



LA CONCHA

Newsletter of American Pilgrims on the Camino

www.americanpilgrims.com

September 2012

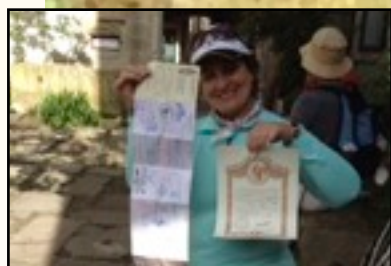
"Life is not about waiting for the storms to pass,



*The sun does come out eventually!
No matter what.
Marilyn Crang, Truckee CA*



*Leaving Valcarlos for Roncesvalles
David Jennings & Monica Armanino,
Kings Beach CA*



*Mission Accomplished
Donne Paine, Hilton Head SC*

On the way to O Cebreiro • Mark Cobb, Asheville NC

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...it's about learning how to dance in the rain."

— Vivian Greene

Dear Fellow Pilgrims,

Sometimes the gifts of the Camino are immediate. Other times they arrive only later, well after we have left Santiago and returned home. One of the great gifts that the Camino has granted me, both immediately and over time, is a renewed appreciation of patience.

By patience I mean the capacity to see, hear, touch, taste, and smell as fully as possible the events of our lives. It is that active engagement with and living in the moment, offering us an alternate way to experience time.

It is the polar opposite of the impatience that can overcome a pilgrim. How many times have we seen it on the Camino? Wake up before 5 a.m. and start walking when it is still an hour before dawn; walk directly through the towns on the day's itinerary, bypassing cafés, churches, and other attractions in the headlong race to arrive at the next albergue; rush to be the first in the shower, at the wash basin, and on the clothesline; wait – impatiently – for a restaurant to open by 8 p.m., and then hurry through supper in order to get back to the albergue before curfew. It is pilgrimage by the clock!

The consequences are tragic. Impatience, that urge to move on to the next place or event, erases the meaning and the importance of the here and now. Sometimes we do not even take time for each other.

The gift that the Camino has presented to me is the patient moment. It is the experience of the moment as rich, full, and complete in itself. It is an experience that makes me want to stay where I am and take everything in. From the jovial fellowship of a community meal in Grañón to the soothing tranquility of a quiet corner in León cathedral, from the simple pleasure of walking hand-in-hand



A patient moment at San Antón.

Photo by Luke Rhoad, student, Erskine College, Due West NC

with a loved one to the serendipitous realization on a rainy Monday morning that it is indeed good to be alive: these are moments from which I do not want to escape. No, I want to savor them to the fullest, for it is in these moments that life as it can and should be has touched me.

This has been one of the Camino's gifts to me. I hope that your Caminos will have been just as generous to you! ♦

Ultreia,

Carlos Mentley

Chair

Have patience with all things, but chiefly have patience with yourself.

—Saint Francis de Sales

In Search of a Chapter?

The spirit of the Camino stays with us well beyond our return, and many of us miss the Camino camaraderie. If you would like to get together with fellow pilgrims during the year for outings, Camino presentations, and a variety of culinary adventures, visit our [Local Chapters](#) web page. There might be a chapter near you. If there isn't and you would like to explore the possibility of forming one, contact our Chapter Liaison at chapters@americanpilgrims.com.

Boston Chapter

We are up and running – well, walking. Pre-chapter we identified co-chairs and an eager group of past and aspiring peregrinos. Our first outing: A six-mile walk through the urban wilds of the Arnold Arboretum, Boston's horticultural gem. St. James' Gate (in Dublin) was one of the traditional stepping off points for Irish pilgrims, and our "local" James' Gate pub served as such for the Boston Chapter.

Among the dozen or so amongst us was Jason McKenna who had literally stepped off the plane from his pilgrimage only two days earlier! He epitomized the enthusiasm that most of us felt after returning home from our pilgrimages - a



Goldsmith Reservation at Andover

delightful addition to the group. Also joining us was Nathan Margason, a recent transplant from Virginia, known through his exquisite Vimeo montage of Camino photos.

July 29 we gathered at Goldsmith Reservation in Andover MA, a venue chosen to accommodate the growing number of New Hampshire pilgrims interested in connecting to all things Camino!

Great discussions and pilgrim pizza concluded our walk. ♦

Meg Holmes & Nancy Nee Hanifin - Co-Coordiators

Texas Gulf Coast Chapter

Howdy, Pilgrims! We are really on the move in the Houston area! At an early summer pot-luck supper, we had 27 members and guests, including seasoned pilgrims, some soon to be leaving for the Camino, and others gathering information for a future trip. The lively occasion included many questions as well as shared experiences and tips. It's always so much fun to talk with others who "get it."

On July 27, an impressively large group of Caminophiles gathered at Tinto's Restaurant in Houston to celebrate St James' Day in style, enjoying conversation, tapas, and drinks.

This fall, when the weather cools, we will enjoy another group hike. Meanwhile, we have some exciting events scheduled and in the works; and new members are jumping in with ideas and volunteering to host even more. ♦

Mary Jane Miller & Jeff Stys - Co-Coordiators



"Getting it" at our early summer get-together

Chapter News

Southern California Chapter

On a beautiful morning in mid-July, we attended Mass at Santiago de Compostela Church in Lake Forest. The site of a Galician granite pilgrimage cross, the church served as the perfect spot to commence our 12-mile walk, on trails and city streets, to San Juan Capistrano Mission!

The Camino spirit was very much alive as 70 experienced or would-be pilgrims, from six counties and four states, ages 10 to mid-70's, walked and shared their stories, 24 having done the Camino and some planning to do so either this year or next. Those considering the Camino were especially interested and appreciative.

In San Juan Capistrano, 40 of us enjoyed a delicious Mexican dinner at El Adobe Restaurant. Everyone left eager to know the details of the next chapter event.

