theme for 2011 is *Voices of the Camino, Past and Present.*

The Gathering is preceded by our popular two day Hospitalero Training, March 22-24. There will then be an Early Arrivals Reception on Thursday evening, the 24th; with the Gathering sessions beginning on Friday morning the 25th, continuing through Sunday morning the 27th. The Spiritual Retreat follows the conclusion of the Gathering and is scheduled for Sunday evening through Tuesday morning. As usual, you may register for one, two or all three

of these events. Our venue is once again the historic Mission Santa Barbara, with lodging and meals available on site.

Sessions will address such topics as young people on the Camino, the music of the *Codex Calixtinus*, learning a foreign language, Camino art history, the return of the Camino Cabaret, and more. On Friday, March 25, all hospitaleros who have served on the Camino are invited to a special lunch in appreciation for your volunteer service. In addition, our keynote address will celebrate 2011 as the 800th anniversary of the consecration of the Romanesque Cathedral at Santiago de Compostela.

Come share your Camino experiences with other pilgrims. Be inspired to return or to set out for the first time. Program details, registration, and exhibitor guidelines will be available by mid-December on the [American Pilgrims National Gatherings](http://www.americanpilgrims.com/gatherings) page of our website We will send an announcement when the registration forms are available. Please check frequently for updates and direct your questions to [gatherings@americanpilgrims.com](mailto:gatherings@americanpilgrims.com). ♦

*Photos of Mission Santa Barbara by  
Carolyn Affleck, Sechelt BC, Canada*





## In New York: Xacobeo 2010, Cathedral of Santiago de Compostela, and American Pilgrims on the Camino



XACOBEO 2010  
Galicia

The Metropolitan Museum of Art held a series of programs this fall commemorating next year's 800th anniversary of the consecration of the Cathedral of Santiago de Compostela. Sponsored by the [Xacobeo](#), this series culminated on November 14 with a special presentation featuring a full-scale 3D computer reconstruction of the medieval Romanesque cathedral and the town of Santiago de Compostela.



*The virtual cathedral beckons us to approach the altar.*

UCLA professor and project director, John Dagenais, led the "tour" through the virtual landscape of Santiago de Compostela and the cathedral in the 13th century. Professor Dagenais was joined by the Xacobeo Director, Ignacio Santos Cidrás, who introduced the program, and scholars involved in the project, including Professor Fernando López Alsina from Santiago de Compostela, Professor Emeritus John Williams of the University of Pittsburgh, and the Xacobeo's José Suárez Otero, an archaeologist. The program was a fascinating blend of medieval art and architecture and 21st century technology and led to the realization that like the Camino, the building

that is the destination of Camino pilgrims has also evolved over time.

Those of you who were unable to attend will have a second chance at the 2011 Gathering in Santa Barbara, where John Dagenais and José Suárez Otero will recap the New York presentation.

The virtual cathedral presentation was only one of several lectures and musical events at the



*Lionheart performs sacred medieval music  
at the Cloisters.*

Metropolitan Museum of Art that focused on pilgrimage and Santiago de Compostela. A highlight of the series took place in the Fuentidueña Chapel at The Cloisters, the branch of the Metropolitan Art Museum dedicated to the art and architecture of medieval Europe, when [Lionheart](#), an a capella male choral ensemble, performed vocal selections from the *Codex Calixtinus* and other music of medieval and early Renaissance Spain. More than one audience participant observed that if they closed their eyes while listening to the exquisitely blended voices, they could easily transport themselves out of 21st century New York to medieval Spain.

The American Pilgrims Board held its annual meeting in New York City in November to coincide with this special program. The Board is very grateful to Board member Bill Edwards and his wife Amei Wallach for facilitating this meeting and for their gracious hospitality. The Board also wishes to thank American Pilgrim members who traveled to New York to be part of the programs celebrating 800 years of the Cathedral of Santiago de Compostela. ♦

## The Beggars' Dinner

By John Barrett  
Oak Park IL

On a cold grey dawn with mist swirling over the snow we set out for the village of Burguete. The Frenchman – I will call him Dad, because he was hiking with his daughter – found the bakery and sure enough, as he promised, it opened up just after 8 am. We all had coffee and warm, just-baked rolls, cream, and chocolate. What a great breakfast!

