



# LA CONCHA

Newsletter of American Pilgrims on the Camino

www.americanpilgrims.com

February 2015

## Gathering 2015 – Ever Ancient, **ever new** March 12-15, Menlo Park CA



Thousands of people discover the Camino each year, but what is new to them is a pilgrimage route that has existed for more than 1,000 years. The theme for this year's Gathering – *Ever Ancient, ever new* – explores the juxtaposition of old and new and presents the Camino's past, present, and future from several perspectives.

Some of the presentation highlights of the sessions are:

- **Mary Jane Dunn** explores the miracles that surround the Camino and presents St. James as a potential superhero in her presentation, *Santiago as Superhero*.

- **Bill Edwards** will cover the buying and selling of historical souvenirs in *The Pilgrim Badge: Foretelling the Disneyland T-shirt*.

- Looking for an alternate route to the Camino Francés? **Lou Flessner, Pam Jones, Kris Ashton, and Martha Lopez** will introduce you to other Camino routes that were frequently traveled in medieval

times and that are gaining in popularity again today.

- Cyclist **Jim Eychaner** will show us that walking isn't the only way to do a Camino.

- **Emilio Escudero** makes a case for stopping once in a while and going off the path to visit some of the *Hidden Treasures Along the Camino*.

- **Lee Sandstead** likens the Camino to walking through a giant museum in his session *The Camino Church through the Ages*.

- **Peg Hall and Yosmar Martinez** will introduce you to some of the wonderful cheeses and wines you might encounter on the Camino.

- **Ann Howley**, in her presentation *12 Steps on the Camino*, will help those who don't drink navigate an environment where wine seems to be a constant companion.

continued on page 3

## In this issue

Gathering 2015 1 & 3

Chair's Message 2

Buen Provecho  
*Pear Salad* 3

Xacobeo News 4

Hospitalero Happenings 5

Chapters 13

New Members 22-23

*Member Writings & Photos  
Throughout*



*The grounds at Vallombrosa.*

## Message From the Chair....

I hope you are as excited as I am about the upcoming 2015 National Gathering of Pilgrims! We are planning a weekend of fun and learning, renewing old acquaintances, making new friends, eating well and sampling good wine, and being reminded of all that we love about the Camino de Santiago.

Can't wait to see many of you in Menlo Park next month for this year's Gathering: Ever Ancient, Ever New.

iBuen Camino!

*Cheryl*



*Icebergs on the Camino? Cheryl on her way to Antarctica.*

## Editor's Note: La Concha Guidelines & Policies

It is truly a privilege to be among the first readers of your essays, photos, poems, recipes, book reviews, tips, and more that come in every time we put out a call for *La Concha*. I know I speak for the whole team when I say that we never cease to be amazed at the way that the Camino touches each pilgrim and the many ways you express your experience. Your enthusiasm, love for the Camino, and willingness to share your experiences with the greater community of pilgrims is extraordinary. It enriches us all.

We do have a favor to ask, though – that everyone observe the few short guidelines and policies below. It makes our lives easier and increases your chances of publication.

–Ed.

### Guidelines

–A **400-word limit** for written submissions in *La Concha*. If you have a longer article, it **may** be included in the newsletter as an introductory, or “teaser” paragraph with a link to the full version on the American Pilgrims website.

–Written submissions should be sent as .doc files.

–**Photos** are welcome and enhance many stories.

- Submit a **maximum of 3 photos / images** per story or topic.
- Please submit photos as **jpeg** or **tiff** files of at least 300 dpi and 2MB or less in size.

- Include the following information about your photos: photographer's name, where the picture was taken, and identity of subjects.

–Publication in *La Concha* is reserved for **members**. The only exception is guest articles by a representative of one of our sister international Camino organizations.

### Policies

**Commerce.** *La Concha* does not promote Camino commerce and does not publish articles that advertise a for-profit product or service. We refer anyone who wants to promote their products or services to The Camino Marketplace on Facebook, which allows Camino-related buying, selling, trading, bartering, distribution of goods and services.

**Books.** If you have a book for review, please send us two copies, and we will put it in the review queue and seek a reviewer. Please contact us at [newsletter@americanpilgrims.com](mailto:newsletter@americanpilgrims.com) for the mailing address.

We no longer publish book excerpts, and we do not print publishers' promotional pieces. If you have published a book in 2014 or 2015, please send us the title and publishing information, and we will list it in our new member book list feature.

We regularly receive more submissions than we can print. We include as many as we can in *La Concha* and defer the rest for consideration in a

## Gathering continued:

•**Gene McCullough** will give you tips on mastering your public speaking anxiety and the technical aspects of presentations so you can spread the Camino story to a local hiking group, church group, or 200 of your closest friends.

•**Michael Barham** and **Lou Flessner** will give you the opportunity to reflect on pilgrimage, the experience of returning home, and ways that pilgrimage acts as a change agent in our lives.

Additionally, National Geographic photographer **Michael George** will offer a photography workshop (pre-registration required). His session on pilgrim photos and stories of their journey will complement **Carlos Mentley's** session on how a true pilgrim was defined in the twelfth century and what that means today. Judging from the comments on the [American Pilgrims Facebook page](#) on this topic, it should encourage a lively discussion.

Interwoven into the program are perennial favorite sessions: first aid, packing light, new pilgrim question and answer, volunteering on the Camino, and more.

Recognizing that pilgrims need to talk about pilgrimage and learn from the journeys of others, Camino camaraderie will begin on Thursday evening as the Gathering kicks off with a Welcome Reception to catch up on all the news.

Although the days are packed with subjects to explore, the nights are pure entertainment. If you aren't actively participating in the Camino Cabaret or 5 x 5 (a Camino story in under 5 minutes with the option of using no more than 5 photos to tell it), you will be moved to tears or laughter by the stories, photos, songs, and skits AND you will want to start planning your own time on the stage next year.

Come join us! To register, go to:

[http://americanpilgrims.com/events/events\\_national.html](http://americanpilgrims.com/events/events_national.html) ♦

## iBuen Provecho!

Conferencia pears are a significant fall crop in the Bierzo region of Spain. Here's how I use them.

From the Kitchen of Kathy Kennerly, Ponferrada, Spain  
Fresh Pear Salad

- Fresh pears, peeled, cored, and sliced
- Blue cheese, crumbled
- Walnuts, pieces or whole
- Field greens or other lettuce
- Extra virgin olive oil
- Balsamic vinegar, fruit infused if available



On a chilled salad plate, place a layer of lettuce leaves. Stack pear slices on top of the lettuce. Sprinkle on blue cheese and walnuts. Drizzle with balsamic vinegar and a scant drizzle of olive oil on the lettuce leaves. Pairs well with chicken and pork dishes.

This same dish makes a wonderful fruit and cheese dessert simply by omitting the lettuce leaves and olive oil. It's nice with a glass of dry white wine. iBuen provecho! ♦





## Xacobeo News

**New Pilgrims' Welcome Center.** The Galician Government and the Cathedral of Santiago have signed an agreement to create a new Pilgrims' Welcome Center in a restored building near the

Praça do Obradoiro in Santiago. The restoration will take place this year, after which the new facility will be ready for pilgrims.