Please enjoy the following YouTube link that truly reflects the Camino spirit and this joy-filled day. http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O_V2DThMHZk. ♦

Anita Baroldi & Marla Keese - Co-Coordiators



Galician granite pilgrimage cross, gift from cathedral in Santiago de Compostela

Portlandia Chapter

The Portlandia Chapter enjoyed a well-attended stroll on Sunday afternoon, July 22, and then met afterwards at Lucky Lab pub to welcome home Tina and Ray Dippert who had recently returned from walking the Camino Francés. Tina shared with the group her delicious Torta de Santiago, having found the template for the traditional Templar cross that decorates the torta in a Santiago hardware store at the end of their pilgrimage.

On July 25, Rev. Patrick Brennan, Pastor of St. Mary's Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception in Portland, offered a warm, welcoming homily and special blessings for the pilgrims before concluding the Feast of St. James Mass. From the choir loft, with a bird's eye view of the congregation, Robin Pigott counted 65 attendees, far more than the usual 20-25 Mass participants. When Fr. Pat asked how many had walked the Camino and how many were preparing to do so, a surprising number of hands were raised!

Do join our Camino activities! ♦

Kathy Kennerly & Heather Knight - Co-Coordiators

New Chapters in Orlando and Phoenix

The Camino spirit is alive and well, expanding across the country! Our two newest chapters are in Orlando, under the leadership of Deborah Schaben and Sarah Van Treeck, and the Valley of the Sun chapter in Phoenix, co-coordinated by Aleida Howard and Laura Prato. They're already very active and have listed events on the Local Chapters page of the American Pilgrims website.

Xacobeo Continues Support of American Pilgrims

American Pilgrims is honored - indeed, thrilled - to have twice received funding support from [Xacobeo](#) Galicia since the first of this year. Their commitment highlights our long-term collaboration with this public company of the Xunta de Galicia (the Galician government) as well as their recognition of the importance of our mission on the Camino.



Rosa Vázquez Santos, whom many of you met at the Gathering in Winter Park, is the Xacobeo's liaison to American Pilgrims and other associations of friends of the Camino around the world. She will be speaking at the 2012 [Annual Symposium for Pilgrimage Studies](#), to be held next month at the College of William and Mary in Williamsburg VA. ♦

Pilgrim Arrivals in Santiago through August 2012

U.S. Numbers Rise Dramatically over 2011

Total number of pilgrims arrived in Santiago January 1 - August 31 2012: **141,360**.

This figure represents a four percent increase over the 136,006 pilgrims arriving during the same period in 2011.

The United States ranks sixth overall with a total of 4,539 pilgrims having arrived during the first eight months of 2012, a 66% increase over the same period in 2011! Among English speaking countries, however, the United States has by far the most pilgrims this

year, Ireland running a distant second with 2,758.

During the above referenced period, American Pilgrims has issued 3,383 credentials, clear indications that we are fulfilling our mission. ♦

Sources: www.johnniewalker-santiago.blogspot.com

Data provided by:
Rosann & Gene McCullough,
Denver CO

More Chapter News

Northern California Chapter

We have been quite active this summer! In June, we went on a seven-mile hike along the American River near Sacramento. The weather was beautiful and the subsequent bountiful potluck included a tasty tortilla española prepared by our event coordinator Samson Elsbernd.

Our St. James' Day celebration on July 21 included 45 pilgrims and friends, gathering at Mission Dolores in San Francisco, then walking to St James Parish Church. Following Mass, we walked to Picaro Restaurant for tapas and conversation (all excellent).

In October, at the Church of the Resurrection, Pleasant Hill CA, we will host a



St. James' Day Celebration.

potluck and our Returnee Celebration of the pilgrimage undertaken by chapter members in 2012. We hope to organize regularly scheduled walks beginning in October, the first of which will be in San Francisco. ♦

Rennie Archibald & Bob Holm
- Co-Coordinators

Canine Goldbrickers

By Allan Garland, Clearwater FL

My wife and I set out from St. Jean Pied de Port on May 4 and, after 38 days of walking and one day of rest, walked into the plaza of the Cathedral de Santiago de Compostela on June 11, 2012.

Along the way, we encountered three sheepdogs between Rabanal del Camino and Foncebadón. About noon on May 30, we reached a spring-fed mountain oasis. I grabbed the opportunity to soak and restart my day with “new feet.”

Thus rejuvenated, I joined my wife on a bench tucked under a single shade tree, a little bit of

heaven on such a hot day. Just then, two large sheep dogs emerged from a herd of sheep that had eased up the mountainside. With their eyes on our shade, they were heading with all due deliberation for our location, and hardly even looked at us.

I told my wife, “Don’t show fear” to which she said, “Too late.” The big white walked up to us, then around the tree and flopped down in the shade. The red stood in front of my backpack and stared directly at it. I had no doubt of what he expected of me and moved promptly to get it out of his way. Immediately, he joined his buddy and flopped down on our side of the tree. He was

barely down 30 seconds when I heard him utter the canine equivalent of “Gosh darn it, he’s found us,” which could also be rendered as “!@*? @#!!”

Suddenly, out of the same herd, appeared an even bigger brown sheepdog – obviously the boss. He stalked up to the other two and, without so much as a growl, stared them out of their comfortable repose. I could see that he had no time for goldbrickers and they

understood that whatever he expected of them, they were obligated to comply. They instantly jumped up, then casually walked over to the water trough as though that was their intention all along. They had just stopped up by the bench to visit with the passing pilgrims.

The pilgrims? They were thrilled with the intelligence of those creatures and their working relationship, so similar to what one would see in the human world. Then, they returned to the trail. ♦

Photos by Judy and Allan Garland



White dog trying to get cool



Camino Fauna

Your photos in response to our request were varied, amazing, surprising, typical, amusing, haunting, evocative, award-winning, full of sheep – and overwhelming. We were forced to choose among several excellent submissions and may well run a second series in a future issue. Meanwhile, enjoy – and keep snapping!