The snow was still deep on the Camino, so we stayed on the road all the way to Espinal. The day lightened but heavy, dull grey clouds still persisted. I found that I was walking at the same pace as Dad and Daughter. The last 9.4 kilometers into Larrasoña was fairly level, and we hiked it together. In town, we found a nice municipal albergue with the door open but nobody home, so we all trooped in and claimed a bunk.

The hospitalera came by later to stamp our credentials. She gave us some bad news. It was

Monday, and the only restaurant and only shop in town were both closed on Mondays. There was no way to get food. She herself gave us some spaghetti, half a loaf of bread, and two cans of tuna – at a price of 8 euros – to try to feed 16 people.

Dad, who has hiked the Camino before, decided that he would go door to door and beg for food for the hungry pilgrims. He returned with 4 eggs, 2 cans of beer, 6 cans of soda, some more spaghetti and half a kilo of cheese. It made me realize what it is like to be given food when you have none.

All of us pitched in and made dinner, and all 16 of us ate outside on the patio. My job was to divide the half a loaf of bread into 16 equal pieces and to help wash up. It was great – we all helped and talked and laughed and enjoyed another wonderful pilgrim dinner.

As I was then, I am struck by the importance of community, the community helping pilgrims and

pilgrims sharing what they have with each other. I realized that we need to help each other “walk the mile and bear the load” to fully appreciate the importance that we all have in each other’s lives. ♦



*The Beggars' Dinner*  
*Photo by John Barrett.*

## Now Available: Our Distinctive Logo On Patches and Pins

A new benefit of membership in American Pilgrims is the choice of either a distinctive enamel pin, with which many of you are already familiar, or the new embroidered cloth patch, both of which are featured to the right. The patch measures approximately three inches in diameter and the pin is almost an inch high by one and a quarter inches wide. The membership forms now offer a choice of one patch or one pin, to be sent at no charge, for each new household membership or each new student membership. Those new members who have not yet received their first membership pin or patch will be contacted for their choice.

For those who would like to receive additional pins or patches, please contact [Pins & Patches at American Pilgrims](#). We are able to send them for a donation of \$6.00 each. Pins and patches will also be available at the Gathering in Santa Barbara. Please contact [Pins & Patches](#) with your questions. ♦



*Patch*



*Pin*

## Tip Board

Suggestions from and for pilgrims.  
Please send us yours.

- ♦ I carry a tennis ball with me on all of my (four so far) pilgrimages. It is a great self-massage tool. Every evening, I roll the ball under each foot, while applying pressure to the ball. I also sit or lie down on it to roll the ball around my hips and back, wherever I feel I need it most. - *Marlena Lambert, Salt Lake City UT*
- ♦ Plastic hooks that attach to walls with suction cups are light weight and keep your clothes dry while you shower in some of those tiny albergue shower stalls that have no place to put your clothes. - *Annette Argall, Baltimore MD*
- ♦ Bring trekking sandals instead of (or in addition to) flip flops as the second set of footwear because you can walk in trekking sandals if you happen to get blisters or if the weather is very hot. - *Herbert Medina, Los Angeles CA*
- ♦ If you are doing the stage over the Pyrenees from St. Jean Pied de Port, consider walking an extra 3 kilometers after Roncesvalles to Burguete so that you can stay at the [Hostal Burguete](#) where Ernest Hemingway stayed. A double room is not too expensive and chances are that you'll get a much better, well-deserved night's sleep at the hostel than in the albergue in Roncesvalles. - *Herbert Medina, Los Angeles CA*
- ♦ To save space and minimize weight, consider carrying a sleep sack instead of a sleeping bag. I have walked four Caminos with only a silk sleep sack. Most albergues have blankets, so even if the nights are cold, I am still cozy. - *Martha López, Sacramento CA*

## iBuen Provecho!

### Paella

Having served as hospitalera in Bercianos del Real Camino in July, Elvie Nelson from Salt Lake City UT is pleased to share one of the many recipes upon which she and Cheryl Grasmoe from North Oaks MN relied as they assisted José Antonio García in the daily preparation of meals in large quantities. "Served with fresh crisp salad, bread, and fruit for dessert, the midday meal was always well received and made the pilgrims feel at home." Quantities and size of paella pan can vary, depending on number of servings desired.