**Explosive Growth on the Camino Inglés.** In 2014, public albergues on the Camino Inglés housed more than 10,000 pilgrims, representing a 61 percent increase over 2013. The number of compostelas issued to pilgrims arriving on the Camino Inglés was 7,194, a 62 percent jump over the previous year. About three percent of total pilgrims arrive to Santiago on the Camino Inglés. ♦

## A Special Opportunity for Hospitaleros in Galicia

The Xacobeo has initiated a pilot program for hospitaleros in its albergues in Galicia with the goal of better serving pilgrims. Xacobeo General Manager Rafael Sánchez has invited American Pilgrims hospitaleros to serve in one of Galicia's most beautiful albergues, Ribadiso, during 2015. Ribadiso is a lovely stone albergue on a riverbank in a pastoral valley near Arzúa, just a few days' walk from Santiago.

Typically, albergues in Galicia are not served by volunteer hospitaleros but rather by local people whose job it is to admit pilgrims, collect fees, and oversee cleaning of the albergue. The Xacobeo understands the very real benefit to pilgrims of hospitaleros who greet, care for, and provide an ambience of hospitality and warmth for pilgrims, as we learn to do in hospitalero training, and for that reason, has invited American Pilgrims hospitaleros to do just that.

Volunteer postings will be for either the first or

second half of the month, between April 15 and October 15. Hospitaleros will serve in two-person teams, provide their own transportation to and from Ribadiso, and be responsible for their own

food. The Ribadiso albergue has a separate room and bathroom for its hospitaleros.

**Please note:**

The hospitaleros who serve through this program will **not** be expected to collect fees or clean the albergue; this will still be done by the people who do those tasks

now.

Because this is a pilot program, only hospitaleros with prior experience in an albergue will be considered. Qualified hospitaleros interested in this opportunity are asked to contact [hospitalerotraining@americanpilgrims.com](mailto:hospitalerotraining@americanpilgrims.com) to apply or with any questions. ♦



*Río Iso, next to Ribadiso Albergue.*

## Hospitalero Happenings

Our next Hospitalero Training is fast approaching. A wonderful way to both give back to the Camino and to experience the Camino in a unique way, training to become a hospitalero gives you the opportunity to enjoy both. Trainers and trainees will be coming together in Menlo Park, CA in March for the next training. Our training program continues throughout the year in locations around the country. If you have walked or biked the Camino and would like to try a different type of Camino, contact [hospitalerotraining@americanpilgrims.com](mailto:hospitalerotraining@americanpilgrims.com) for updates on upcoming trainings. ♦

Thank you to all the 2014 hospitaleros for their care of thousands of their fellow pilgrims!

We need **YOU!**

If you served and were not recognized or if you have a story about your hospitalero experience, please let us know at [newsletter@americanpilgrims.com](mailto:newsletter@americanpilgrims.com)

## Postcard from the Camino - Halloween in Grañón

*by Cindy Day, Morgan Hill CA*

Last October, pilgrims had the opportunity to support the village of Grañón as the community planned its first Halloween celebration. A few days after my husband Pat and I arrived at the Hospital de San Juan Bautista albergue, the word was out that the new hospitaleros were Americans – and “they would know about Halloween.”

Juan Carlos, a local gardener who was planning the event, came into the albergue and asked us if we would have pilgrims make decorations that could be used to decorate the town center. After 10 days of no Americans or any other interested pilgrims, Javi from Spain and Carol from Canada arrived early one afternoon and were excited to help. In the spirit of “the Camino will



*Cindy, pilgrim ghost, and Juan Carlos  
Photo by Pat Day*

provide,” Javi had an Exacto knife, and Carol was a former art teacher. Using items from the donativo box and hiking poles that a pilgrim left at the albergue that morning, Javi, Carol, and I crafted a styrofoam pilgrim skeleton, a ghost, and a French-Canadian scarecrow.

Juan Carlos was so pleased with the results that he and his wife Maritxu, a local chef, came a few nights later and prepared Spanish *tortilla* for the 29 pilgrims staying at the albergue. Although the village’s Halloween celebration was not until November 1, on Halloween a number of children came to the albergue to trick-or-treat while

Pat and I were still there. It just happened that we had brought Halloween candy for the pilgrims but had plenty to share with the village children. ♦

## Thin Places

by Thayer Woodcock, Nyack NY

“Thin places,” an early Celtic Christian metaphor for places where the boundary between the sacred and the everyday feels “thin,” are everywhere along the Camino de Santiago: a heather-covered mountaintop where one walks, quite literally, between seeming “floating islands” above the clouds; a eucalyptus-scented grove where the sun-dappled path winds over a hidden pond alive with the shouts of unseen frogs; the solid, timeless church at Muxia, standing guard over the rocks at the western-most coast of Spain. These places were glorious, and moving, and powerful beyond words.

But it is the *albergues*, thin places more of time and circumstance than physical grandeur, that remain with me. Sacred moments lying in the small personal space of my bunk, surrounded by darkness and by the sounds and smells and sheer human presence of my fellow pilgrims, people of so many different ages, languages, and stories; some already friends, others unseen before they climbed into the adjacent bunk -- all of us physically exhausted and in varying degrees of pain, all of us breathing together as we made the journey to sleep, to Santiago, and beyond.

Preacher Barbara Brown Taylor has pointed out that “conspire” means to breathe together, to be filled with the same spirit, and goes on to say that

beneath our earth’s atmosphere, “the same ancient air just keeps recirculating...every time any of us breathes we breathe stardust left over from the creation of the earth. We breathe brontosaurus breath and pterodactyl breath...we breathe the same air that Plato breathed, and Mozart and Michelangelo...”

And each night in the dormitory, this thin place of conspiracy, I felt knit into kinship not just with those who surrounded me on a particular night, but with pilgrims who had made similar journeys for centuries before me.

And while the realities of sharing this space – alive with the sounds and smells and movements of so many – was not always conducive to the best night’s sleep, the connection felt with fellow *peregrinos* across the centuries wove itself throughout the journey, as we walked along remains of roadways built by the Romans, sat silently preparing our feet each morning, lingered over *café con leche* at a wayside cafe, gathered in the cool darkness of a stone church, descended to the crypt to view the silver casket of St. James, or looked for the sunset at Finisterre, all the while breathing together that same generous ancient air. ♦



*Rainbow over Castrojeriz. Photo by Lawrence Graves, Little Rock AR*

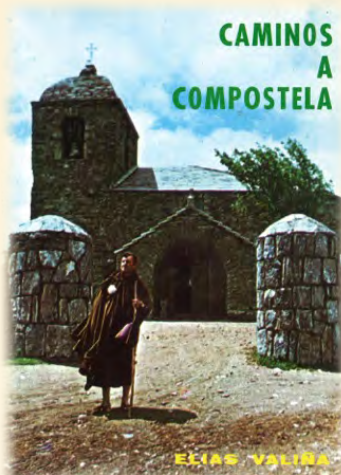


## Elías Valiña Sampedro

By Lynn Talbot, Blacksburg VA

Today's pilgrims on the Camino de Santiago owe a great debt to one of the major figures responsible for the route's revitalization. Elías Valiña Sampedro (1929-1989) early on recognized the importance of the Camino and worked tirelessly on its promotion. Twenty five years after his death, his dream has become a reality.

Born near Sarria, D. Elías entered the priesthood in 1953 after completing his studies at the Seminary in Lugo. He was named parish priest of O Cebreiro in 1959 and dedicated his life to the economic development of the area and to the Camino de Santiago. He worked to revive O Cebreiro, which was on the verge of disappearing; his efforts led to the restoration of the pre-Romanesque



*Don Elías dressed as a pilgrim on the cover of his 1971 guidebook.*

encouraged the formation of Camino associations, and promoted the Camino at lectures and conferences throughout Europe.