*Santo Domingo roosters in training.
Esther Jantzen, Pomona CA*



*Stone bull heads
Celia Dollmeyer, Columbus IN*



*Gallinas gallegas
Cherie Pagett, Alexandria VA*



*Bull crossing sign with pilgrim's staff, just
outside of Atapuerca
Celia Dollmeyer, Columbus IN*



*Cattle with donuts – the staff of life.
Esther Jantzen, Pomona CA*



*Master of the house
Mike Dunican, Lake Stevens WA*



*The stark black bull, towering over 40 feet high on some 90 prominent sites
throughout Spain, is the quasi-official national symbol. Initially the logo of
Osborne brandy, the bulls were to have been removed when all roadside
advertising was banned in the '90s; but the courts responded to public
outrage and the bulls remained, stripped of all color and the Osborne logo.
This is just outside Logroño, one of two bulls in La Rioja.
Judy Garland, Clearwater FL*



*Horse eating bread
Esther Jantzen, Pomona CA*



*Old goat.
Lynn Liptak, Wayne NJ*



Sharing the trail with mounted pilgrims and their faithful steeds - David Jennings, Kings Beach CA



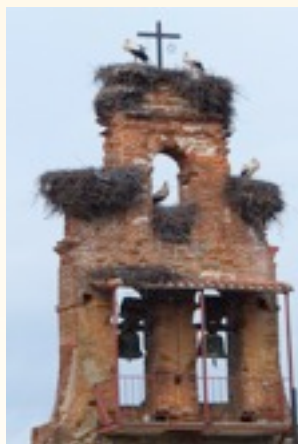
*Arriving Moratinos, one of Rebekah Scott's dogs shows the way.
Celia Dollmeyer, Columbus IN*



*Burro with stone and clothesline
Tim Foster, Oskaloosa, IA*



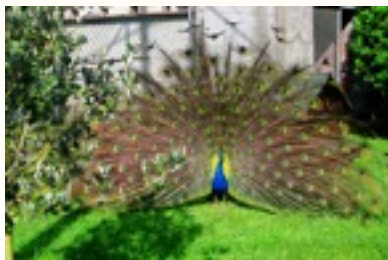
*Sheep blocking the path in Zamora
Tim Foster, Oskaloosa IA*



*Ubiquitous storks
David Jennings, Kings Beach CA*



*St. Anthony Abbot, depicted with a pig,
Iglesia de Santiago in Carrión de los Condes
David Jennings, Kings Beach CA*



*Peacocks after we pass
Lynn Liptak, Wayne NJ*



*Sheep ignoring us
Lynn Liptak, Wayne NJ*

A Most Unusual Pilgrim

By Ramon Nazareno, Sacramento CA

During my 2010 biking pilgrimage on the Vía de la Plata, I met Narciso Jurado Bernal, a very interesting gentleman, who began walking in 2000, when he decided to take one of his donkeys and walk to Rome from his home on the southern coast of Spain. He was proud to show us a photo he carries taken of him with Pope John Paul II upon his arrival in Rome.

As we shared a meal next to the albergue in Grimaldo, Don Narciso, in his late 60s, told me that every year since then, he, his dog, and his two burros had set out in pilgrimage to Santiago from his home in Chipiona, Cádiz, 100 kilometers south of Sevilla. He wouldn't think of making the trip without them. He enjoys nature, the company of his animals, and the friends he makes along the way. You can find all the details on his pilgrimage to Rome at this [website](#) (in Spanish). ♦



*Don Narciso shares a meal at Bar Grimaldo
on the Vía de la Plata*

Scarecrow

By Brad Harper, Toano VA

At the edge of the village was a small pasture with maybe a dozen sheep, enclosed tightly by a rusty barbed wire fence. The Camino traveled along its border. I noticed a mysterious figure up ahead where the Camino bent left, close to the fence. It wore a large brimmed hat, a large flowing cloak, and held a staff in its right hand.

Standing stock still, it was only as I passed within about 20 feet of it was I sure there was an actual person beneath all that clothing. I was able

to discern an old woman, long gray hair peeking out of the folds of her garments, who stood there motionless staring intently at the small and listless cluster of sheep.

As I trudged on I caught just the faintest hint of her humming some odd and probably ancient melody to herself and I wondered why such a small and innocent party of herbivores merited such close scrutiny. A brief moment in a long day's walk, but a source of endless amusement to two weary peregrinos. Of such small things a good day's walk is made. ♦

A Camino in Five Days

By Edward Wittkofski, Shelton CT

As we stood by a very modern Camino sculpture near the Alfonso IX Hotel, the air thick with fog, an older couple came up to me and my wife Janelle and asked in very heavily German-accented Spanish, "Excuse me, where is the Camino?" I pointed to the yellow arrow beneath my feet; thus, we began our Camino from Sarria to Santiago de Compostela.

Sarria is 113 kilometers from the Cathedral and is recognized as the nearest point to begin a pilgrimage on the Camino Francés and still be able to receive a compostela. The pilgrimage from this point takes five days to complete.

We began our walk through the beautiful mountains of Galicia in May 2012. We crossed ancient medieval bridges, saw a chapel built in 840 AD as a victory monument, and became friends with fellow peregrinos. As we walked, we saw countless churches, hamlets, beautiful farms, and dramatic woodlands. We felt pain, joy, exhaustion,

and exhilaration. We also experienced some profound moments.

While there is no doubt that walking the entire breadth of Spain is a tremendous experience, we found walking from Sarria is also stirring. On our first two days of walking, we traveled in some pretty challenging hill country; here the views are spectacular. It was springtime, and we saw beautiful freshly plowed fields and remarkable herds of cows enjoying the thick soft green grass of their pastures. Crossing an ancient bridge over a river in the middle of a forest was right out of our childhood fairy tales. Likewise, we had the experience of walking through smaller cities such as Palas de Rei, Melide, and Arzúa. Different from the countryside, they offered supplies and meals not available in the smaller communities.

