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# LA CONCHA

Newsletter of American Pilgrims on the Camino  
September 2015



*Alone from Los Arcos*

*photo by Gene Cheltenham, Los Angeles CA*

## Camino Impressions

*by Benjamin Hayes and Nick Hayes, Bonita Springs FL*

I woke up to the sounds of footsteps in a tiny French town near the Spanish border, St. Jean Pied-de-Port. I slowly tried to shake off the effects of sleep while I packed my hiking bag. It was still dark. I stepped outside and looked straight up at the mountains we would soon be attempting to hike over. The path was marked by yellow-painted stones, which were easy to spot although much of their paint had been washed away by rain.

The hardest part about walking long distances is keeping your mind occupied; once your legs are in rhythm, they seem to carry the rest of your body without effort. The slope steadily zigzagged up the mountains until the clouds were level with the ground, almost like walking into another world. The thick fog seemed to consume the whole mountain and transform the landscape; there was not the slightest sign of civilization. As the trail wove its way higher, it felt like being inside the eye of a hurricane; everything was totally still and peaceful within the huge cloud, with only the distant sound of cowbells to remind you where you are.

After hours of walking in this mystical environment, it didn't seem so ridiculous that people in the past believed in goblins and monsters; if these strange creatures do indeed exist, this is where they live. You begin to feel like a real pilgrim; you can almost see the footsteps left by the thousands of pilgrims who have passed before you. From the top of the last peak, the cathedral we were to sleep in that night came into view; it did not look far away, a few strides across the treetop canopy and I could be there. It was around that time that I quickened my pace, not because I was excited about stopping, but because beds were on a first-come-first-serve basis. The slow and the weak were left to their blisters, as they

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descended the mountainside.

After one long day I understood that to walk five hundred miles to Santiago, I was going to have to break this overwhelming goal into smaller and more manageable pieces. I learnt that when something seems too big, I should think of it in simpler terms: one step at a time, one day at a time. With this philosophy, walking became a form of meditation. ♦

## Message From the Chair...



### *Cheryl on the Big Screen in Spain*

Beyond our love of and concern for the Camino, international pilgrim associations have a lot in common. This was evident at the first global gathering of more than 150 Jacobean associations in Santiago de Compostela in early June. The event, sponsored by the Xacobeo, provided an opportunity for association representatives to address many of the issues facing our associations.

On behalf of American Pilgrims on the Camino, I was invited to present the topic of challenges and trends from an association viewpoint. My comments addressed the need to stay relevant to our

members, the challenge of managing social media, the difficulties of serving a membership that is geographically dispersed and the issue of rising costs of operation. Interestingly, the other international associations reported that they struggle with the same issues. However, issues most directly affecting pilgrims, such as security on the Camino, safety where road or highway walking is involved, the need to keep the Camino clean and free of litter, and the impact of the growing numbers of pilgrims, garnered the most attention. We concluded that solutions are not easy, quick or even readily apparent.

However, this meeting produced ideas, possible collaborations and the will to begin to tackle issues that have a daily impact on pilgrims and their experience. Our association will continue to be an enthusiastic partner in these efforts as they develop and will keep you informed. ♦

*¡Buen Camino!*

*Cheryl Grasmoe*

Board Chair

## With Sympathy

On behalf of the entire board of American Pilgrims on the Camino, we would like to offer our condolences to the family and friends of Denise Thiem and sympathy to the whole Camino community who helped and prayed for her safe return. May she rest in peace. ♦



## Xacobeo News

The Xacobeo is pleased to announce that this year, UNESCO expanded its World Heritage Site designation of the Camino Francés to include an additional 1,500 km of the Camino on the following routes: Camino del Norte, Camino Primitivo, Liébana (through inland Cantabria) and Vasco-Riojano through the interior of the Basque Country and Rioja.

Two of these routes, the coastal del Norte and Primitivo, pass through Galicia. The President of Galicia, Alberto Núñez Feijóo, has taken this opportunity to announce that the Xunta will open a

new albergue in A Fonsagrada (Camino Primitivo), expand wifi on both routes, improve signage and security, rehabilitate potable water sources, and expand other services to prepare for what the Xunta anticipates as a greater influx of pilgrims because of this new designation. Already this year, the numbers are inching upward, with a 4-5% increase in pilgrims on both routes.

This year, the number of pilgrims arriving to Santiago on all Caminos is up 13% over the same time in 2014, and U.S. pilgrims now represent the fourth largest number of pilgrims, behind Spain, Germany, and Italy. ♦



*Additional km of Camino del Norte and Camino Primitivo added World Heritage Site designation.*

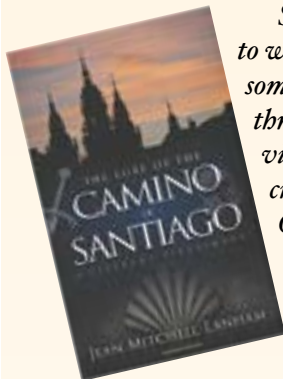


*Ponte Do Porco, Camino Inglés*

*photo by Mike Dunican, Lake Stevens WA*

## Book Review-The Lore of the Camino de Santiago: A Literary Pilgrimage

Reviewed by Paul Moses, Brooklyn NY



*Struggling to explain what it's like to walk the Camino de Santiago, I've sometimes told friends it's like walking through a storybook. Its medieval villages and fragrant forests help to create that effect. So too does the Camino's rich blend of history and legend.*

Jean Mitchell-Lanham enters those enchanting words with her book *The Lore of the Camino de Santiago: A Literary Pilgrimage*.

The author, who holds a doctorate in Romance languages and literatures, is an expert on medieval Spanish writings.

Most of the Camino-related literature she writes about dates to the Middle Ages, such as the *Song of Roland* or the *Liber Sancti Jacobi/Codex Calixtinus*. There are excursions into Ernest Hemingway and nineteenth-century poets as well.