In 1971, he published an early guidebook, *Caminos a Compostela*, in a compact format that could be easily carried in a backpack. His book describes the traditional French Way, indicates routes that only walkers could take, and includes a variety of economical accommodations. This contrasts sharply with the emphasis of the Spanish

government of that time on the economic potential of the Camino, which followed established highways rather than the Camino, with detours to visit sites related to the Camino, and emphasized high-end hotels, such as the Hostal de los Reyes Católicos in Santiago.

D. Elías's most recognizable contribution to today's Camino is the yellow arrow used to mark the route. Stories – perhaps apocryphal – relate that he obtained the yellow paint inexpensively from the Spanish highway department which had switched from yellow to white paint to mark highways. Another story tells of an encounter with the Guardia Civil, who found him painting yellow arrows in the Pyrenees. Questioned about his activity, he replied that he was preparing for a great invasion. Although he did not live to see the “invasion,” pilgrim numbers already had begun to rise in the late eighties. D. Elías is buried in

the church at O Cebreiro and his bust and a number of dedication plaques are located outside the church. ♦

**Editor's Note:** In December 2014, the Xacobeo commemorated the twenty-fifth anniversary of the death of Elías Valiña, a true pioneer in the twentieth century rebirth of the Camino. Annually, the Xacobeo awards the Elías Valiña Prize to an organization that has done outstanding work to revitalize and promote the Camino. The most recent Elías Valiña Prize was awarded to the Japanese Association of Friends of the Camino, whose president, Tomoko Morioka, attended the 2012 American Pilgrims Gathering.

Año	Peregrinos	Año	Peregrinos	Año	Peregrinos	Año	Peregrinos
1970	68	1980	209	1990	4.918	2000	55.004
1971	451	1981	299	1991	7.274	2001	61.418
1972	67	1982	1.868	1992	9.764	2002	68.952
1973	37	1983	146	1993	99.436	2003	74.614
1974	108	1984	423	1994	15.863	2004	179.944
1975	74	1985	690	1995	19.821	2005	93.924
1976	243	1986	1.801	1996	23.218	2006	100.377
1977	31	1987	2.905	1997	25.179	2007	114.026
1978	13	1988	3.501	1998	30.126	2008	125.141
1979	231	1989	5.760	1999	154.613	2009	145.877

Número de peregrinos que consiguieron la Compostelana. En negrita, los Años Jacobeos. Estadística del Archivo de la Catedral de Santiago de Compostela

*Statistics from the Santiago de Compostela Cathedral Archive. Years in darker print are Holy Years.*

church (Santa María la Real), the historic inn, the pilgrim hospital and the Celtic *pallozas*, one of which became an ethnographic museum. In 1972 O Cebreiro was declared a National Historical Heritage Site.

In the early 1960s, D. Elías completed doctoral studies at the Universidad Pontificia de Salamanca, and defended his thesis, *El Camino de Santiago. Estudio histórico-jurídico* in 1965. His interest in the Camino led him to set out to revive the medieval route. He published articles on the Camino,

## A Camino Walk and Well-earned Tattoo

by Bill Jones, Cleveland OH

Gary Mitchener and I traveled to Spain in 2014 to challenge ourselves by hiking the Camino de Santiago. Gary hiked by himself from Roncesvalles to Santiago in 2012 and was a 2013 American Pilgrims volunteer in Santiago. But it was a formidable undertaking for me, at age 78, with a history of cardiac problems and brain seizures. I was unable to drive a car for six months in 2013 and had to learn to live with balance difficulty. Medication has prevented reoccurrence.

I needed physical awakening to move forward and yearned for a contemplative spirit I imagined awaited me in Spain. Gary and I attended the National Pilgrim Gathering outside St. Louis in 2014 and learned quickly that persons with much greater difficulties had endured great hardships only to exalt at the end of a great accomplishment inside the Cathedral in Santiago. I was determined to try at least a portion of the Camino. My doctors studied my condition thoroughly before telling me to go.

I had to prepare myself for such hiking; I had taken only short hikes before and my legs were weak. I went to work with a physical trainer, Scott Curtis, at Cleveland's Judson Senior Living, where my wife, who suffers from Parkinson's disease, resides.



*A well-earned tattoo.*

Scott and I walked for weeks through difficult paths in Cleveland and he made me into a careful and slow walker.

Gary and I walked west from Pamplona, hiking several sections. Altogether, we hiked slowly over more than three weeks 165 miles including a final stretch of 160 km or 99 miles from Herrerías to Santiago, by bus to the Atlantic Coast, Fisterra and Muxia, and by train to Barcelona for some relaxation.

Back home, I visited a truly accomplished tattoo artist -- Matty M. Tattooing in North Olmsted, Ohio. For my left calf, he designed a journey remembrance: an identification tag with Camino symbol and rope holding traditional shell. It will always remind me of my joys and tribulations: recalling Gary carrying my backpack for the final 10 km because I couldn't; happy pilgrims from the world over; mystics such as David, a young man with one leg at his outpost east of Astorga, who escorted me over a bridge of boulders I couldn't cross, the farmer who took us in when I could hardly walk; hundreds of gracious, happy, outgoing Spaniards. My tattoo speaks to me every day about hours of quiet

walking and thinking about my future. ♦



*Bill Jones and Gary Mitchener at Cruz de Ferro.*

*Photos courtesy of the author.*



## Camino Poetry

April is National Poetry Month, and *La Concha* is pleased to have poems from five Camino poets throughout this issue.

### Pilgrims

by Linda Fitts, San Diego CA

We sad refugees  
Wash ashore on the beach of  
Our temple,  
Crawl emptied to its doors  
To be received on our knees  
at the portal.

Granted entrance, the  
Sanctuary of our god  
Embraces us in timeless  
Beauty.  
We are absolved before we ask.  
The serene gaze of the saint  
Penetrates our pain and our  
Time  
And time falls away into  
Timelessness.

The penitent approaches the  
Altar.  
The saint receives us but  
Does not see us.  
No need.  
We are seen and known and  
Penetrated.  
Autumn's impulse.  
We shed. We are naked.  
The breathless one  
Gives breath to our new  
Life.  
We do not depart him as the  
Same person.

The dry bones enshrined in  
Darkness  
Embrace our relic state as a  
Holy and new thing.  
The completeness of youth  
Has yielded to the  
generativity of the broken.  
We are not dead yet. ♦



### Deception

by Ann Loar Brooks, Baltimore MD

Along rows of brambly bushes  
I amble toward Villares de Órbigo

A wizened man  
in threadbare overalls  
thin short sleeved undershirt  
scuffed boots  
dull blue denim hat  
stands ten feet away

He beckons  
uttering undecipherable Spanish  
then laughs at my reluctance  
made known by my furtive glances  
up and down the road  
in hopeful search of  
anyone within earshot  
anyone to protect me from  
forceful assault

Suddenly he thrusts out  
his chapped hand  
to grasp mine

*Gozar!*\* he barks  
prying open my fingers  
releasing wild blackberries within ♦

\*gozar = enjoy

## Camino Calling

*by Susan G. (Trixy) Barnes, Troy MO*



I want to roll over  
in the early morning  
And feel soft fingers  
on my shoulder  
calling me  
To rise  
and walk with friends  
To laugh  
to cry  
and to know  
my soul is no longer on hold. ♦



## What to Expect on the Camino

*by Jim Carpenter, Littleton CO*

For more than twelve hundred years pilgrims have been making their way across Europe to Santiago de Compostela and the tomb of Saint James, the apostle and friend of Jesus. They have crossed the Pyrenees, the farms and fields of northern Spain, the high desolate plateau of the *meseta*, the scrub-covered *Montes de León*, and the misty green mountains and valleys of Galicia, finally reaching the grand city named after the patron saint of Spain and the even grander cathedral that holds his remains. They have numbered in the millions – peasants, paupers, merchants; kings and queens; saints, sinners, priests, and religious; young and old, rich and poor. They have come in remission of their sins, to exorcise demons, to gain indulgences, to seek God's healing grace for themselves or in hopeful prayer for loved ones who suffer, as sentences for crimes or other misdeeds, and in some cases, perhaps just out of curiosity.