As we neared Santiago de Compostela, the farms became more conventional and the scenery more suburban, and then suddenly, we were there. Like so many pilgrims before me, I entered the Cathedral and was equally and profoundly affected by the moment. I can attest that it is possible to

have many great Camino adventures without a full commitment of the five to six weeks needed to walk from St. Jean Pied de Port. If you have been holding back because of time constraints, this is a wonderful way to experience the many facets of the Camino de Santiago de Compostela in the vacation time available to most of us. ♦



The World Needs More Pilgrims

By David Jennings, Kings Beach CA

The members of the 'Earth is Flat' society had obviously never walked the Camino. Of the physical challenge, history, scenery, present-day Spain, the best of the experience had to be the interchange with the other pilgrims. We met people from at least 40 different countries, Korea, Japan, Slovenia, Israel, Russia, New Caledonia, Nigeria, Mexico, Brazil, China, Canada, Croatia, all the Scandinavian countries, and on and on; only to discover that regardless of nationality, religious or not, whatever culture, we all shared the same expectations and goals, and that

all of us should be able to work and live together for a more peaceful world. If we stopped to deal with a blister, the next pilgrim along would ask if we needed help.

The other pilgrims, like us, carried everything they thought necessary in their packs, but were always willing to share anything they had that you might need. On several occasions the services at

the evening Pilgrim Mass brought tears to the eyes of many with the feeling of the brotherhood of the Camino, regardless of religious belief. The world needs many more pilgrims. Someone suggested that world leaders should all walk the Camino. ♦



Pilgrim Welcome Center in Santiago

If, since May of this year, you visited the Pilgrims' Office on the Rúa do Vilar in Santiago, you most likely were greeted by an English-speaking ¡Amigo! in a bright blue t-shirt.

"For many years there has been a perception that more could be done to welcome pilgrims to Santiago and to provide them with advice, support and information." The Confraternity of St. James in the UK and the Irish Society of the Friends of St. James recognized this need. With the blessing and cooperation of the Pilgrims' Office, they collaborated to establish and financially support a six-month pilot program, whereby two volunteers would be provided food and lodging and would serve for two-week periods, working 12-hour days at the entrance to and on the stairway of the Pilgrims' Office.

Amigos Welcome Service, consisting of the two Amigos on duty, welcomes each pilgrim and sends them off with congratulations. They keep the line moving smoothly, provide maps, they listen, empathize, provide practical information, and applaud the pilgrims' accomplishments.

As many as 1,400 pilgrims a day have been welcomed in this fashion. The wait time for compostelas has diminished considerably due to the Amigos' organizational skills. The Pilgrims' Office staff is grateful for the assistance, noting "the power of pilgrims helping pilgrims..." ♦

From: www.johnniewalker-santiago.blogspot.com

¡Buen Provecho!

Salmorejo is a cold soup that originated in the southern Spanish city of Córdoba. It is related to gazpacho, its better-known culinary cousin, but salmorejo is thicker and uses fewer ingredients. Adorned with chopped ham and egg, as it is served in Spain, it can be a refreshing lunch on a hot day. ¡Buen provecho! ♦

From the Kitchen of Carlos Mentley, Donalds SC

Salmorejo

- 1 thick slice or 2 thin slices of white bread
- 2 lbs ripe tomatoes (4 large) seeded & chopped
- 3 cloves garlic, peeled & minced
- 2 tsp salt
- 2 1/2 oz extra virgin olive oil (use Spanish olive oil if you can find it)



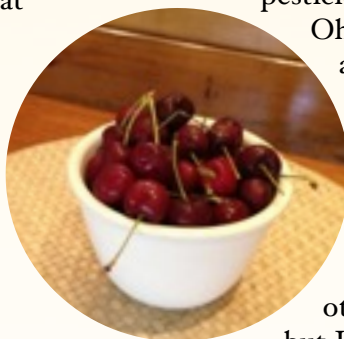
- Remove crusts from bread and soak bread in water to cover for 15 minutes. Squeeze out excess water and put the bread in the blender with the tomatoes, garlic, and salt. Process until pureed smooth, in two batches if necessary.
- With the motor running, add the oil in a slow stream, then add the vinegar. The mixture will thicken and change color as the oil emulsifies.
- Transfer to a tureen and chill until serving time. Serve the soup in individual bowls; you can top it with chopped jamón serrano and chopped hard-cooked egg. Serve with chunks of hard-crust bread.

Cherries

By Sheila Kogan, Kensington CA

Throbbing pain. Do not know what town I was in when my shoulder started hurting but I picture a long sidewalked street lined with trees. I tried every sort of strap adjustment, tried folding a shirt as extra padding – nothing eased the constant ache. My backpack had been combed for any excess weight: makeup, hair gel, book – gone. Everything was essential. And like my pack, every joint, muscle, and tendon was crucial to the walk. I felt like hurling the pack and calling it quits.

Looking up, I realized that the trees were providing welcome shade and thanked whoever thought to plant the neatly aligned rows. Then I realized that they were cherry trees dangling ripe fruit directly overhead. Focused on my shoulder, I had walked about a half a mile without noticing the



gift being offered. Tentatively I reached up. Would someone yell at me? Were they sprayed with pesticides? How wary I am of gifts.

Oh! A burst of tangy sweetness! The fruit was at its peak: Last week they would have been too sour, next week probably too mushy. How enjoyable it was to amble and pluck lovely red/orange globes, to savor the sweet juice, roll the pit in my mouth, and spit it out onto the adjacent grass. Maybe that was how all these trees got here. I saw other pilgrims gathering bags of the cherries but I did not; I just picked as I went. Like manna, I knew they would not keep. Forgetting about my shoulder, I stretched full length to reach the sun-soaked beauties on higher branches.

When the grove of trees ended, I was full and (how could it be?) my shoulder was fine. ♦

From Chapter 10, *Angels and Encouragements*, of the author's forthcoming book, *Stories from the Street, the Camino de Santiago*

Photos by Marlena Lambert, Salt Lake City UT

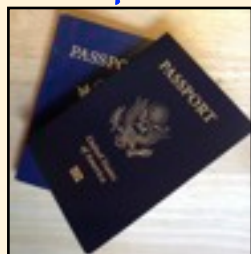
Not Your Pilgrim Passport

By Peg Hall, Gainesville FL

Flash back to Saturday, May 19, 2012, the night before we are to depart for Le Puy en Velay for another leg of the Camino Francés.