Mitchell-Lanham structures the book around her own journeys on the Camino Francés, a device that works well. And so early in the book she arrives at Roncesvalles, where the author helpfully separates myth from fact. "Roland did not fight Moors at Roncesvalles but Basque Christians who wanted retribution for Charlemagne's destruction of their city, Pamplona," she writes, reflecting the scholarly consensus on the famed fight.

The book dips deep into the well of Saint James

miracle stories, certainly an important part of Camino lore, and Mitchell-Lanham has some fun setting out the legends explaining why chickens have been kept in a coop inside the Cathedral of Santo Domingo de la Calzada.

Some of the stories will be familiar to peregrinos who make use of a good guidebook or stop to explore historical markers and exhibits along the way. Mitchell-Lanham brings them out in greater detail, though. For that reason, this book will interest those who want to savor a previous journey on the Camino, as well as those who want to prepare for a trip by entering into the route's fascinating lore.

While Mitchell-Lanham has a scholar's credentials, this is not an academic book. Its conciseness and conversational tone make it a quick read. At times, it seemed almost too conversational to me: the writer can't resist a wisecrack, and that can detract from the enchantment of the tales she sets out.

Suggestions are offered for further reading, so the book is a good jumping-off point for deeper study of this literature. Those who've walked through this storybook may well want to continue on. ♦

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**The Lore of the Camino de Santiago:  
A Literary Pilgrimage** By Jean Mitchell-Lanham  
Two Harbors Press. 202 Pages, softcover. \$19.95

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Pilgrims walking past  
Countless fields of sunflowers  
Sunflowers with hearts

*Haiku and photo by Susan Sedlachek, St. Petersburg FL*



## Lepoeder Pass Closed to Pilgrims November 1 - March 31

by Gene McCullough, Denver CO

Given the increasing number of interventions by emergency teams to rescue pilgrims attempting to cross the mountains in winter, as well as the recovery of the bodies of pilgrims who have died in the attempt, authorities have declared that the Lepoeder Pass on the Route Napoleón is closed to pilgrims from 1 November to 31 March.

This decision was made after consulting with town officials of the village of Lusaide-Valcarlos; the Association of Friends of the Camino de Santiago in Navarre; the Departments of Culture, Tourism and Institutional Relations and Rural Development, Environment and Local Government; the General Council of Pyrenees-Atlantiques and the Provincial Police of Navarre, after consultation with the Navarre Emergency Agency, which coordinates rescue efforts throughout the region.

The route is well marked, but it can nonetheless be difficult to follow in adverse weather conditions. While great effort is constantly being made to improve waymarking and the incorporation of new technologies such as emergency GPS tracking and localization, the number of rescue interventions by emergency personnel, both

professional and volunteer, continues to increase, often motivated by imprudent or poorly-informed pilgrims who undertake the crossing without adequate physical preparation and/or the necessary equipment for confronting the difficulties of this route.

The situation is particularly serious in the winter, with very difficult conditions for rescues, including situations of risk for life-saving teams, given the terrain and climate of the area, and the serious difficulties of access, location and evacuation.

For this reason, passage through this variant of the Camino de Santiago in its first stage in Navarre is restricted. From 1 November to 31 March, all pilgrims are required to follow the Valcarlos route from St. Jean Pied-de-Port to Roncesvalles, unless express authorization to use the Route Napoleon is given by the Emergency Agency of Navarre.

Here is a link to the original article in the local press (in Spanish):

[Se restringe la entrada de peregrinos por la variante este del Camino de Santiago en su primera etapa, a la entrada por Navarra](#) ♦



## Congratulations, Authors!

### Recent Camino-related publication include:

- *Walking Distance - Pilgrimage, Parenthood, Grief & Home Repairs* - David Hlavsa
- *Chronicle of Pseudo-Turpin Edition and translation* - Kevin R. Poole
- *Keeping Company with Saint Ignatius - Walking the Camino de Santiago de Compostela* - Luke J. Larson
- *One Pilgrim's Progress - Lessons from the Camino* - Jo Paluzzi
- *Walking Through Sunflowers: Through Deepest France on the Road to Compostela* - Denise Fainberg

We hope to include reviews of these books in future issues of *La Concha*.

## A Camino Reflection

by Melissa Lawson, Shawnee KS



My husband, Brian, and I had the privilege of taking time away from our everyday lives and dropping ourselves onto the Camino de Santiago in October of 2014. I started the pilgrimage with Psalm 84 in mind; verses that the Children of Israel would sing as they made pilgrimage to the temple:

*How lovely is your dwelling place, Lord Almighty!*

*My soul yearns, even faints, for the courts of the Lord;  
my heart and my flesh cry out for the living God...  
Blessed are those whose strength is in you, whose  
hearts are set on pilgrimage.*

*As they pass through the Valley of Baka, they make  
it a place of springs; the autumn rains also cover it  
with pools. They go from strength to strength, till each  
appears before God in Zion.*

We discovered that the dwelling places of God in Spain are lovely! It was fascinating to think about the number of pilgrims who ascended, as we did, to Cruz de Ferro, leaving a rock symbolizing the burdens carried. It was emotional to consider the burdens of those who had come before, the burdens of those who had asked me to pray for them and to consider my own burdens. Leaving my burden would be the hardest task. You see, I was quite attached to that which I carried.

The struggle was, as the Psalmist described, passing through the Valley of Baka (the Valley of Tears). It was in these moments that God spoke the loudest and I resisted the most. I'm stubborn, prideful and vain, a product of fear that had become my heavy burden.

More than anyone or anything else, God spoke to me through Brian. It was Brian who kept encouraging me to lighten my load, let go of my pride. Once I did, I was able to experience this pilgrimage in a new way. Letting go provided space to worship God in the most beautiful of ways.

It was ironic that our pilgrimage ended in two days of rain. Remember the Psalm earlier? "...after they pass through the Valley of Tears, the autumn rains cover it with pools." As we walked drenched in rain, I couldn't help but see the rain as an image of God's grace and mercy. When I thought there couldn't be more rain, or that I couldn't be wetter, there was and I was...I "soaked" it in as a gift. ♦



*We lay our burdens down.*

# Road to Rabanal

by Julia Wagener, Alvin TX



The mist was still heavy as I followed the path out of Astorga. The sound of boots to ground interrupted by the clack of walking sticks settled into its familiar rhythm. Late October ensured many long stretches of meditative solitude on the Camino, something I cherished and fell into with ease. Yet it made the moments I did share with others that much more meaningful. The contrast amplified each state of being.