Now you are about to embark on this great journey, to add your footprints to those of the millions who have beaten this path before you. To get a taste of what you'll see, hear, and experience along this journey, click [here](#) for the full essay. ♦



*Pilgrim Yasmina Nye on pathway in Galicia  
Photo by Al Nye, Mission TX*

## Post Camino Blues: The Camino Provides

by Bob Scheckenback, West Islip NY

I walked from Pamplona to Santiago Sept/Oct 2014, and have been going through (what I understand to be typical) withdrawal symptoms, which I can only describe as grief and a mourning. I find myself trying to recapture – most of the time unsuccessfully – the feeling, the magic that I experienced.

I got a Kindle for Christmas, and as I started reading Camino books on my Kindle, I suspected that the authors were attempting to do the same thing. Their retelling of the experience was relatable and well written but made me miss the Camino even more. I even began planning to walk from Porto to Santiago maybe this summer or fall.

It was then I realized that it would be a mistake to try to recreate my Camino experience, for the exact same reason why it is so captivating and addictive. The Camino is its own ecosystem and creates an arena where *we* can truly live in the moment, in the now, even while we're obsessed with the idea of having it again. The very nature of the Camino is that it is fleeting, transitory, and gone as soon as it is over. I would never be able to recapture the exact experience any more than I could capture lightening in a bottle. My need

to feel that excitement of seeing the village I'll be able to stop in for second breakfast, the uncomfortable vulnerability of making intimate connections so quickly, the awe of the

history and beauty, the freedom and absolute security, and the utter joy of the simplicity of a bed and a meal. All of these are simply a reminder that the *only* need I really have is to feel all of these things in *this* moment. I will never be able to recreate what I felt because it was for *then*.. I want to integrate the feelings and lessons into now.

I may very well make that trip to Porto to walk the Camino Portugués, but it won't be in order to feel the same feelings. It will be about putting myself in a place where I can live in the moment and trust completely that the Camino will decide what I feel, because the Camino always provides. ♦



*Contemplating the mountains of León.*



*Imitation is the sincerest form of flattery.*

*Photos by Karine St. Onge, Montreal, Canada*



## The Whole Thing

by Megan Ramer, Chicago IL

While I was on retreat at a Benedictine Monastery in Chicago, the Prior was interested in hearing about my experience on the Camino. "Did you do the whole thing?" he asked. On the one hand, I walked 500 miles so YES; I'm not about to give myself less credit than is due for that sort of accomplishment. And I *did* walk the entire Spanish Camino: from Roncesvalles to Santiago.

But the path I walked, the Camino Francés, the *French Way*, traditionally begins in Saint Jean Pied de Port. So, in that sense, I was 25.1 km and a legendarily grueling crossing of the Pyrenees short of the "whole thing." Also, some consider Finisterre to be the "real" end of the Camino. You're not done until you put your toes in the ocean and toss your pilgrim's shell into the sea's embrace. And I'd stopped in Santiago.

But this isn't the issue: a calculus complex enough to prove or disprove that I or anyone else did "*the whole thing*." That's a false goal. It doesn't even exist. What does it mean to "arrive" while on a road that, as poet Edward Thomas writes, "begins many miles before I could come on its traces and ends miles beyond where I had to stop." The path extends before and behind and we walk whatever portion we are able, privileged, blessed to walk. And that is enough.

One Camino friend I came to know logged far fewer kilometers than she'd intended and she never made it to Santiago. But truthfully? She did the whole thing, without a doubt. And that's not just spiritualized vagaries. She had very real challenges to face and she faced them all. Each one. The way she confronted her fears was one of the most beautiful things I witnessed on the Camino, and I saw a lot of beautiful things on the Camino!

The Camino does provide you with what you need. Materially, yes, but also spiritually. She did the *whole thing*, I would confidently contend, because the path is eternal and our joining the path for a spell will always be temporal. The question is how fully we enter the experience, how much we open ourselves to be transformed, to let The Way have its way with us.

Did we find what we came for? Or find what we never could have imagined, but needed so badly?

Then we have arrived. ♦

**Editor's note:** Megan Ramer also provided this [audio link](#) for a segment of a sermon she preached about the Camino, entitled "Pilgrimage: Journeying, Arriving, Returning." Relating pilgrimage also to the Biblical journey of the Magi, she incorporated not only her own reflections but also those of one of her Camino companions, presenting at least two pilgrims' voices in one!



*Megan Ramer somewhere between Nájera and Santo Domingo de la Calzada. Taken by unknown pilgrim, never seen before or after.*



The shop in Calzadilla de los Hermanillos.

## Amigo on the Camino

by Hugh Baskin, Salem OR

The arid plateaus of the *meseta* dominate the central portion of the Camino Francés between Burgos and León. Some pilgrims pray for an escape from the *meseta*, but for those who are drawn to the quiet expanse of wheat fields bordering the Roman Road, pleasant surprises await. And so it was that I encountered my favorite Spaniard in Calzadilla de los Hermanillos.

To learn more about Hugh's favorite Spaniard, click [here](#). ♦



Amigo on the Camino.

## Chapter News

American Pilgrims Chapters continue to grow throughout the country, now numbering 28. A warm welcome to our newest Chapters from Central Ohio and Philadelphia. The interactive map on the American Pilgrims website shows where Chapters are located, and you can find a listing of activities in local chapters. If there isn't a chapter near you and you would like to explore the possibility of forming one, contact our Chapter Liaison at [chapters@americanpilgrims.com](mailto:chapters@americanpilgrims.com). ♦

### SoCal Chapter

In July the SoCal Chapter made its 12-mile St. James's Day walk with 39 hearty pilgrims and pilgrims-to-be from the Church of Santiago de Compostela in Lake Forest to the Mission in San Juan Capistrano. We were featured on the front cover of the church's August 2014 magazine being blessed by Fr. Thomas Paul Naval as we began our walk.

In January 2015, we started off the year with our Third Annual Potluck with delicious food and 40 attendees,

including Annie O'Neil from the documentary *Walking the Camino—Six Ways to Santiago*. We had a number of new pilgrims, who are planning on doing the Camino in 2015 or 2016, and veteran pilgrims who answered many questions and were able to encourage the newbies.

Upcoming events include a Q&A at the home of Co-Coordinator Anita, with another potluck in February in Orange County and possible hike also in February. ♦

Co-coordinators Marla Keese and Anita Baroldi





## Old Pueblo Chapter An Interview with Mikey Hill, Age 8

*Old Pueblo Interviewer: What made you want to walk the Camino with Mom and Dad?*

Mikey: I was watching the movie "The Way" and told my parents "We should do this."