We have our pilgrim passports, delivered in record time as usual by American Pilgrims. Only a few things need to be rounded up before we leave the following morning. One remaining task is to retrieve our U.S. passports from our little safe.

In what shapes up as a last-minute disaster, we discover that one passport is due to expire on July 4. This may be cutting it close, based on what we've heard. Friends were refused admittance to some countries when their passports were about to expire. A search on the web reveals that signatory countries to the European Union Schengen Treaty require travelers to have valid passports – valid meaning they won't expire before the termination of the standard 90-day tourist visa stay. We supposed they worried about what they would do



when our time there expired and our home country would no longer admit us for lack of a current passport.

We might have tried the French embassy, but it was the weekend and the embassy was closed. A call to the airline was not particularly helpful. Sure, they would fly us to Paris, and, we feared, happily fly us back to Florida on the next available flight if we were refused admittance.

Maybe the officials would take pity. We had return flight reservations – non-refundable, no less. But we couldn't take the chance that they might enforce the letter of the law, and we opted to cut our losses with a \$250 per ticket flight change fee in lieu of flying all the way to Paris and back without being admitted to the EU. We had also made train reservations at both ends of our trek and for lodgings all the way to Figeac. We had to cancel them also.

We still plan on walking in early fall 2012 and may rekindle our earlier plans. We're wiser now, having newly renewed passports, and hope others will benefit from our misadventures. Make sure passports are renewed well in advance. ♦

Editor's Note: A U.S. State Department website says the following: "If possible, you should renew your passport approximately nine (9) months before it expires. Some countries require that your passport be valid at least six (6) months beyond the dates of your trip. Some airlines will not allow you to board if this requirement is not met." Anyone with passport renewal questions can check the following U.S. State Department site <http://travel.state.gov/passport> or call the National Passport Information Center at 1-877-487-2778. ♦

Codex Calixtinus Found Safe

The Codex Calixtinus, the illustrated twelfth century book often referred to as the first guidebook to the Camino and stolen from the Cathedral of Santiago de Compostela in summer 2011, has been found. The Codex, considered a priceless Spanish national treasure, was recovered this summer from the garage of a long-time Cathedral employee who had been dismissed.

This book is now safely back in the hands of the authorities, and the former employee and several family members have been charged. Team La Concha thanks Grant Spangler of Ojai CA for forwarding this police photo of the Codex as it was

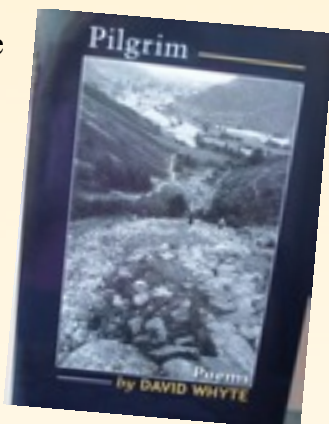
found amidst the other "treasures" in the garage of the accused thief. ♦



Pilgrim

Reviewed by Kathy Kennerly, Portland OR

Poet David Whyte grew up with a strong, imaginative influence from his Irish mother among the hills and valleys of his father's Yorkshire. He has authored seven books of poetry and three books of prose, and currently lives, with his family in the Pacific Northwest of the United States. With a degree in Marine Zoology, he has traveled extensively, including living and working as a naturalist guide in the Galapagos Islands and leading anthropological and natural history expeditions in the Andes, the Amazon, and the Himalayas.



Pilgrim

by David Whyte
Many Rivers Press, 2012.

Whyte's latest book of poetry, *Pilgrim*, attracted me first to Chapters 1 and 2, entitled *Pilgrim* and *Camino*, respectively. This author surely must have walked the very steps we all have walked on the Camino de Santiago. He knows it well. I cannot tell you whether it is written in iambic pentameter or some other sophisticated poetic language, but I can tell you that reading his thoughtful words about where we slept, whom we met, and how we walked, will evoke a flood of beautiful memories. Only a gifted poet like Whyte can distill the essence of pilgrimage in a few well-chosen words, while others might require volumes to create the same effect. As you enjoy *Pilgrim*, don't miss *Finisterre*, Whyte's poem ending, "part of you could still walk on, no matter how, over the waves." I promise that you will feel the mist of the ocean on your face. ♦

My Camino as Haiku

You will find a place
Where life slows down long enough
For you to see it

I awoke I walked
Even though I got blisters
I'll do it again

Antoinette Hubbard, Loveland OH



Although the three unrhymed lines of haiku traditionally contain five, seven, and five syllables, respectively, there is a recent trend in English toward fewer syllables. We encourage you to apply the format of your choice to your Camino experience – much can be conveyed in a few words!



Riff on a Tree Along the Camino Aragonés

By Erin Corcoran, Chicago IL

She's not an easy tree to find.

She stands clinging with everything she's got to the rocky slope of a painfully steep hill called the Alto de la Cruz, some 8 or 9 kilometers from the village of Monreal, Navarra. It's not easy to put a label on her, figure out what species of tree she was when she bloomed and grew and sprouted green. In a look you decide what sort of tree she is: proud. Tested. Generous. Strong. What sort of being could hold on to that tiny a parcel of earth with a pair of long dead roots? What sort would want to? Long after her sprouting life has ended, she is eager. Eager to play. Eager to share a bit of the road with each traveler who passes.

You see she did sprout green some time; it's there in her confidence and the graceful wishbone reach of those two surviving branches. Is she long dead, you wonder? Did she once have company on this lonely summit when she lived and breathed and cleaned the mountain air sweeping down from the Pyrenees? What fragrance did she loan the breeze that passed by then? Did she welcome birds? Mice? Maybe a pueblo of bees helped itself to her generosity. Has she met many

villagers during her long stay atop this hill, you ask? Did her branches serve as fuel or fodder for homes and barns and necessary farm tools?