- ♦ Fry pieces of chicken, rabbit and ribs (chopped Spanish style in small pieces) in olive oil for about 20 minutes.
- ♦ Add chopped red and green bell peppers and garlic. A few minutes later add ½ can tomatoes and fresh chopped tomatoes. Add also 1 T sweet paprika, saffron and hot chicken broth (twice the amount of rice that will be added). Add Italian flat green beans. Cook this for 20 minutes.
- ♦ When it is bubbling at the edge of the pan, add the rice and cook for about 20 minutes. Decorate with fresh rosemary and lemon.
- ♦ You can add whatever vegetables you have available – zucchini, squash, peas, artichokes – but the important thing to note is that a few go a long way.



*Albergue Paella  
Photo by Annette Argall  
Baltimore MD*



## My Camino as Haiku

My Camino as Haiku is a regular feature in *La Concha*. Haiku is a form of Japanese poetry of three unrhymed lines. The first, second, and third lines have five, seven, and five syllables, respectively. We encourage you to apply the format to your Camino experience. As you see from the various haiku below, much can be conveyed in a few words.

*In luminescence  
Verdant green, coo, coo bird song  
Camino in Spring*

-- \* --

*Walk in solitude  
Infinite Presence within  
Camino beckons*

*By Rose Sardisco  
Alpine CA*



*Photo by Rose Sardisco*



*Feet, earth meet again  
Road snakes into distant fields  
Eyes close, snores begin*

*By Sandy Lenthall  
Williamsburg VA*

*Photo by Sandy Lenthall*

*July pilgrimage  
My boots meet baked, ancient ground  
Sounds like my heart beat*

*By Marty Robinson  
Friday Harbor WA*

*Inspired by nine Julys since 2001 walking Caminos Francés, Portugués, Inglés, Primitivo, San Salvador, Finisterre, Muxia, the Chemin from Le Puy, the Arles route from Oloron Ste. Marie, and as an hospitalera in Ourense. The Camino is my joy, my passion, and my annual opportunity to connect with my soul. -- Marty Robinson*



## Why? Did It Change You?

By *Eva Stramer Nichols*  
Truckee CA

Those are probably the most common questions asked of a returning pilgrim. For some, the answers are easy – for most of us, probably not.

My reasons for embarking on this journey are difficult to explain. It was not a life-long dream of mine. Actually, I didn't even know about the Camino until I visited my daughter in Biarritz three years ago. She had told me about the wonderful little village of St. Jean Pied de Port in the Pyrenees, so we lunched there on a beautiful August day. This was my first encounter with the pilgrims and the pilgrimage.

More than a year had passed when, on a trip back from Denmark, I came across a book in the Copenhagen Airport about a Swedish woman's pilgrimage. I read it from cover to cover on the flight back to California. As I stepped off the plane in San Francisco, I was saying to myself: "I think I want to walk the Camino."



*Good Vibes Vision*

© *Eva Stramer Nichols* 11/10/2009

The following day I stopped at the newly opened REI store. A large poster at the entrance announced a presentation the following evening by Susan Alcorn, author of *Camino Chronicle: Walking to*

*Santiago*. I felt like fate was giving me a big nudge! Of course, I attended, and by the end of it I was convinced I had to go!

A few weeks later I mentioned my Camino plans to my Danish girlfriend who told me her friend Vibeke had walked the Camino and written a book



*Pyrenees I*

© *Eva Stramer Nichols* 9/10/2009

titled *Walking with God and Blisters*. Reading the book and corresponding with her prepared me to embark not only on walking the Camino, but on an entire year of traveling, painting, and writing!

Did it change me? Yes and no. I now know that daunting tasks can be accomplished, one step at a time – literally. I also know that what really matters has nothing to do with material things - human kindness and generosity are everything. The feeling of being one with my fellow pilgrims and the universe on the Camino was overwhelming and awe-inspiring at times. We are all on the Camino together, we all have the same goal, but we have different ways of getting there. I have always known that, but now I really know it.

For information regarding my paintings, contact me at [eva@mbay.net](mailto:eva@mbay.net) or visit my website at [www.beautyonlocation.com](http://www.beautyonlocation.com). ♦

## The Substance of Memories

By *Cedric Gifford*  
*Acworth GA*

Adventures are the substance of memories. I recently returned home from a two-month stay in the hospital. The second month was for rehabilitation, so I walked the halls to regain strength and balance. It was during that time that memories from walking El Camino a year ago cheered me along.