*OPI: Did you realize how long you would be walking each day?*

M: It looked like a lot of walking on the computer.

*OPI: And how did you feel when you first saw the big mountains, the Pyrenees, you would be climbing?*

M: I thought I was dreaming, so I pinched myself – it hurt so I knew I wasn't dreaming. OH NO!!! I freaked out.

*OPI: What was it like the first night you stayed in an albergue? Was there a lot of snoring?*

M: We stayed in Beilari in St. Jean. At first I thought it was neat, but then I was nervous because the bunk beds rocked when the other person moved. There were 3 snorers that night.

*OPI: How did you feel when you reached the albergue in Orisson?*

*Were you tired? Did your legs hurt?*

M: WATER, FOOD, SHADE, NAP, SHOWER! I was glad to be there. When you take your pack off, it feels like you can fly. My pack weighed 10 pounds.

*OPI: What were your feelings when you arrived at Roncesvalles? Were you happy that the second day of the Camino was over?*

M: I was happy and tired. No more mountains to climb. But there was a man who was a shower hog. He was in the shower very, very long and nobody else could get in.

*OPI: So you walked and you walked, what did you do to keep yourself from getting bored?*

M: I listened to music and sang and looked for places to get ice cream and swing sets to play on.

*OPI: Did you ever get tired of walking?*

M: Every day!

*OPI: Did you make a lot of new friends on the Camino?*

M: Yes, and we all sang songs from "Frozen."

*OPI: When you arrived in Santiago, how did you feel?*

M: First I thought why couldn't the Cathedral be at the beginning of the city, why was it still far away. In the square I cried – I was sad for it to be over, but also happy that it was over. We met friends we saw in the beginning of the Camino and that was nice.

*Now for the big question..... would you like to walk the Camino again?*

Mikey: Hmmm, let me think about it – YES!!!! In 2016 we are going to walk from Le Puy in France to Santiago and then to Finisterre. I'm going to learn to speak French by then. ♦

*Co-coordinators Arlene Mourier and Aleida Howard*



*Pilgrim Mikey Hill.*



## Camino Reflection: My Camino Francés – August 27 to October 4, 2014

by Suzanne Heinrich, Ashland OR

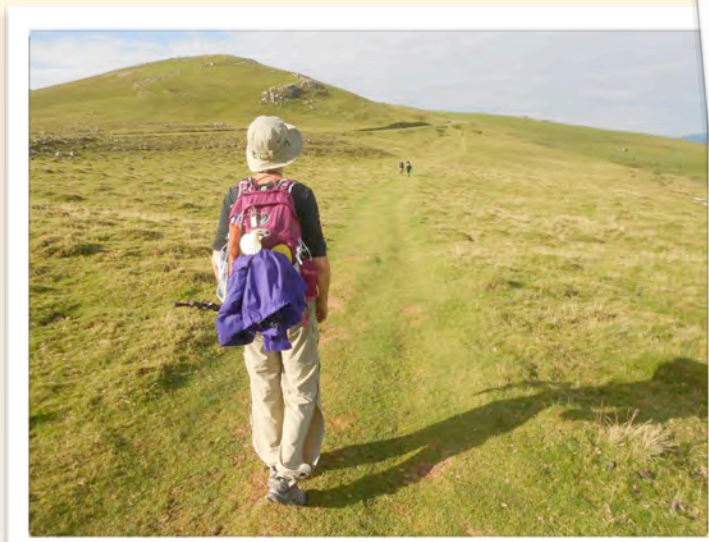
As my husband and I departed Saint Jean Pied de Port, I was filled with anticipation and at the same time a little anxious. As we ascended the heavenly Pyrenees, joy replaced anxiety. The weather was perfect – hot, sunny, blue sky days nearly the whole Way. I was sweaty and delighted. It was also fun and refreshing to don rain gear three or four times.

Thinking of my Camino in thirds, I was: enthralled to cross the Pyrenees, then walk through villages, lively Pamplona, and varied countryside to

filled with tearful happiness, inward, occasionally sad, but never had a “meltdown” – only “meltups!”

It was not a long trek, it was a spiritual journey; I began to understand what pilgrimage meant.

My faith grew. At times God’s presence was palpable, certainly in the Cathedral of Santiago, a truly sacred place. I viewed St. James’s tomb, then literally as well as spiritually,



*Suzanne on the Camino. Photos by William Heinrich*



*The main altar at Santiago Cathedral.*

Burgos and its Cathedral of treasures; mesmerized through the goes-on-forever open spaces of the Meseta to gorgeous León; saturated in emotion and spirituality by the mist-covered mountains and “Legend of Sleepy Hollow” paths in green Galicia.

On Day 39 we arrived in Santiago de Compostela wearing ponchos. It then rained hard for nearly two weeks. We surely had had a weather Guardian Angel accompanying us.

The Camino stretched my physical abilities. It was a personal achievement and took me out of my comfort zone. I witnessed beauty in people and places, was absorbed in history. Yet it was more: communing with Nature, God, and my inner self... hard to put in words. I’d never felt this way before. I was at the top of joyful, brimming with gratitude,

embraced the Apostle. The magnificent altar piece has a large statue of Santiago that one can walk behind to embrace. I hugged tight, resting my head on his back, asking for help in my promise to try to lead a worthy life. We attended Mass repeatedly in this beautiful House of God and witnessed the swinging of the botafumeiro – awesome, in the true sense of that overused word. Emotions and tears flowed freely.

Upon reaching Santiago, I had become subdued and even a bit melancholy. I said to my husband, “Let’s turn around and walk back.” I did not want it to be over. After prayers and starting to reflect, I realized “it” was not over, but only beginning. ♦

## Camino Numbers!

by Gene McCullough, Denver CO  
(aka American Pilgrims Webmaster and Chief Number Cruncher)

It's that time of year again! If compilations of numbers make you nod off, you should just move on to the next article. However, the 2014 Camino numbers are impressive and saw American Pilgrims and all U.S. *peregrinos* continue to increase their presence on the Camino. The number of compostelas issued to U.S. passport holders increased 14% over 2013, passing the 10,000 mark for the second year with 11,576 compostelas issued! The total number of compostelas issued during 2014 (237,886) was up 10% over 2013.

U.S. pilgrims continue to make up an increasingly larger percentage of the total number of pilgrims. Americans were just short of 5% of the 2014 total, behind Spain, Italy, Germany, and essentially tied with Portugal for fourth place. If you want to walk with other Americans, late

spring and October, when we were more than 8% of the arrivals in Santiago, is the time to go.

As for the routes travelled, the *Francés* continued to be the most popular, and the *Portugués* continued to account for about half of the remainder.

The number of credentials issued by American Pilgrims in 2014 was up 13% over 2013. More impressive perhaps is the raw number: 5,789 credentials processed and mailed.

So if you've waded this far through all of this minutiae, perhaps you'd like to see the full picture. You're invited to take a look at the [Statistics page](#) on the American Pilgrims website. ♦

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## Thank you, Rosann and Kris!