Now she greets you as a signpost. On her dry grey trunk someone's painted the red and white marks of the GR trail that crosses Spain, and below them the simple yellow arrow of the Camino. She has to hang on, she tells you; she's guiding pilgrims. As the only distinguishing feature of this harsh, scrub covered alto, she has work to do. No one walks the Camino Aragonés without climbing this hill. And so she clings. And waits.

She leans hard over the edge of her stony cliff, bending her two stubby branches toward the green, flat valley below. Is she struggling to hold on, you ask yourself? Is that it, or? Could she be trying to free herself? She twists and bends like a pilgrim preparing for the day's hike. As if to say she'll be with you in just a moment, yes in fact she will join you on your walk to Santiago. If you go on ahead she'll be right along. It's that way. There. Have you spotted her arrow?

When you've finally left her alto behind you, you're genuinely surprised not to hear the dull scratch of wooden feet lumbering behind you. ♦





Save the Date~Mission Santa Barbara

Relive your adventures on the Camino, share your knowledge with others just beginning their journey, commune with those who share your enthusiasm for walking a long path, and explore the hidden trail. Join us the eve of March 14-17, 2013 at the Mission Santa Barbara in Santa Barbara CA for Gathering 2013 as we explore the Camino and its natural and cultural treasures.



Gathering 2013 March 14 eve — 17, 2013

Keep an eye on the website for a detailed agenda and on your email for the open registration announcement in December. For now mark out your calendar for March 14-17 and the Camino de Santiago. Don't forget the hospitalero training is the same week – March 12-14, 2012. ♦



Photo/Image Submission Guidelines

We love using Pilgrim photos in the newsletter and on the website. Here are a few rules of thumb to make it easy for you to know what format and size to submit and make it easy for us to use them!

- Submit no more than a maximum of 3 photos/ images per story or topic
- Format: 300 dpi; jpeg or tiff image files (please do not submit photos in a Word document)
- Photos should be 2 MB or less in size
- Photos should include the following Information:
 - Photographer's Name
 - Photo/image Description:
 - Location & Date
 - Identity of People in Photo (please specify "from left to right" or "from top to bottom") with the exception of large groups such as the chapters ♦

The Singers

The Singers-Minnesota Choral Artists was founded in 2004 and is dedicated to giving world-class performances of the finest choral literature through well-known pieces and original works. They have premiered and commissioned over fifty new works. They serve as artists, educators, and advocates of the choral art through innovative choral artistry that speaks to a changing world. <http://www.singersmca.org/concerts>

The Singers present *Path of Miracles*

Friday, Oct. 26, 2012 – 8:00 p.m.
St. Olaf Catholic Church, Minneapolis MN

Saturday, Oct. 27, 2012 – 8:00 p.m.
Nativity of Our Lord Catholic Church, St Paul MN

"Path of Miracles" is a mesmerizing 65-minute a cappella work that recounts the medieval pilgrimage to Santiago de Compostela via Roncesvalles (in the foothills of the Pyrennees), Burgos and León. From its opening eerie rising glissando to the final distribution of the pilgrims having reached Finisterre, west of Santiago – when the singers disappear from the audience's view, singing and chanting into the distance until all that is left is silence – Joby Talbot's ambitious a cappella "Path of Miracles" is little short of a musical miracle itself. ♦

A Sense of Direction

Reviewed by Bill Edwards, Mattituck NY

This is a marvelous book. It's philosophical, profoundly smart and often hilarious. As the narrative opens, Lewis-Kraus is in his late twenties, subsisting in Berlin on a Fulbright to compose an essay about contemporary young German novelists that he plans "never to write." Instead, he's spending his time enjoying Berlin after dark with his friends and (sort of) dealing with the issues posed by his father, a rabbi who at the age of forty-six has come out and deserted his wife for Brett, "a lovely guy he met at the gym." Since *both* his parents are rabbis, Gideon is doubly endowed with a tradition of intellectual exploration, introspection, and a psyche ranging from overweening self-confidence to abject self-deprecation. He is also enormously well read.

A Sense of Direction: Pilgrimage for the Restless and the Hopeful
By Gideon Lewis-Kraus
Riverhead Books, 2012.

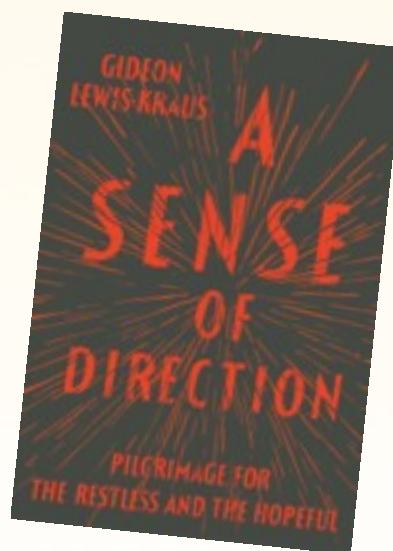
One drunken evening in Estonia he agrees to walk the Camino de Santiago with fellow writer Tom Bissell, a pact he only recalls days later when he finds it in his date book. He ultimately proceeds on three successive pilgrimages: The Camino Francés with Bissell, a solitary rain-filled pilgrimage of the 88 temples around the Japanese island Shikoku, and finally a crazy junket to Uman (Ukraine) with his father where they join tens of thousands of Hasidic Jews who flock there on Rosh Hashanah to visit the 1810 tomb of the mystical Rabbi Nachman of Breslov. His portrait of the *Hasidim*-filled Aeroflot flight from JFK is a comedic masterpiece.

Gideon's Camino is a blend of history, social comment and humor. He feels that "there is something in the ritual itself, and in the stories

that have accreted to that ritual, that leaves the pilgrim somehow renovated." But while surfing this philosophical plane he also takes time to liken the wooden crosses in the fence (west of Logroño) to those in *Pet Sematary*, and to ridicule John Brierley's indispensable guide for its "treacly, self-righteous meditations." He points out that pilgrimage has always been "a religiously sanctioned excuse to go have an experience of elsewhere, and it's always been taken up out of mixed motives." Lewis-Kraus' extended essay offers us a brand new lens to view the Camino.