This day, morning seemed to hang on a little longer, the clouds a little lower. It was the wind and the faint sound of bells that drew my eye up the

road. Far in the distance I could see what appeared to be a man carrying a heavy load spanning well beyond his shoulders. The form swayed slightly side to side walking with a peculiar lightness. I stopped. As the form drew nearer, my initial impression was replaced by the gentle gait of a pack mule. I stepped off the narrow path, watching. The bells grew louder. Beyond the mule, now, I could see a smaller beast closely followed by its master.

We nodded silent greetings as the procession passed. ♦





## Camino Paradoxes

by Victoria Fineberg, Arlington VA

The life of a pilgrim on the Camino de Santiago is full of surprises. As I was walking the Camino in the spring of 2015, I compiled some of its paradoxes.

- *Walking uphill is easier than downhill, particularly in treacherous parts of Camino Francés such as the descent from Alto de Erro to Zubiri.*
- *When you are cold starting out in the morning or after a rest before a climb, you should take off extra layers of clothing. When you are warm after climbing a steep hill, put on extra layers to enjoy the views from the top.*
- *Standing with a backpack is more strenuous than walking. This is an example of a barbell situation, in which the extremes, walking and sitting, are natural, but standing is not the golden mean.*
- *After you walk with the pack for a few weeks it grows on you, and you notice its weight only when you take it off.*
- *Walking in moderate rain is more comfortable than in hot sun.*
- *The fear of threading a blister is greater than the fear of flying, public speaking, or commitment.*
- *Overnight stays in villages are more intimate than in cities. Some of my best albergue experiences were in Trinidad de Arre and Cizur Menor near Pamplona.*
- *Donativo albergues have a friendlier atmosphere than paid ones. San Juan Bautista in Grañón provides the ultimate social and spiritual environment.*
- *Flashlights are more disturbing than ceiling lights. Those packing with headlights on create son et lumière effects that are more suitable for night festivals than 5am dormitories.*
- *As you are approaching Santiago, your physical fitness improves but your pace slows down. You have more confidence in meeting your schedule and are reflecting on the experience that soon will end.*

Perhaps, the greatest paradox is that the simple life of the Camino is rich in decision-making circumstances. In preparation for the trip, you are agonizing over the contents of your backpack, footwear selection, and contingency planning. During the pilgrimage, you are making decisions on how fast to walk, where to stay, and when to turn back when you have not seen a yellow arrow for a while. And upon return home, you are contemplating the next Camino. ♦

*photo by Bill Arney & Patrick Stewart, Friday Harbor WA*

# Walking the Kumano Kodo

by *Yosmar Martinez, Miami Beach FL*



Walking in Japan was not something I had ever considered, but when I first came across the name Kumano Kodo about two years ago, it really piqued my curiosity. After reading a few articles online, I knew instantly, that someday, I would walk the Kumano Kodo, the ancient pilgrimage routes that crisscross the Kii peninsula in Japan. The routes date back over 1000 years when emperors and aristocrats used to walk from as far as Kyoto for weeks at a time to visit the three Buddhist/Shinto Grand Shrines: Kumano Hongu Taisha, Kumano Hayatama Taisha, and Kumano Nachi Taisha.

Most modern day pilgrims take four or five days to walk a section of about 75 km that has been declared a UNESCO World Heritage Route. Because the Kumano Kodo and the Camino Francés are the only two pilgrimage routes in the world to be designated as such, the two share a unique history of human spirituality and a special relationship:

- 1) Tanabe, the main city in the Kumano area, and Santiago are sister cities.
- 2) Recently, the two created the Dual Pilgrim program where anyone that has completed both pilgrimages can receive a special commemorative pin.
- 3) Near one of the grand shrines, you will even find a Camino marker indicating that it is over 10,000 km away from Santiago!

The Kumano Kodo is in a remote area and pretty unknown by international travelers. As a result, I only saw about 15 or 20 pilgrims a day. I walked through lush mountainous forests trails lined

with beautiful 100-year-old trees. The terrain is uneven with many rocks and tree roots. In addition, there are a lot of long climbs followed by many long descents, which are followed by MORE long climbs, making it necessary to adjust daily distances down. At times, I felt like I was on my way to heaven with a few stops in purgatory! This analogy is fitting, as there are many purification rites along the way. But even when I could feel my pulse in my eardrums, I felt an inordinate amount of peace and serenity, similar to what I felt on the Camino. This peacefulness and sense of accomplishment together with the soothing *onsens* (hot springs) in the area, the deliciously fresh meals and the delightful hospitality of the Japanese people make the Kumano Kodo a pilgrimage not to be missed!

For more information, visit [www.tb-kumano.jp/en/](http://www.tb-kumano.jp/en/). ♦



# Camino 1

by Richard Goudeau, Macon GA

When you walk The Way, reaching the tomb of the Apostle is, on first blush, the goal; the target; the destination of the journey. But as I reflect on my Camino time – full disclosure here: I only walked the first 100 miles or so – it seems to me that the trip termination at the “field of stars” can be perhaps illusory.

I met many pilgrims, from all over the world, and I wanted to know their story. So, I asked. I was amazed to discover how many were walking for answers to personal questions, the most prevalent of which seemed to be “What do I want to do with my life from here on?” This was particularly true for folks in their late 20s or early 30s. Many had excellent jobs before this ambulatory adventure, but they had quit/resigned because of a deeper realization that their job, though they often loved it, was not what they wanted; there had to be more. I found they often liked their job, but it was not their passion.

However, they were not sure what Plan B was. So they ended that part of their life, loaded up a backpack, boarded a plane or a train or a bus (or maybe all three in succession) and struck out for St. Jean Pied-de-Port or Roncesvalles or Pamplona or wherever their head and heart told them to begin striding toward Santiago.