In November, American Pilgrims credential volunteers Rosann McCullough and Kris Ashton handed this critical and time-consuming task to OrgSupport, the company that now handles many of our administrative tasks. Rosann and Kris are owed a **huge** debt of gratitude for their work over the years – having sent out more than 20,000 credentials since 2007! ♦

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## 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. ♦

- ♦ James Adams
- ♦ Bill Arney
- ♦ Susan G. (Trixy) Barnes
- ♦ Hugh Baskin
- ♦ Ann Loar Brooks
- ♦ Jim Carpenter
- ♦ Cindy Day
- ♦ Pat Day
- ♦ Linda Fitts
- ♦ Lawrence Graves

- ♦ Peg Hall
- ♦ Suzanne Heinrich
- ♦ William Heinrich
- ♦ Andrea Hug
- ♦ Bill Jones
- ♦ Kathy Kennerly
- ♦ Marla Keesee
- ♦ Richard Mallory
- ♦ Yosmar Martinez
- ♦ Gene McCullough

- ♦ Mike Mikulich
- ♦ Al Nye
- ♦ Yasmina Nye
- ♦ Louis Pepper
- ♦ Megan Ramer
- ♦ Bob Scheckenback
- ♦ Joseph Stewart
- ♦ Lynn Talbot
- ♦ Thayer Woodcock

## Camino Miracle

by Bill Arney & Joseph Stewart, Friday Harbor WA

After we completed our Camino Portugués, Pam Stewart, wife and mother, met us in Santiago to walk to Finisterre, Muxía and back. A few hours out on the first day, Pam spotted a bearded old man scything in an orchard perhaps 300 meters off our path. He saw us, rested his hands on his scythe and watched us.

Bill raised his hand in greeting. The old man raised his hand. Bill waved both hands over his head. The old man did the same. Bill blew kisses. The old man reciprocated. Bill raised the camera to ask, from our distance, to take a picture. The old man nodded. We walked on, watching him, him watching us, until we turned up a hill. We glanced back to see him still watching.

Pam finally said, “He didn’t stop working.” We were puzzled. “No. He changed his work. He was scything. Then he changed his work to greeting us, acknowledging the pilgrims.” A few steps later, she added, “I’m going to remember that.”

When we got back home to San Juan Island and Pam got back to work in her bakery, it was clear that she had remembered. She spent more time out of the kitchen talking with customers, especially the locals and regulars on whom any island business depends, our friends. She didn’t stop working to chat; she just changed her work for a few minutes.

Jack Hitt, in *Off the Road*, muses on miracles. *Miracle* entered English from the Latin *mirari* that meant “to look on in wonder.” According to Hitt, Augustine considered miracles “small epiphanies that confounded our expectation of nature and creation.” Hitt’s Camino miracles included, for example, those moments at unmarked crossroads where, inevitably, “a man on a bicycle pops into existence” to shout, “Pilgrim, turn right!” For us, that old man “popped into existence” to show us all how to work better.

On the last day of our Camino Finisterre, we looked for the old man, or at least his field. We found nothing. Joe, who had an almost perfect “reverse memory” of the first day of our walk, could not find that miraculous place. Bill said, “The old man probably didn’t exist. In fact, his picture won’t be on the camera. Neither will the five pictures on either side of him. We hallucinated him.” But there he is—picture P1010613—still watching. ♦



Picture P1010613 - Miracle Man



## I Am a Recovering Multi-Tasker

*by James Adams, St. Louis MO*

One subtle and often overlooked appeal of a long walking pilgrimage is the sheer simplicity and uncomplicated routine of it all.

You basically have one thing to do from dawn to dusk, day after day, week after week, maybe even month after month – and that is to walk and rest occasionally so you can walk some more. Just walking. Just doing it.

Walking is as simple and uncomplicated a bodily activity as can be imagined. Rarely do you have to think about walking, any more than you have to think about breathing or digesting food or having your heart circulate blood throughout your body. These things happen thousands of times a day without your having to fire any neurons at the conscious level of your brain.

For pilgrims, multi-tasking or even the urge to do or think of more than one thing at a time falls away naturally. One path to follow, one step after another, drinking enough water, tending to any painful body parts. One goal for one day: getting a place to sleep that night. Not easy, maybe, but

simple, as simple as it gets, requiring, literally, a one-track mind.

Neurological analysis has shown that for people trying to focus on specific problems or do precise tasks, about 90 percent of what their brain has to do is to block out the huge inflow of distractions and backlog of cognitive clutter that is irrelevant to the task at hand. Deflecting distractions taxes the brain about as much as any other function. That, apparently, is where the grossly mistaken notion comes from that people normally use only 10 percent of their brain's capacity! Imagine how restful it is for the brains of pilgrim walkers, who have only one daily goal that requires little or no conscious focus and can freely give their minds and hearts over to all the daydreaming they desire.

For a pilgrim, the notion of distraction is turned on its head. Being pressured by a cell phone call, text, or email message into a conscious focus on some problem or other from the “real world” -- now that's a really serious and unwanted distraction for the pilgrim! ♦

## Advice from a Concha

*By Linda Fitts, San Diego CA*

Keep beauty simple.  
Hold no more than you can contain.  
Remain open.  
Embrace your incompleteness.  
Be multipurpose.  
Know that you are unique. ♦





## The World Needs Your Prayers

by Louis Pepper, Bend OR

At my Camino's end  
In the Cathedral  
in Santiago  
A young Spaniard  
next to me,  
kneeling on the cold stone floor,  
giving thanks for being alive,  
for walking a pilgrimage,  
for the people  
who needed him to pray.  
His knees ached,  
his head bowed,  
a painful sincerity on his face,  
he was naked before  
God.

The world needs your prayers.  
The unspeakable ones  
you claim you don't know,  
the ones you speak silently  
to the God you deny.

Think of  
Your friend with cancer.  
Does she need hope or well  
wishes  
Or does she need your prayers?  
Think of  
your elderly mother,

crippled by Alzheimer's  
talking to ghosts,  
beyond hope,  
in a place where only  
prayers matter.

Life needs you to kneel on the  
stone floor,  
feel the hurt and cold  
on your knees,  
and pray with tears  
in your eyes  
for the people who need it  
most.

That day in Viana,  
when you thought you were  
done,  
feet blistered,  
spirit broken,  
another step impossible.  
Somehow you carried on.  
Maybe it was the pilgrims  
blessing,  
the smile of a friend,  
a good night's sleep.  
Or maybe it was your  
brokenness,  
your grief and sorrow,

that called on God and the  
universe  
to throw you a bone.

The Camino teaches you  
to bow down  
to quit the veil of control  
that rules your life,  
to give way  
and surrender:  
To be humble,  
vulnerable and raw  
and cry out for mercy  
for when you need it  
and for those who need it.

Are you brave enough  
to be seen  
and show you feel  
another's pain  
and your own  
to the depth of your soul?

Don't wait until you are broken  
again.  
Do it now. God waits and is  
lonely.  
The world needs your prayers. ♦

## Congratulations, Authors!

Congratulations to the following members for the recent publication of their books:

- *Along the Way: Pilgrimage Scenes from the Camino Francés to Santiago de Compostela*, Robert France, Truro NS Canada
- *A Sociology of Pilgrimage: Embodiment, Identity, Transformation*, Lesley Harman, London ON Canada, editor
- *Preparedness Guide for the Camino de Santiago*, Matthew A. Toy, Berkeley CA
- *Spiritual and Walking Guide: Leon to Santiago*, Stacey Wittig, Flagstaff AZ ♦

This listing is to congratulate member authors and inform our readers and is made without endorsement.