I would stop in the ward waiting room to rest with my back to the TV. On the opposite wall were two paintings of vineyards stretching across hills to white buildings with red tile roofs. I was on the Camino once again. I recalled God pushing me up the hills and singing with me as we walked together in the valley flatlands. I remembered my son Nathan who would leave his pack at the top of some of the longer grades to backtrack and carry mine. I felt again the love of other pilgrims who, with smiles, encouraged me on

the way to Santiago de Compostela to celebrate my eightieth birthday. There were kindnesses such as a cup of hot tea at the albergue or a dry shirt a pilgrim had left behind. I never would have made the hundred miles without the love of God, my son, and young people.

Then there was the Pilgrim Gathering last March at Winter Park FL, where my wife and I had the joy of meeting so many of you. I doubt that I shall be able to do another Camino, but perhaps I will attend another Gathering not too far from Atlanta. My conclusion is this: seek out the Way and make it now, not putting it off until tomorrow. One never knows when the unique experience and the wonderful memories of El Camino will provide that little bit of encouragement needed to continue life to the finish line. ♦

*Pilgrim on the Meseta*  
*Photo by Richard Mallory*  
*Baltimore MD*

## Calling All Octogenarians

In our next issue of *La Concha*, we would like to feature submissions from our members who will be turning 80 in 2011, or who have already reached or passed that venerable age. We have been inspired by Cedric's enthusiastic contributions to our newsletter and to the Gathering, especially the Camino Cabaret! So, those of you Eighty and Better – and you know who you are – please share your brief impressions, poems, sketches, whatever brings you closer to the Camino. ♦



## Meandering to Jerusalem

It's been a year since Mike Metras' *4,800 Miles to Santiago* appeared in *La Concha*. In May, we passed on the news that he and Petra Wolf had reached Santiago and were headed to Arles, France, where they stopped walking in June.

Mike's most recent report reached us in September after they had taken three months off to renew their spirits in the mountains and by the ocean in California. They have changed the emphasis of their pilgrimage from walking east to meandering to Jerusalem. Henceforth, they will follow the path that draws them, whether on foot or in a bus, train, car, or boat, whether it is east, north, south, or west. When they come to a crossroads, Mike says they will decide which way to go - and it might not always be the shortest way to Jerusalem. "The journey is more the destination than before." You can still follow Mike and Petra at [www.walkingeast.com](http://www.walkingeast.com). ♦

## Camino Duality

By Andrew Brown  
Salem OR

On the Camino one has the feeling of being in many places at once. On the one hand, you are walking through a hauntingly beautiful, alien landscape filled with the deep soul of history and innumerable stories long-forgotten to time. On the other, you are immersed in a sea rich with people from throughout the world, conveying a sense of imminent present. This duality of experience blends to invoke a sense of being in many places at once. It requires a rare combination of bravery and innocent wonder to walk among the old places in the happy company of present souls. This, to me, is the essence of the Camino experience. ♦



Photo by Andrew Brown

## The Pilgrim

By Sheila Torres  
San Jose CA

Gathered in my rucksack  
Are all the pieces  
I could find  
Of this solitary life  
That I call mine.

The gift of love  
Returned unopened,  
A quiet heart,  
An old soul,  
A haunting melody,  
One last dance,  
The scent  
Of love's sweet breath  
Upon my face,  
A memory  
That time has not erased.

Much have I witnessed,  
Some sad, that's true,  
But I do not judge.  
For I am but a pilgrim,  
Passing through.

Walking, then, with Courage  
and Kindness,  
Never ceasing to walk in  
Wonder.

-- Ji Aoi Isshi

Submitted by Kathy Kennerly  
Forth Worth TX

## A Vision Through the Mist

By Daniel De Kay  
Occidental CA

We have been walking now since late summer and are camped on the banks of the River Carrión. Across from us is the monastery of San Zoilo. This morning, as I stirred the embers of last night's fire back to life, I noticed a brilliant blue flash out over the river. It was a kingfisher, darting in and out of the shadows along the riverbank. A mist rose from the river's slow-moving waters and the pungent smoke of burning leaves thrown into our cooking fires slowly drifted up into the day's new sky.