The Eagles sing:  
*So oftentimes it happens,  
That we live our lives in chains,  
And we don't even know we have the key.*

Kahlil Gibran wrote:  
*Paradise is there,  
Behind that door;  
In the next room;  
But I have lost the key.  
Perhaps I have only mislaid it.*

I cursed the rocks. Their presence on my path pissed me off...for a while. But one day along the trail, I recalled a Spanish peregrino my wife and I met on our first day out of Roncesvalles. He was returning...yes, returning...from Santiago. He had



walked there and was now walking back. We were awed, but as we talked, he gave what proved to be sage advice. With a big smile, he said, “Walk slowly, especially the first week. Get accustomed to the weight you are carrying. (Did he just mean my overly filled pack? Or was he speaking in metaphor? One pilgrim told me early on that my Deuter would get lighter once it gave birth. Thanks, Brian.) And look around you; see the flowers; take in the views. Look. See. This is your camino, not mine, not hers (pointing at my wife, Roz). Yours!!”

Later, I truthfully trudged onward, and I pondered his words; my eyes were cast downward, watching my step. But something caused me to really look at those accursed rocks. And I began to see. By God, they were metaphors also. They represented all of us on The Camino; the rocks were pilgrims. They were different shapes, different sizes, different colors, different ages, and different genders just like us peripatetic peregrinos. And like us, they were stones strewn out along an ancient path towards Santiago. ♦

**Editor's Note:** To read the rest of article click [here](#).

## La Anciana (03.06)

*by Ann Loar Brooks, Baltimore MD*

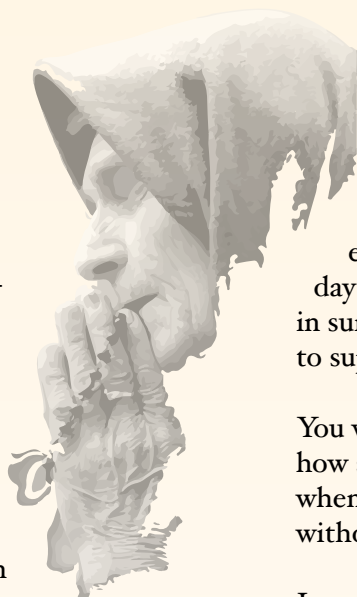
Along the steep paved way  
between La Portela de Valcarce  
and Ambasmestas  
outside the rough-hewn umber  
brown door  
of a mottled stone cottage  
you encounter a solitary anciana  
in a white plastic armchair  
at rest under an early autumn mid-  
day sun

Loosely tied over her head  
a paisley challis headscarf  
covers thinning gray hair  
Right hand  
lifted to her forehead  
blocks out the intense mid-day sun  
Left hand  
arthritic and gnarled  
lies in her plaid-skirted lap  
clutching an oak cane

You nod a wordless greeting  
and stop to inspect merchandise  
displayed on a wheeled cart  
stationed beside the weatherworn chair

She drops her right hand  
to return your silent greeting  
As she lifts the other hand  
to brush a fly from a wizened cheek  
you notice a pink beaded rosary  
clasped within misshapen fingers

On the cart you find  
twenty or so hand-carved wooden staffs  
one lone flimsy plastic poncho  
eleven scallop shells of varying sizes  
trinkets and gear that would add extraneous weight



to your already overfull rucksack  
You wonder how many pilgrims pass her by  
each day  
how many pause to look at her goods  
how many patronize her makeshift store

You wonder at the faith that  
enables the woman to sit  
day after day after day  
in sun and rain and wind and fog  
to supply ill-equipped pilgrims

You wonder  
how she survives in winter  
when days and weeks can go by  
without a pilgrim in sight on this path

In awe of her unwavering devotion  
you reach your hand into your waist pack  
to remove a one euro coin

You slip the small disc  
into her bent fingers and whisper  
Orar por mí, por favor  
pleading for blessing and prayers  
before you continue on your way

Farther up the unforgiving uphill road  
you turn back to see  
her right hand once again shields aged eyes from the  
sun  
but her left hand no longer clutches the cane

Now instead  
it now fingers the beaded rosary  
while her lips move without a sound. ♦

## Chapter News

American Pilgrims Chapters continue to grow throughout the country, now numbering 31 chapters. A warm welcome to our newest Chapter the San Diego Chapter. 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.org](mailto:chapters@americanpilgrims.org) ♦

### Texas Gulf Coast Mary Jane Miller

Mary Jane Miller, a wonderful person and a great Camino supporter, passed away on August 17, 2015. Mary Jane and her husband Chuck walked from St. Jean to Santiago in 2011. On returning, she wrote for La Concha, was founding member of The Gulf Coast Chapter and co-coordinator. Mary Jane was always ready to help aspiring pilgrims with information, encouragement and a big hug. The Texas Gulf Coast Chapter will miss our friend Mary Jane, greatly, and we wish her a final buen camino! ♦

Co-Coordiators: Linda Shubert, Kathy White, & Bronnie Brown



*We only part to meet again.*

*-John Gay*

### Orlando Chapter

Members of the Orlando Chapter welcomed the spring season with a beach party and walk in New Smyrna Beach, FL., April 4.

Chapter co-coordinator Richard Baldwin graciously opened his beach house to 20 enthusiastic members. After partaking in a delicious meal, past and future pilgrims shared their experiences and anxieties and bid a "Buen Camino" to those members that were preparing to walk the camino in June, July or August. ♦

Co-coordinators: Richard Baldwin & Casey Blanton



## Chapter News

### Jacksonville Chapter

Jacksonville Chapter members gathered at Hannah Park in the historic village of Mayport for a trail and beach hike May 25, followed by a beachside lunch and some camino camaraderie. Six chapter members planned to walk the Camino de Santiago on one of its nine routes starting in June. ♦

*Co-coordinators: Miriam Gallet & David Dufresne*



### NorCal Chapter A Heavenly Day at Angel Island

*by Laurie Ferris*

What do you get when a group of Bay Area pilgrims are stranded on an island together? A heavenly day of hiking, camaraderie, and an ice-cold, dirty beer.