## Blessed Are You Pilgrims

by Andrea Hug, Arlington Heights IL

*Blessed are you  
Pilgrim if you discover  
Comfort.*

The Camino...  
what better place to  
learn Comfort? It was  
everywhere.

Every pilgrim  
breaks down and  
everyone questions  
motives, ability, or  
sanity while on the  
journey. Then,  
encouragement  
comes from other  
pilgrims who hear,  
validate, or befriend  
during a break down.  
For one pilgrim,  
comfort gave reason  
to continue. For  
another, comfort  
meant a tip to  
manage difficulties like  
an injury or blister.  
Another listened to  
honor loneliness,  
suffering, loss, or pain. All were comforts that  
helped resist defeat while giving meaning along  
The Way.

Comfort came through consolation,  
reassurance, or relief. In troubling times when  
anxiety overwhelmed me and my spirits sank,  
another pilgrim  
came along to  
urge me  
forward.  
Comfort came  
quickly, as a  
“¡Buen  
Camino!” or in  
a longer  
conversation  
that affirmed



*Andrea finds comfort in the beauty  
of an early Camino morning. Photos  
courtesy of the author.*

me and helped me feel physically relaxed and  
connected. Comfort showed me love and  
support. People shared it in a moment of  
camaraderie and solidarity. Tender gestures  
showed true care. Throughout the pilgrimage, I  
was comforted by another’s thoughtfulness,  
their consideration, and their interest in what  
happened to me.

Through the month of walking, fellow  
pilgrims connected and shared the daily  
Camino experience. “Camino” meant  
something different to everyone as it is meant  
to do, and we each took it back to our home  
community to continue the journey. But most  
importantly, the Camino’s comfort reminds me  
that I am never alone, even in the heat, driving  
rain, exhaustion, hunger, or pain, even in  
internal chaos or external confusion, in the  
beauty of a full moon, or the changing painted  
sunrises, in a conversation with another, or all  
by myself. I am never alone. I learned that my  
heart is united with all Camino pilgrims who  
walk this path: before me, with me, or in the  
future. Ah, Comfort!

When I left Spain, I had no words for what  
happened there. Now I see that while walking  
the Camino, something mystical happened as I  
dealt with the practical elements of the journey.  
The Camino became a crucible for change,  
integrated through the rhythm and regularity of  
relentless walking. The sometimes mystical,  
sometimes practical process of connecting to  
others along the journey proved a precious and

sacred piece of the  
Camino experience.  
In the end, the  
greatest comfort  
came in knowing  
that I am loved,  
and that really, we  
journey together. ♦







## Camino Reflections Camino Reflections

By Mike Mikulich, Danville CA

### The Thought

There is a Camino not far away  
where pilgrims tread and  
thoughtfully pray

The Way can be strewn with  
rock and soil  
And wayfarers under the sun will  
toil

To reflect on our life in light of  
our Lord  
And His teaching of one we are  
in accord

A life so full and yet so empty  
This vessel of mine always to  
tempt me

To think of things wrought and  
what I will do  
When the journey ends, much  
further ado

So into our soul and hearts we  
take Him within  
To taste and succor, forgiveness  
our kin

And hope to discover that I am  
worthy  
Of God's great grace and  
abundant mercy

### The Action

A good rest tonight and then  
we'll start  
A morning a-fresh and  
determined depart

With credential in hand kept  
safe and secure

In pocket or pants, for stamps to  
procure

Packs strapped on, mornings  
start the same  
Water secure and hearts aflame

We try to leave our troubles  
behind  
And set our back to the cross  
and shrine

Hour after hour, we find our  
stride  
Day after day, the time will slide

All under one roof we sleep and  
snore  
to wake to feet so tired and sore

Onward we crawl, incessantly  
west  
to pray, eat and only ceasing to  
rest

And soon to be in Santiago the  
goal  
To lay our hand on Jesse's foal

That field of stars found  
centuries before  
Now concheiros respite with  
spires that soar

And sit with St. James and give  
God great praise  
For journey traveled and past  
wondrous days

Then to attend pilgrims mass at  
noon

Where God's light shines bright  
and we will swoon

To witness thurible's arc pulled  
high by men  
In transept high, swung back  
and forth again and again.

### The Reaction

Camino, Oh Camino you'll  
never end  
Just when I'm through you urge  
again

Down yonder path you'll beckon  
to me  
Around the corner you wish me  
to be

I'm coming again just not sure  
when  
But soon I hope before this life  
will end

So Pilgrim, if you wish your soul  
to bare  
Strap on your sandals and pack  
to forswear

The comforts of home and lazy  
mind  
For pilgrim road and daily grind

Where you will discover in very  
brief time  
The solace of peace and rest  
sublime

God's daily companion you'll  
become  
Loved.....and forever...  
succumb. ♦



## Welcome, New Members!

We are pleased to welcome the following new members who joined American Pilgrims on the Camino from November 2014 through January of this year. We look forward to meeting all of you at future Gatherings and events. ♦