Elisabeth, a Silesian woman, has been in labor all night; I have been attending to her. My stock of herbs has been of great use, and once again I thank the memory of Sylvie who taught me their uses. I have washed her with lavender and strengthened her contractions with pennyroyal. Her labor was long but not too difficult. After the baby was born I gave Elisabeth a mix of nettle to stimulate milk and hops to help her rest.

The new mother is a strong young woman, but this pilgrimage has not been easy for her, and her time of labor has made her homesick. She has

named her child Erica in memory of the hardy purple-flowered plant of her homeland. The child has bright blue eyes and dark hair, with long, curly lashes. I believe that if she lives she will be a delight, for she sighs with such sweetness, her breath is very soft, and she smells like purity itself. I wonder if I shall give birth to such a child one day.

The child's father was Johannes, a sturdy man of about twenty-five. He was drowned while crossing a fast-moving stream in the Aubrac. The current caught him and he was swept into a nest of sunken branches from which he could not escape. Since then I have befriended Elisabeth, though we do not share a common language.

We had planned to continue walking today but I will advise Father Marot that we should wait a day so that Elisabeth can regain her strength. I will give her a strong nettle tea mixed with nut mash. The monks at the monastery

say that tomorrow's walk is along a narrow stream; perhaps the path will be soft, lined with grasses and useful herbs. ♦

*We appreciate Daniel's sharing with us this vignette from his forthcoming novel.*



*Stone bridge over the River Carrión.  
Photo by Richard Mallory  
Baltimore MD*

## Walk with Beauty (Navajo Prayer)

As I walk, as I walk  
The universe is walking with me  
In beauty it walks before me  
In beauty it walks behind me

In beauty it walks below me  
In beauty it walks above me  
Beauty is on every side  
As I walk, I walk with beauty



## Passing Through Fuenterroble?

If you plan to walk the Vía de la Plata in 2011, you might want to pace yourself in order to pass through Fuenterroble de Salvatierra to participate in one of their many one-day or longer pilgrimages, organized by Father Blas, or Don Blas as he's known by many. Members of American Pilgrims have an open invitation to join them whenever we're in the area, and we've just received the updated schedule for the first half of 2011.

Of special note are the local activities scheduled for February 12 and 13, the first being a work day on the Vía de la Plata and the second a festival dedicated to the local slaughter of pigs in Guijuelo (6 km from Fuenterroble), source of some of the best *jamón ibérico de bellota* and other pork products in Spain. They also organize two very moving pilgrimages related to Holy Week, *Vía Crucis* (Way of the Cross) and *Vía Lucis* (Way of Light) on April 22 and 30. Many of these processions are accompanied by burros pulling carts laden with large wooden statues, and all include music, camaraderie, and always plenty of good food.

In July Don Blas will take burros, carts, statues, and pilgrims to Norway for two weeks on the Camino de San Olav! This could be terrific - and we're welcome to participate!

For details on these activities and many others, visit [www.viadelaplata-fuenterroble.com](http://www.viadelaplata-fuenterroble.com) and click on Programa 2010-2011. (When looking at dates, the day and month are inverted.) If you have difficulty with Spanish or need help finding

more information, contact

[membership@americanpilgrims.com](mailto:membership@americanpilgrims.com).

While recently serving as an hospitalera there, one of our members had the opportunity to participate in a two-day pilgrimage with six carts, ten burros, and 100 or so pilgrims. She reports that it was exciting, challenging, and that it heightened her appreciation and understanding of pilgrimage. She felt it was a privilege to meet Don Blas, who proved true to his reputation for kindness, hospitality, and respect for all - a man of vision, serving the people of his pueblos. All are welcome in Fuenterroble. ♦



*Don Blas prepares a wagon for the march (upper left).*

*Pilgrims setting out from Fuenterroble (below)*

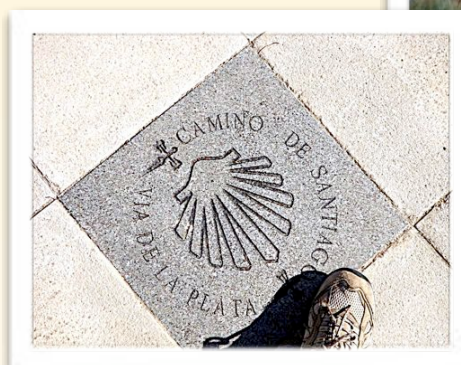
## Camino Signs

There is no end to the variety of yellow arrows on the Camino. Whether their maker is well-known or unknown, they have the same purpose: to guide pilgrims.