On Saturday, July 11, 2015, about thirty Bay Area pilgrims converged on Angel Island in the San Francisco Bay for a day of hiking, socializing, and Camino story sharing. This trip was organized by the Northern California Chapter of American Pilgrims on the Camino.

Ferry boats arrived from San Francisco and Tiburon just before the 10:30 am meet and greet. One of the leaders gave a brief overview of Angel Island's history as the Ellis Island of the West. When he asked if we've done a Camino before, about ninety percent of the group raised their hands. He encouraged us newbies to ask questions of those who have walked the Camino. I love hearing Camino stories so I soaked it up like a sponge.

Conversation flowed as we dispersed into smaller groups and found our walking groove. We stopped a few times for photos of the incredible views

and tours of the chapel and immigration stations. Camino camaraderie was strong during a rest stop in the shade where everyone offered treats to each other.

I met some interesting people and learned a few tidbits of peregrino knowledge:

- For five to eight euros, you can hire a company to take your pack to your next stop
- Many people choose to stay in private albergues and some splurge on Paradores
- Some travel with a lightweight tent in case there's no room at the albergue
- Front packs distribute the weight and make it easy to access water and snacks
- There is a selfie stick attachment for walking poles!

I appreciated the advice from the experienced peregrinos. All agreed everyone makes their own way, and that the Camino provides.

By the end of the walk, an ice-cold beer was all I could think about, and apparently this was the case for many others. Fortunately Angel Island has a cantina, for I was one exhausted and thirsty peregrina. An Anchor Steam never tasted so refreshing. One of my new Camino buddies calls the ritual a "dirty beer," meaning, at the end of a day's hike on the Camino, he drinks a beer before taking a shower. I can get used to that. Salud!

*For more photos, [click here](#).*



*photo by Rennie Archibald*

*Co-coordinators: Rennie Archibald, Lin Galea & Cybele Peregrine*

# I'd Rather be Walking

by James Adams, St. Louis MO

There's nothing diehard pilgrims would rather be doing than afoot on a long pilgrimage--except perhaps providing shelter and meals for other pilgrims. So is the first observation about pilgrimage by non-pilgrims that it's selfish idiosyncratic behavior with only the weakest of claims to rest on some high moral, cultural or religious ground? That it's one more of the discretionary leisure activities of the world's ballooning middle class with enough money and time to be trekking in foreign countries for weeks or months?

Whether consciously religious or not, pilgrims are doing something because they feel drawn to it, because they want to do it, because they find it fun or at least somehow vaguely satisfying. Perhaps pilgrims should just admit that pilgrimage is their play, a sport, a vacation many secretly wish could last longer, perhaps with some even a lifetime.

The book *Homo Ludens* by historian John Huizinga is an exploration of the theory that the deepest tendencies in humans is to play games, simply to play, and that many invest so much more of ourselves in their play than in their work, or their "work" is really for them a form of play that they throw ourselves into happily as play.

On our deathbeds, most of us likely will regret that we didn't play more, harder and longer or at least that we didn't play more creatively or demand more of ourselves in our play. Even perhaps regretting that we didn't risk enough of ourselves in our play to break through our case-hardened self-images. Pilgrims likely will regret that they didn't start doing pilgrimages much earlier in life, and didn't do more demanding pilgrimages once they acted on that first urge.

Yet a pilgrimage might just as easily be seen as burdensome work, as a dreaded duty or an onerous

obligation, something of a nagging nuisance the would-be pilgrim may want to avoid because the whole enterprise seems much too daunting and demands interruptions of too many comfortable life routines that, for all the negatives they might bring us, has helped us fulfill at least minimally most of our duties and responsibilities.

In the Roman Catholic Good Friday liturgy with its list of solemn prayers for the universal needs of the faithful, the plea on behalf of pilgrims is that they be granted a "safe return," a backhanded acknowledgment that many pilgrims in the Middle Ages risked life and limb, sometimes their very existence as free persons, as kidnapping and being held for ransom or sold into slavery were omnipresent risks.

Few post-modern pilgrims put themselves so squarely in harm's way, but the traditional prayer for a safe return might still be relevant. After weeks or months of the potentially life-changing experience of a long pilgrimage, many pilgrims nowadays likely feel they need divine help for a smooth and stress-free reentry into ordinary life. One cannot indulge in something as counter-cultural as walking weeks on end with nothing but the vague goal of reaching a specific destination without having some significant psychological readjustment and reorientation challenges when returning to normal life.

There are two kinds of pilgrims: those who haven't made their first pilgrimage yet and those who have. The first is grumpily putting off what is probably the inevitable because a pilgrimage initially seems too much like work--but they still can't seem to suppress the urge to try it. The second is the happy pilgrim who has chosen to take time off to play, and is either on a pilgrimage or planning the next one. ♦



Camino Vista

photo by Gene Cheltenham

## You Gotta Walk that Lonesome Valley

by Woodie Guthrie - remixed by Beth Sharp, St Joseph MO

*You gotta walk that lonesome valley,  
You gotta walk it for yourself,  
Nobody here can walk it for you  
You gotta walk it for yourself.*

*Now though the road be rough and rocky,  
And the hills steep and high  
We can sing as we go marchin',  
And we'll meet at that big union by and by.*

*There's a road that leads to glory,  
Through a valley far away  
Nobody else can walk it for you  
They can only point the way.*

*I'm gonna walk that lonesome valley,  
I'm gonna walk it for myself  
Don't want nobody to walk it for me,  
I'm gonna walk it for myself. ♦*



*Beth Sharp walking for herself.*



*The forest in Galacia*

## Camino Magic

by Jane Carter, Seattle WA

This is the third year that Richard and I have served as hospitaleros at Santa Maria Albergue in Carrion de los Condes, the albergue with the "Singing Nuns." They received their name because every night pilgrims gather to sing songs from around the world, led by the Sisters. It is a sweet Camino memory for many pilgrims.

They also sing beautifully at services in the Church of Santa Maria next to the albergue. At these services they accompany their singing with a zither, an ancient string instrument a little larger than a guitar.