After Gideon finally arrives tired but elated in Santiago, he gushes sentimentally and at length about how every single pilgrim who walked the Camino can take pride in the achievement; his friend Bissell challenges, "Even the people who started in Sarria?" "No," I say. "Not them."

Buy it. Read it. You'll love it too. ♦





Would You Make a Good Hospitalero?

Join us for Hospitalero Training
October 2012 in Portland OR

If you have been looking for a way to say thank you for all that the Camino has given you, look no further: American Pilgrims on the Camino is pleased to announce the Autumn 2012 Hospitalero Training Course!

Join us in Portland, Oregon and learn what it takes to support other pilgrims on the road to Santiago.

Training begins Friday, October 19 at 4 p.m. and concludes on Sunday October 21 at 5 p.m. The weekend training includes all instruction, meals, and lodging. Participants are required to stay on site to simulate camino living and to attend the entire training. Instruction addresses the physical, emotional and spiritual needs of pilgrims, as well as the daily routine of being a volunteer innkeeper, including cooking, house cleaning, and self-care.

Anyone who has walked at least 100 km (or biked 200 km) of the Camino, and is a member of American Pilgrims on the Camino, is eligible to attend. Registration information and both mail in forms as well as online registration is available on our website www.americanpilgrims.com/camino/hospitaleros.html.

If you have any questions, please contact:
hospitalerotraining@americanpilgrims.com. ♦

My Time as an Hospitalero

by Marlena Lambert, Salt Lake City UT

My experience as an hospitalera was at least as powerful as that when I was walking. In many ways, it was even more challenging – and thus more rewarding.

As pilgrims, we are "takers," relying on the kindness of strangers for our success, if not survival. Whenever I walk the roads and trails of the Camino, I feel intense gratitude for the kindness of so many who make my difficult journey more comfortable. After my first experience as a pilgrim, I longed for a way to give back what was given to me so freely and abundantly. Another pilgrim told me about becoming an hospitalero. As soon as I could, I attended a training, and within a couple of months served a two-week tour in Nájera, La Rioja.

If you stayed in public albergues along the Way of Saint James, you most likely met a spectrum of good and bad hosts. Learn what it takes to become a good, or even a great, hospitalero. The training not only introduces you to the skills required, it also provides you with the means to place yourself in an albergue in Spain during the coming year. The training cultivates camaraderie among returned pilgrims who share your sense of gratitude, eager to offer the gifts of on-the-ground support to other pilgrims on the trail, ready to give back to the Camino the support that was accepted there. ♦

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.

- | | | |
|-------------------|----------------------|---------------------|
| ♦ Mark Cobb | ♦ Brad Harper | ♦ Carlos Mentley |
| ♦ Erin Corcoran | ♦ Ann Howley | ♦ Ramon Nazareno |
| ♦ Marilyn Crang | ♦ Antoinette Hubbard | ♦ Donne Paine |
| ♦ Celia Dollmeyer | ♦ Esther Jantzen | ♦ Cherie Pagett |
| ♦ Mike Dunican | ♦ David Jennings | ♦ Luke Rhoad |
| ♦ Bill Edwards | ♦ Kathy Kennerly | ♦ Grant Spangler |
| ♦ Tim Foster | ♦ Sheila Kogan | ♦ Edward Wittkofski |
| ♦ Allan Garland | ♦ Marlena Lambert | |
| ♦ Judy Garland | ♦ Lynn Liptak | |
| ♦ Peg Hall | ♦ Herbert Medina | |

Tip Board

Suggestions from and for pilgrims
Please send us yours



If you are flying within Spain be sure to check all the regional airlines, as prices can vary by quite a bit.



One "foot" at a time.

Photo by Allan Garland



View as one comes into Arrés

Arrés Albergue Grant

The results of the American Pilgrims grant money at work on the Camino Aragonés are shown through these photos taken by Herbert Medina. The photos were taken earlier this year shortly after the dedication. This is truly an instance where a relatively small grant can make a very big difference – in an albergue and in a pueblo! ♦

Photos by Herbert Medina, Los Angeles CA



Plaque thanking American Pilgrims on the Camino



Sitting area in albergue



New kitchen in Arrés albergue

Association News

Meet Your Board Members

Ann Howley

First you'll notice, even be taken in by, her infectious laugh.

Fortunately for American Pilgrims, for whom she's served as Treasurer since 2010, behind that laugh is the steel-trap mind of an accountant; and she keeps our books with an attention to detail and

clarity. Interestingly enough, this same characteristic further reveals itself through her passion: Travel photography!

Ann has traveled the world's seven continents, including nine trips to Africa and four to Asia, creating images and a desire to share them in diverse formats with a broad audience. Those fortunate to be part of her 2012 Gathering workshop at San Pedro Center learned that even difficult circumstances can produce exquisite photographs.

In 2009, Ann made her first Camino, recording images as she walked 500 miles with a borrowed camera. She damaged that camera by plunking it down on the tiles in a plaza in Burgos while waiting for her first taste of Spanish paella. Her favorite Camino moment was around day 21 when her head finally stopped chattering and there was silence! Ann's pilgrim experience has included a 2010 stint as hospitalero at Ponferrada.

She is currently looking for new outlets for her creativity. She now spends long hours in UCLA Extension classes where she's enrolled in the Communication Arts program while considering the myriad options available to her. ♦



Marlena Lambert

Marlena joined the board of American Pilgrims in mid 2009, just before hiking the Camino Aragonés in a loop that started and ended in Oloron, France. On her way, she walked west to east along the Camino Francés for several days and spent a night in Saint Jean Pied de Port. In the morning, as all the west-bound traffic was scurrying about at the crack of dawn, Marlena lounged with the resident cat, the very same cat that had kept her up all night by camping out on her bunk three years earlier when she passed through on her way from Le Puy to Muxia! Most recently, Marlena walked 300 km of Il Cammino di Assisi from Dovadola to Assisi, Italy.