### *Vía de la Plata*



*Restaurant sign in Pau, France  
Photo by Marlena Lambert,  
Salt Lake City UT*



*Camino Francés  
Photos by Andrew Brown,  
Salem OR*





## Member Survey Results

We recently conducted our first-ever member survey. To the many of you who responded, thank you! Here is a brief summary of what you told us.

- ♦ We are a mature group. Most of you are between 60 and 69 years of age, with 47 to 59 a close second.
- ♦ Most of you traveled the Camino once, in one trip, usually on the Camino Francés.
- ♦ By far, the majority of you walked. About the same number reported a solo Camino or a Camino with a single companion.
- ♦ When we asked which of the many routes American Pilgrims should support, the majority picked the Camino Francés.
- ♦ Most of you love or really like *La Concha*, our newsletter. Our web site is outstanding or above average to most of you. Few show enthusiasm for our online forums or our grants.
- ♦ As for priorities for American Pilgrims, you chose our credential, the web site, and support for the infrastructure of the Camino.
- ♦ About half of those who responded said they had attended a Gathering. Those who had, not cited distance as the main reason for not attending. If given the opportunity, the majority of you would attend a local event.
- ♦ Those interested in logo items chose shirts, pins/patches, and T-shirts.

This information is invaluable to the Board of American Pilgrims because it shows what is going well and where we could improve. ♦

## Canadian Hospitalero Blogspot

As a prelude to their planned Canadian hospitalero website, Tom Friesen, hospitalero par excellence, is delighted to announce that he and Mary Virtue have developed a blog. They invite you to visit [Canadian Hospitaleros Blogspot](#). We'll look forward to seeing Tom at the Camino Cabaret in Santa Barbara! ♦

## Camino Video

A member from Ashland OR, Elin Babcock, would like to share a link to an i-movie she made of her recent trip on the Camino from Sarria to Santiago and on to Finisterra. You can see her film at [THE CAMINO 2010](#). Enjoy!

## Contributors

A special thank you to all the writers, photographers, and artists who contributed to this edition of *La Concha*. Your talents are much appreciated.

- |                   |                   |                       |
|-------------------|-------------------|-----------------------|
| ♦ Carolyn Affleck | ♦ Sheila Torres   | ♦ Martha López        |
| ♦ Rebecca Andrews | ♦ Jim Eychaner    | ♦ Richard Mallory     |
| ♦ Annette Argall  | ♦ Tom Friesen     | ♦ Herbert Medina      |
| ♦ Elin Babcock    | ♦ Cedric Gifford  | ♦ Elvie Nelson        |
| ♦ John Barrett    | ♦ Jim Green       | ♦ Eva Stramer Nichols |
| ♦ Andrew Brown    | ♦ Kathy Kennerly  | ♦ Marty Robinson      |
| ♦ Martha Crites   | ♦ Marlena Lambert | ♦ Rose Sardisco       |
| ♦ Daniel De Kay   | ♦ Sandy Lenthall  |                       |

## Association News

### Board Member Changes

The Board of American Pilgrims is sorry to bid farewell to Martha López, who leaves the Board to pursue other goals. Martha's enthusiastic participation on the Board will be missed, but she will continue to be a key participant in the production of *La Concha* and *Hospitalero News*, and she will undoubtedly continue to serve as an hospitalera in Spain, as she has for many years. Martha walked the Vía de la Plata from Seville to Santiago earlier this year, so who knows what her next Camino challenge will be?

We welcome former Board member Carlos Mentley back to the American Pilgrims Board. A professor of Spanish at Lander University in South Carolina, frequent traveler on many Camino routes, leader of student groups to the Camino, and presenter at the 2010 Gathering, Carlos is immersed in all things Camino, and will organize the 2012 Gathering in Winter Park FL.