The Sisters belong to the Augustinian Community of Conversion, which has a monastery in central Spain. Many women from Peru came to Spain to join the Community, and now, according to the original agreement, they are returning to Peru to start a new Community there.

The zither is a very important part of their community prayer and worship life. At least two of the returning Peruvian Sisters play the instrument and expected to take a zither with them when they returned to Peru. However, it was too big to store in the overhead compartment, so they had to leave it in Spain.

While in Carrion, we thought about this problem, especially when we were in church listening

to the beautiful music. Learning that a one-way ticket to Peru would cost about €300, I emailed the Seattle hospitaleros who had served in Carrion, explaining the situation.

In the morning my inbox was overflowing with pledges! We went to the ATM machine to withdraw the money for the plane ticket. At lunch we gave the Sisters a card with our gift. They were overwhelmed and everyone cried. A Sister from the main monastery called and heard the news. She said there was a Peruvian priest visiting the monastery, and he agreed to carry the zither with him when he flew home the next day. The whole project, from the time I wrote the email to the hospitaleros until the Peruvian Sisters received the zither, took about 48 hours. They had the zither to accompany them at Mass the next Sunday! Camino Magic! with some help from God! ♦

Zither is the name of both a class of musical stringed instruments, and of certain particular instruments within that class. The word zither is a German rendering of the Latin word cithara, from which the modern word guitar is also derived. Zither - Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Zither>



*Sister Carolina with Seattle Hospitaleros Jane and Richard Carter, Summer Ott and Miriam (from Spain)*

## Why The Camino? Because It Calls You

*Chandler McLay, Glen Rose TX*

Four friends, Chandler 73, Krystyna 60, Laura 43, and Jason 43, met at Dallas to board a flight to Madrid, Spain. Upon landing we made our way via train and bus to St. Jean Pied-de-Port, France. Feet on the ground we rushed up a steep, narrow street to register at the Peregrino Office, and to make arrangements to stay at the Orrison Albergue for the next night. This is the first albergue on the steep climb up into the Pyrenees, and we had discussed going easy for the first two or three days to acclimate to the country, our packs, and footwear.

Next we found lodging for the night then headed into town to sight-see, eat, and celebrate. We found a restaurant serving Peregrino meals and lifted a glass of wine to one another as we proclaimed our desires regarding the next steps. Agreeing that we would each listen to our inner voice to decide to move faster or slower, and to do whatever called to us, we enjoyed the dinner and the freedom to get to Santiago in whatever way called us. However, we would do the first few days together to see how it all

felt to each of us, then we would just check in with one another every few days when we were separated.

This was brilliant, as although we hiked together and alone at various times, we knew how the others were progressing and we all met again in Santiago to experience the Cathedral together and scout the city, as well as make plans to visit Finisterre.

Having read several horror stories about blisters, it is remarkable that none of us got any blisters. As experienced hikers, we all wore liner socks, and after witnessing some horrifically painful feet that others were nursing, we were continually grateful to our situation. Two additional factors regarding our feet are that we often switched from hiking boots to sandals, and were conscientious about moisturizing our feet in the evening.

Since this pilgrimage, two of us have hiked again in 2013, and another hiked in 2014. Please see <https://youtu.be/OWJKNOldrIc> to witness some glimpses along "the way." ♦



*Lourdes, France*

*photo by Matthew Buzby,  
Washington DC*

### Quixote Revisited

*by Richard Goudeau*

Across Iberian ridges  
A hundred malevolent giants  
Wave their windmill arms  
Beckoning an attack.  
Instead of lowered lance  
Buffeting breezes oblige.  
Evil is often persistent.  
But aggressive winds seldom cease  
Their assault to hold it at bay,  
And this new ally allows  
Rocinante a rest much needed.

# The Last Day

by Patrick Stewart, Sebastopol CA



The last day is about to begin. The last day to wake before six in a roomful of strangers, the last day for a walking shirt that won't be coming home with me, the last day to walk the Camino Francés.

The last day of sore muscles and serene landscapes, pounding pavement and lush forest paths, ornate cathedrals and simple sanctuaries, unrelenting rain and blue skies, and the last bocadillo de jamon I swear I will ever eat.

The last day as my journey of a lifetime comes to an end before the Catedral de Santiago de Compostela, 775 kilometers from where Cheryl and I first stepped on the Camino Francés in St. Jean Pied-de-Port. The last day when new experiences and old baggage will sort themselves out in the Praza de Quintana.

I stop short of the old city at the Porta do Camino, not ready to walk the last kilometer. I have had moments of emotion and thought to prepare for

this last day, but now, now I'm hesitant to continue. Sitting at a cafe across from the Porta, I watch other peregrinos flow through the entrance without hesitation, with one thought in mind – stand before the Cathedral. I don't have that thought, that urge to continue, just yet.

I pull my iPhone and review my trip in pictures. Snapshots of moments that shaped this experience of self, spirit, perseverance, and friendships, step after step after step. Some momentous, some monotonous, but all remind me of what has been endured and accomplished. I close the phone grateful for that sense of accomplishment the visual memories instill. I'm ready to walk through the Porta.

There are two large prazas at the Cathedral. Praza de Obradoiro fronts the cathedral and is the "official" end point. This is where everyone finishes their Camino; this is where everyone celebrates in their moment.