Marlena's Board contributions include the gathering committee and volunteer coordination, including hospitaleros. She served as an hospitalera in Nájera, La Rioja in 2008, which inspired her to apply for a Board position. She also led a group of 18 college students on the Camino Francés from Astorga to Santiago in May 2010, an experience she describes as being both pilgrim and hospitalero at the same time.

When Marlena isn't on the Camino, she is professor of wellness at the College of Nursing at Westminster College in Utah, where she teaches yoga and meditation. A licensed massage therapist for ten years, Marlena is also an accomplished musician and gardener. ♦





Welcome, New Members!

We are pleased to welcome the following new members who joined American Pilgrims on the Camino from May through August of this year. We look forward to meeting all of you at future Gatherings and events.

- | | | | |
|--------------------------------------|------------------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| ♦ Martin Adamski | ♦ Carolyn & Nancy Dohnalek | ♦ Thresa Kussman | ♦ Mary Pat Schaaf |
| ♦ Zoe Alameda | ♦ Jim Doilney | ♦ Tony Lamson | ♦ Deborah Schaben |
| ♦ Linda Alfredson | ♦ David Duroy | ♦ John & Mikki Lawrence | ♦ Teresa Schmidt |
| ♦ Mary Lou & Ted Allison | ♦ Dillard Eigel | ♦ Kelly Leone | ♦ Katy Schmitt |
| ♦ Devika Aloha | ♦ Luke & Susanna Elliott | ♦ Lisa Lerner | ♦ Nancy Schott |
| ♦ Sindo Amago | ♦ Michael Englehardt | ♦ Anne & Madeline Lesso | ♦ Serena Schrier |
| ♦ Michael & Ava Anders | ♦ Ana Esteban | ♦ Ronald Lindhart | ♦ James & Pamela Scruggs |
| ♦ Milagros & Michael Anderson | ♦ John Ewen | ♦ Shem Torre Longakit | ♦ Charles Seymour |
| ♦ Lily Ann | ♦ Patricia Fisher | ♦ Todd Macaulay | ♦ Charles Shankle |
| ♦ Rogerio Araujo | ♦ Sheila Forrette | ♦ Anh Mai | ♦ Lynette K Shinsato |
| ♦ Antoine & Anaïs Barthelet | ♦ Niki & Stephen Foster | ♦ K Wanda Makela | ♦ Michelle Skally |
| ♦ Charles Batten | ♦ Paulette Geragos | ♦ Mary Margaret | ♦ Sandy Slattery |
| ♦ Charles Beury | ♦ Robert Gimello | ♦ J Marren | ♦ Kevin Sloan |
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| ♦ Gary Calhoun | ♦ Mchelle Herring | ♦ Elissa Meites | ♦ Terri Swartz |
| ♦ Tena Callahan | ♦ Judith Hilyard | ♦ Pat, Russ & Althea Mickiewicz | ♦ Christina Swiat |
| ♦ Lou & Lynn Caputo | ♦ Craig & John Hoffman | ♦ Jessica Moening | ♦ Judith & Rebecca Thill |
| ♦ Sam Cardenas | ♦ Mary Houdek | ♦ Elandra Moran-Eigel | ♦ Elizabeth Tisdell |
| ♦ Roberto Cartelli | ♦ Michael & Aleida Howard | ♦ Bob Mounger | ♦ Rafma Lauren Torre |
| ♦ Julia Castillo | ♦ Alice L Hurley | ♦ Robert Nellums | ♦ Lamberto D Torres |
| ♦ Kathleen Chipps | ♦ Mark & Karen Ingle | ♦ Heidi Niemela | ♦ Trudy Tucker |
| ♦ Martin Cirincione | ♦ Cynthia & Alfred Johnson | ♦ Richard Ostendorf | ♦ Leslie Waldie |
| ♦ Nancy Claire | ♦ James Johnston | ♦ Donne Paine | ♦ Judy, John & Dennis Walsh |
| ♦ Mark W Cobb | ♦ Joshua Johnston | ♦ Richard Peter | ♦ Don Walton |
| ♦ Pascale Couderc | ♦ Christine L & Peter L Jones | ♦ Eduard Peyer | ♦ Ruthy Warda |
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| ♦ Larry, Madison & Christopher Crane | ♦ Terry Kinnear | ♦ Ann Marie Rakovic | ♦ Kathy Weber |
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| ♦ John Daly | ♦ Ann Knutson | ♦ William & Luellen Reese | ♦ Will & Lisa Wiebe |
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| ♦ Caren della Cioppa | ♦ Sarah Kotchian | | ♦ Chris Woodruff |
| ♦ David & Matthew Dohnalek | ♦ Susan Kowalczyk | | ♦ Oliver, Nancy & Thomas Wright |



*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.*

Do You Have Camino Impressions to Share?

With every issue we are delighted anew by the quality, variety, and abundance of submissions – and especially by the fact that so many are from first-time contributors. Your enthusiasm for the Camino and for *La Concha* as a medium for sharing that enthusiasm keeps us going!

So, please keep telling us, in 400 words or fewer, about *your* Camino. Consider a photo, a poem, or a new found understanding of an idea – a pilgrim's perspective. We have refined our guidelines, so please visit [Newsletter](#) on our website for suggestions and our new guidelines.

The submission deadline for the next issue is November 12, 2012. We welcome your questions, comments, and submissions at newsletter@americanpilgrims.com. You can also submit to the street address provided below.

¡Buen Camino!

*Cherie Pagett, Annette Argall
Zita Macy, & Mona Spargo
Team La Concha*

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Cherie Pagett – Vice Chair
Cheryl Grasmoen
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Annette Argall – Secretary
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Cherie, Annette & Zita
Cherie, Annette, Zita & Mona
Herbert
Marlena
Bob
Marlena
Mona, Marlena & Zita

Other Key Personnel

Credentials Distribution: Rosann McCullough

Webmaster: Gene McCullough

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