We wish Martha all the best in her new endeavors and look forward to working with Carlos once again. ♦

### American Pilgrims Awards Grant Funds

For the second consecutive year, American Pilgrims has awarded grant funding to successful applicants. At the November American Pilgrims Board meeting, the Board voted to approve a \$4,000 grant request from George Greenia of the College of William and Mary and John Moore of the University of Alabama to support their work in bringing together scholars and students for pilgrimage studies in a multi-disciplinary initiative called the North American Camino Consortium.

The consortium is a new effort to promote scholarship and direct experience on the Camino among university professors, graduate students, and undergraduates. The goal is to bring hundreds of new pilgrims to Spain in a carefully mentored program of study and enrichment that will include coursework at the University of Santiago de Compostela and time on the Camino. Professors Greenia and Moore will convene an initial workshop at Georgetown University early in 2011, bringing together professors in the fields of religion, anthropology, Spanish language and literature, art history, medieval history, and sociology to invite their participation in this new pilgrimage studies program.

American Pilgrims on the Camino looks forward to expanding its reach within the North American university community and to meeting the many new pilgrims we expect will result from this initiative. ♦

## Welcome, New Members!

We are pleased to welcome the following new members who joined American Pilgrims on the Camino between August and October 2010. We look forward to meeting you at future Gatherings and events.

- |                              |                             |                             |                         |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------------|
| ♦ Norman Berkley             | ♦ Victoria & David Drummond | ♦ Dawn & Max Lindholm       | ♦ Byron Purves          |
| ♦ Mary Squire Board          | ♦ Susan Hooker              | ♦ Lauren Lindholm           | ♦ Alexander Rodlach     |
| ♦ Andrew & Kathleen Brown    | ♦ Denis Houde               | ♦ Cinnamon & Chad Martin    | ♦ David Rudesill        |
| ♦ Heidi Campini              | ♦ Michael & Patricia King   | ♦ Mary Menconi              | ♦ Hank & Geri Ryan      |
| ♦ Deborah Ann Carvalho       | ♦ Richard Lawrence          | ♦ Tannis Moore              | ♦ Vicky & Phillip Rynda |
| ♦ Tom & Suzanne Crotty       | ♦ Benjamin & Miok Lee       | ♦ Richard Ollivier          | ♦ Susan Senko           |
| ♦ Alan & Kathleen Cunningham | ♦ Spencer Lindholm          | ♦ Kathie Peltz              | ♦ Norman Snyder         |
| ♦ Cheryl Darby               | ♦ Linda Lindholm            | ♦ James & Robin Prendergast | ♦ Barbara Stahler       |
|                              |                             |                             | ♦ William Ware          |
|                              |                             |                             | ♦ Daniel Young          |





*The mission of American Pilgrims on the Camino  
is to foster the enduring tradition of the Camino by supporting its infrastructure,  
by gathering pilgrims together, and by providing information  
and encouragement to past and future pilgrims.*

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## Do You Have Camino Stories or Events to Share?

We would be pleased to report on Camino-related activities in your part of the country. Tell us about your plans, and we'll try to announce them in *La Concha*.

In addition to announcements and news, please tell us in 400 words or less about a part of the Camino you would like to share with your fellow pilgrims. Consider a photo, a poem, or a new found understanding of an idea – a pilgrim's perspective. Visit [Newsletter](#) on our website for suggestions and guidelines.

Submission deadline for the next issue is January 31, 2011. We welcome your questions, comments, and submissions at [newsletter@americanpilgrims.com](mailto:newsletter@americanpilgrims.com). You can also submit to the street address provided below. ¡Buen Camino!

Your Newsletter Team -

*Cherie Pagett, Annette Argall,  
Martha López, Zita Macy*

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## Board of Directors 2010

Jim Eychaner, Chair  
Cherie Pagett, Vice Chair  
Annette Argall, Secretary  
Ann Howley, Treasurer  
Daniel De Kay, Camino Support

Bill Edwards, Communications  
Marlena Lambert, Volunteers  
Bill Matthews, Gathering  
Herbert Medina, Grants  
Carlos Mentley, Gathering

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Cherie & Annette  
Cherie & Annette  
Herbert  
Marlena  
Daniel  
Bill & Marlena

## Other Key Personnel

Association Manager: Zita Macy  
Credentials Distribution: Rosann McCullough  
Webmaster: Gene McCullough

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