By accident or intention, I find myself at the back of the Cathedral in the Praza de Quintana instead. Almost as big as Obradoiro, Quintana is quiet and faces the morning light I love so much. This is my end, this is my place to thank whomever, whatever guided me here. This last day I carry an offering of fern leaves and the purple flowers that lined my path the entire Camino. With gratitude, I place it on the stones of Praza de Quintana and have my moment. ♦



## Hospitalero Happenings

American Pilgrims continues to be a strong volunteer presence along the Camino. We work closely with the Spanish Federation of Associations of Friends of the Camino to provide hospitaleros in the seventeen donativo albergues the Federation assists. Many of our hospitalero volunteers have served in private, municipal, and parochial albergues also that are not connected with the Federation. Hospitalero opportunities also exist in France, Portugal, and Italy. ♦

## Hospitalero Trainings

If you wish to be an hospitalero, the following hospitalero trainings are planned over the next several months:

- Nov 13-15, 2015 – San Pedro Center, Winter Park FL
- Feb 5-7, 2016 – Presentation Center, Los Gatos CA
- April 5-7, 2016 - Belleville, IL (St. Louis MO Metro area), immediately preceding the Annual Gathering of Pilgrims at Our Lady of the Snows

Please check the American Pilgrims website for registration details. If your chapter would like to arrange for a possible hospitalero training to take place in your area, please contact: [hospitalerotraining@americanpilgrims.org](mailto:hospitalerotraining@americanpilgrims.org). ♦



*Bridge at Pontedeume, Camino Inglés photo by Mike Dunican, Lake Stevens WA*

## Contributors

- |                   |                     |                     |
|-------------------|---------------------|---------------------|
| ♦ James Adams     | ♦ Victoria Fineberg | ♦ Paul Moses        |
| ♦ Bill Arney      | ♦ Richard Goudeau   | ♦ Cherie Pagett     |
| ♦ Ann Loar Brooks | ♦ David Haas        | ♦ Susan Sedlachek   |
| ♦ Matthew Buzby   | ♦ Benjamin Hayes    | ♦ Beth Sharp        |
| ♦ Jane Carter     | ♦ Nick Hayes        | ♦ Patrick Stewart   |
| ♦ Gene Cheltenham | ♦ Melissa Lawson    | ♦ Julia Wagener     |
| ♦ Jason Driver    | ♦ Yosmar Martinez   | ♦ Sanjiva Wijesinha |
| ♦ Mike Dunican    | ♦ Chandler McLay    |                     |
| ♦ Laurie Ferris   | ♦ Gene McCullough   |                     |

## Eating Well on the Way of Le-Puy

by David Haas, Appleton WI

The Way of Le-Puy runs from Le-Puy-en-Velay in central France to St. Jean Pied-de-Port, the starting point of the Camino Francés. I hiked it in the summer of 2014, and along the way, I was able to eat very well for a reasonable cost.

The Way of Le-Puy has many small (less than 12 beds), private gîtes d'étape (French for "albergues"), and many of them are on farms. They offer comfortable beds, dinner and breakfast for a fixed price (30 - 35 euros), and they serve very good food. I ate meals with meat from the farm's animals, cheese and yoghurt from the farm's cows and freshly picked vegetables. Breakfast included the hostess's homemade butter and jam. Wine was generally included with dinner.

One excellent farm-based gîte was Au Repos d'Antan in the village of La Clauze. Our hostess, Sonia Vidal was charming, and her food was superb. Two other farm-based gîtes where I found especially good food were La Croix du Plô in St-Alban-sur-Limagnole and Gîte l'Escale in Larreule. Dinner at Gîte l'Escale was special because we ate with the family of our hostess Patricia Bourda.

A couple of places which are not on farms but which had very good food were Les Figuiers in Lauzerte and Chez Yvonne in Nogaro. Les Figuiers was a fairly big gîte, but the food was exceptional. Chez Yvonne was not a gîte. It was a chambre d'hôte (bed and breakfast), which also served dinner. The house was dark and a little musty, but the welcome was warm and friendly, and the dinner served by the hostess Yvonne Doat was extraordinary.

For lunch, I often stopped and enjoyed the menu du jour (daily special, 11 - 18 euros) at a bar or restaurant. Otherwise, I bought a sandwich in a bar (2.50 to 4 euros) and carried it with me along with some fresh fruit purchased in the village square. I particularly liked sandwiches made with a local pâté or with the jambon du pays (local ham), which is similar to Spain's serrano ham. The Way of Le-Puy also passes through the area where pâté de foie gras (goose or duck liver pâté) is produced. Don't miss it.

I found that the best guide-book for information about lodging, places to eat and places to replenish your supplies is *Miam Miam Dodo*. ♦



*Just before the harvest.*

*photo by Gene Cheltenham, Los Angeles CA*


*Heather and Oaks in the Fall.*
*photo by Gene Cheltenham, Los Angeles CA*

## Camino as Transition

*by Jason Driver, Crestview FL*

Let me start by being honest: I never planned on being a peregrino. I am an out of shape asthmatic who never looked at exertion as a process worth much interest. In addition, my spiritual need for self-discovery was equally comfortable with apathy and the status quo. “Don’t start none, won’t be none” was the mantra I lived by. All of that changed abruptly when my younger brother (and best friend) passed away from cancer, a year after an unexpected divorce left me as a single father. Loss is like being thrown from a sinking ship, into a sea of uncertainty and pain...and it was a big sea. The result of finding oneself in a sudden and crushing discomfort can lead to scrambling for whatever debris happens to be floating around us, clinging to whatever will keep us above water. For me, there was a lot of detritus to hang on to. I was determined to live the life that my brother no longer had, to show my young son that pushing outside comfort was the key to enjoying life, and to raise money for a scholarship at Florida State that my family had established in my brother’s name. I was going to do more than float around and wait. I was going to swim for a shore beyond the visible horizon that I had faith would be there.

There were various signs and events that occurred to lead me to walk the Camino. The final sign was discovering during a conversation with my mom that the cross my brother Joel had bought for me years ago was that of St. James – I had never made the connection to Santiago but I had been wearing the last push to go for years without knowing – any remaining doubt left that day and I bought my airline tickets that evening.

Once the decision to go was set, a new found determination to push outside my comfort zone propelled me forward. Logistics and being of English and Celtic descent led me to the Camino Ingles. Not as long as the more familiar Francés, the Ingles would allow me to tackle a full Camino, not be away from my son for an extended period of time, and still earn the Compostela. As I prepared, I remember spending huge amounts of time and energy learning all about the journey I was about to undertake. Although the Camino Ingles is the shortest of the complete pilgrim paths to Santiago, there was still a lot for me to absorb. From routes and accommodations to distances and elevations, I immersed myself in the details of the trip. Not knowing Spanish, I worked on learning phrases that I would need along the way. Being out of shape, I spent months working on losing weight, watching my diet, and walking farther and farther distances to be as prepared as I could be for the trip. I joined American Pilgrims on the Camino, read Brierley, and joined Ivar’s Camino forum online.