- |                                   |                                |                              |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------|------------------------------|
| ♦ Holly & Jeff Abel               | ♦ Jan Davis                    | ♦ Penelope Hufnagel          |
| ♦ Roy Abragan                     | ♦ Gehl Davis                   | ♦ Anne Hughes                |
| ♦ Fred Ahboltin                   | ♦ Nelson de la Cruz            | ♦ Carol Hume                 |
| ♦ Tess Alan                       | ♦ John DeRuggeris              | ♦ Karen & Gary Ide           |
| ♦ Pilar Alcivar-McCoy             | ♦ Pat DeVaney                  | ♦ Roberto & Vanessa Illanes  |
| ♦ Roberta Allsman                 | ♦ Kathryn Dias                 | ♦ Lynne Ince                 |
| ♦ Allen Amis                      | ♦ C Don                        | ♦ Lori Irlbeck               |
| ♦ Michael Carl Anderson           | ♦ Mary Douglass                | ♦ Perry Jones                |
| ♦ Barbara Anderson                | ♦ Maya Echeverria              | ♦ Susan & Luke Jouflas       |
| ♦ George Anthros                  | ♦ Jane Eguez                   | ♦ Beth & Eric Jusino         |
| ♦ Donato & Vicky Arguelles        | ♦ Wes Ehrecke                  | ♦ Ron Kammer                 |
| ♦ Carolyn Atkinson                | ♦ Mary Engleton                | ♦ Marraine Kettell           |
| ♦ Elin Babcock                    | ♦ Lois Evans                   | ♦ Laura Krebs                |
| ♦ Mark Barry                      | ♦ Laurie Excell                | ♦ Paul Kruelle               |
| ♦ David & Pilar Bernd             | ♦ Rod Farley                   | ♦ Christina Lambard          |
| ♦ Carola Bernstein                | ♦ Lynn Farnham                 | ♦ Janet Lapp                 |
| ♦ Kelly Bilak                     | ♦ Kathryn Flanagan             | ♦ Kenneth Larsen             |
| ♦ Peter Bock                      | ♦ Amanda Fonville              | ♦ Mary Leykom                |
| ♦ Holly Boone                     | ♦ Carol Frey                   | ♦ Laura Lindberg             |
| ♦ Pat Braus                       | ♦ Duke & Ann-Marie Fuller      | ♦ William & Dimitri Littig   |
| ♦ Barbara Bridge                  | ♦ Ingeborg Fullerton           | ♦ Susan Lockett              |
| ♦ Denise Brogna                   | ♦ Merri G                      | ♦ John Long                  |
| ♦ Rebecca Brown-Nienow            | ♦ Sharon & Terry Gingras       | ♦ David Long                 |
| ♦ Kathleen, John & Linda Brownley | ♦ Angela Giudice               | ♦ Carolyn Long               |
| ♦ Robert Buckborough              | ♦ Anne Grauer                  | ♦ Barbara Longshore          |
| ♦ Becky & Todd Bunderson          | ♦ Henry Gregory                | ♦ Patricia Lucas             |
| ♦ Dawn Butler                     | ♦ Corinne Gross                | ♦ Majella Maas               |
| ♦ Ann-Marie Carlson               | ♦ Pamela Grubaugh-Littig       | ♦ Patti Maguire              |
| ♦ Janel Carrasco                  | ♦ Mark Gutierrez               | ♦ Anabel Martinez            |
| ♦ Jorge A Castaneda-Campos        | ♦ Marcia Hall                  | ♦ Denise Mathes              |
| ♦ Toni Cervantes                  | ♦ Robert "Bob" Hall            | ♦ Michael Matynka            |
| ♦ Cayce Chalk                     | ♦ Sabra Hall                   | ♦ Ms McGlennon               |
| ♦ William Clark                   | ♦ Dennis Joseph Hanna          | ♦ Stephen McGourty           |
| ♦ Andrea Clark                    | ♦ Penelope, Eric, & John Harju | ♦ William McIntyre           |
| ♦ Susanne Clyde                   | ♦ David & Blayne Harper        | ♦ Gail McNally-Welch         |
| ♦ Nancy Cole                      | ♦ Darryl Harris                | ♦ Pat & Jim McNeece          |
| ♦ Laura & Michael Collins         | ♦ Suzanne & William Heinrich   | ♦ Janet Meskin               |
| ♦ Brian & Tammy Combs             | ♦ Donna Helm-Yost              | ♦ Ann Meyer                  |
| ♦ Marti Conaway                   | ♦ George Herrgott              | ♦ Stephanie Miller           |
| ♦ Liz Cordero                     | ♦ Carlos Hinayon               | ♦ Ed Miller                  |
| ♦ Larelle Cox                     | ♦ Judy Hinrichs                | ♦ Patrice Moulton            |
| ♦ Linda & Francis Crisman         | ♦ Thu-Anh Hoang                | ♦ Julie Mullette             |
| ♦ Kathleen Dahm                   | ♦ Andrew Hogan                 | ♦ Bill & Jean Mullette-Bauer |
| ♦ Diane Darling                   | ♦ Laurie Horne                 | ♦ Barry & MaryAnne Nelson    |
|                                   | ♦ Kitty Howard                 | ♦ Dale Nienow                |

## New Members continued!

- |                              |                              |                          |
|------------------------------|------------------------------|--------------------------|
| ♦ Gina & Timothy O'Donnell   | ♦ Darlin & Rene Romeu        | ♦ Alexander Stroebele    |
| ♦ Shelley Oberwetter         | ♦ Pat & John Roth            | ♦ Yolanda Suarez         |
| ♦ Valerie Ohanian            | ♦ James Rowan                | ♦ N & A Susuki           |
| ♦ Alisa Ortega               | ♦ Suzanne Ruch               | ♦ Grace Tam              |
| ♦ Joella Pardue              | ♦ David & Anja-Leigh Russell | ♦ Gaik & Thomas Taylor   |
| ♦ Greg Pecheos               | ♦ Geraldine (Geri) Ryan      | ♦ Diane Thompson         |
| ♦ Paula Perticaro            | ♦ Harlan & Karen Sager       | ♦ Karen Throckmorton     |
| ♦ Wade Peterson              | ♦ Maria Helena Schouten      | ♦ Ettele Toole           |
| ♦ Michael Philben            | ♦ Lisa Schritter-Miley       | ♦ Josephine Trickler     |
| ♦ Curtis Pilgreen            | ♦ Nancy Schulman             | ♦ William & Joan Tucker  |
| ♦ Anthony & Nicole Porpiglia | ♦ Cynthia Sibley             | ♦ Flavia & Jorge Valle   |
| ♦ Janice Pruch               | ♦ Toni Silvera               | ♦ Jennifer Vassy         |
| ♦ Tim Quinn                  | ♦ Nancy Sink                 | ♦ James Henry Wade       |
| ♦ Sharmain Rambaran          | ♦ Benjamin Smith             | ♦ Victoria Walter        |
| ♦ Patricia Ramsey            | ♦ Rick Standly               | ♦ Thomas & Patricia Ware |
| ♦ Suzan Reece                | ♦ Dan & Pamela Starkey       | ♦ Cathy Watkins          |
| ♦ Peggy Reuler               | ♦ Susan Louise Stoltze       | ♦ Adam Wells             |
| ♦ Julianne Rittenberry       | ♦ Alice Straus               | ♦ Mary-Rita Williamson   |
| ♦ Ernesto Rodriguez          | ♦ Jerald Stroebele           | ♦ John Wilson            |
| ♦ Coralie Rodriguez          | ♦ Zoe Stroebele              | ♦ Bryan Winter           |



*Canal de Castilla, near Frómista. Photo by Richard Mallory, Baltimore MD*



## New Board Members for American Pilgrims on the Camino



Peg Hall

Peg Hall and her husband Russ have walked the Camino six times, covering sections of the Vía Podiensis, Camino Francés, Portugués, Finisterre, Vía de la Plata. They were hospitaleros in El Burgo Ranero in 2013.

Peg is co-author with Russ of *Second Wind on the Way of Saint James: A Novel* (2013) and *The Summer of a Thousand Cheeses* (2010). They developed a Camino website and annually teach *Hiking the Camino* through the community education program of Santa Fe College in Gainesville FL.

Before retiring, Peg was an administrator and faculty member in public relations and fundraising at Gallaudet University and the University of Florida. ♦



Yosmar Martínez

Yosmar walked her first Camino in 2011 from St. Jean Pied de Port to Santiago. She has been hooked ever since and has walked again twice: the Camino Francés in 2013 and the Camino Portugués and Camino Muxía in 2014. She also volunteered as an Amiga at the Pilgrims' Office two years in a row.

In early 2013, she founded the South Florida Chapter and has had fun growing the chapter together with co-coordinator Jackie Michelini. Yosmar is fluent in Spanish and Portuguese and gets by in French and Italian.

When not working, she likes to cook, write, go to movies, and travel! On the Board, she will be most involved with chapter coordination and Gatherings. ♦



Cindy Day

As a new member of the Board, Cindy Day will be helping with chapter coordination, fundraising, and nominations. Cindy first walked the Camino Francés from Roncesvalles to Santiago de Compostela in the fall of 2013. She attended hospitalero training in 2014 and served at Grañón with her husband Pat last fall. After leaving Grañón, Cindy and Pat walked the Camino Portugués from Porto to Santiago.

Cindy is a retired nurse and hospital administrator and lives in the San Francisco Bay Area. ♦



*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 April 13, 2015. We welcome your questions, comments, and submissions at [newsletter@americanpilgrims.com](mailto:newsletter@americanpilgrims.com).

iBuen Camino!

Annette Argall, Mona Spargo & Zita Macy,  
Team La Concha

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Zita  
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Michael & Martha  
Zita  
Martha, Jeff, Yosmar & Cindy  
Zita  
Carlos, Martha & Zita  
Cheryl

## Other Key Personnel

Webmaster: Gene McCullough

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