However, the Camino (like becoming a parent) is not something that one is ever truly prepared for, no matter how much effort is put in (as every peregrino knows)...because the Camino de Santiago is so much more than simply a journey. I would almost argue (from the comfort of home) that the physical part of the Camino is the smallest part of the journey...almost. ♦

**Editor’s Note:** To read the rest of article click [here](#).

## Grants Program

The American Pilgrims Grants Program supports projects on the Camino that in 2014 included the Mosteiro de Vairão albergue on the Camino Português and the Asociación Jacobea de Jaén on the Camino Mozárabe. The report from Portugal and the report about Jaén reflect how much our support means to pilgrims in those areas. The results of the 2015 Grants Program will be covered in a subsequent issue.

### Mosteiro de Vairão

Last July 25, Santiago's Day and our second anniversary, we opened the Pilgrim Museum as part of the Camino de Santiago Interpretation Centre. We hope you can come to visit it and participate! Mainly it is a delightful collection of stories (and objects) from the Camino, told by pilgrims from around the world (US, Australia, the Netherlands, Brazil... You can participate in the Museum, in several languages through the following link: <https://goo.gl/GAqa49>

Some weeks ago we also opened the new wing for groups with 30 beds; we now have a total of 80. We also had the opportunity to recover the roof and

to paint all the monastery on the outside and even restore the outdoors. You really must come and see it for your self! In the end we spent more than 60.000 euros; we initially planned 37.000, without the work in the outside. Your support was really fundamental in getting additional resources.

We will send you the final report and list of expenses as asked, but we wanted to share right way the good news! It was quite a work for us, but we are really happy and proud of the results. ♦

*Warm greetings,*  
**Pedro Macedo**  
**Mosteiro de Vairão**

## Start the Camino Mozárabe in Jaén

*by Cherie Pagett, Alexandria VA*

Jaén: A convenient gas stop on the highway between Madrid and Málaga, olive groves extending in all directions, highest summer temperatures in Andalucía; yet in over 30 years of going up and down that highway, I never once considered it a destination. Which only shows how little I knew!

Then in 2014, as part of the American Pilgrims' Grant program, the Asociación Jacobea de Jaén was awarded \$6,000 to refurbish an unused wing of a Trinitarian convent as the first albergue in the city of Martos, 20 kms beyond Jaén on the Camino Mozárabe.

We could never have quantified the grant's emotional impact on the members of the Asociación, nor the enthusiasm and dedication with which they labored to create this charming albergue in a jewel of a convent. The Martos albergue is only part of the nearly unknown efforts of Asociación President Jacinto Fuentes and his hard-working associates to establish the reality and the culture of the Camino Mozárabe in Jaén and to promote Jaén as the historically star-studded starting point of the Camino Mozárabe, joining the Vía de la Plata in Mérida.

The website [www.jaenjacobeas.es](http://www.jaenjacobeas.es) is lively, interesting, and continuously updated. Scroll down

on the left and you'll find the Pilgrim's Guide, The Mozarab Way of Santiago, in pdf format. Before you go, contact Jacinto or his administrative right hand, Verónica, and you will be warmly received.

I was amazed by the immense Assumption of the Virgin Cathedral, renaissance yet unique with its many balconies, inside and out. It turns out it served as the pattern for many later cathedrals in Central and South America. Jaén's well-preserved Moorish baths, built over extensive Roman ruins, are as impressive as any I've seen. Overlooking it all, stands the Castle of Santa Catalina, originally an eighth century Moorish fortress, and today a luxurious parador.

A little known fact: On 1 April 1937, the German Condor Legion bombed the city of Jaén in an attack comparable to that of Guernica – carried out one week later. Pablo Picasso immortalized the latter, yet there are few reminders in Jaén.

Maybe early next spring, you'll find yourself in Madrid, hopping a train from Atocha to Jaén, allowing yourself a couple of days to visit the city and hang out with the wonderful group of pilgrims there, then heading off through the olive groves to experience the Camino Mozárabe. ♦

# Memories

by Sanjiva Wijesinha, Balwyn Australia



Five years after I completed my Camino, I look back on many happy memories of people and places.

Along my journey I connected with innumerable folk with whom I felt united in what was a common quest. My slow pace of travel allowed me to enjoy the variety and natural beauty of the region – the majestic Pyrenees, the rolling vineyards of the Rioja, the forest-clad hills east of Burgos, the unrelenting flatness of the wheat fields of Castille, the snow-capped peaks of the Cantabrian mountains, the sparsely populated hill country of the Maragatos, the almond blossoms of the Bierzo valley and the Irish mists and greyness of Galicia.

Now back in my own home, when oft I lie in vacant or in pensive mood, I see in my mind's eye sunlight dappling on a stream trickling underneath an ancient stone bridge – or a windswept view of the Pyrenees – or an ochre path stretching out into the distance through flat fields of wheat. I recall evenings spent in the company of strangers who became family for a night - dinner by candlelight at the Albergue San Nicolas, a twilight singsong with fellow pilgrims in the lawn of the Albergue San Mamed de Camino, just sitting in the evening sun by

the river in Villafranca del Bierzo savouring a simple meal of tinned zamburinos, olives, bread and wine.

I remember the kindness of strangers – the lady in Ventosa who bought food for me and refused payment, the couple from Devon who shared their meal with me in Navarette, the optometrist in Carrion de Los Condes who fixed my broken specs without charging me a cent for her services. I still keep in touch with friends I would never have met if not for the Camino – Roland in Lyons, Fahdi in Paris, Leonie in Brisbane, Greg in Canada.



Big cities like Leon and Burgos I found impressive, smaller ones like Astorga and Ponferrada were delightful, the many little towns and villages were decidedly quaint. The views on the mountains, whether in the Pyrenees, in Galicia or looking across to the Cantabrian hills, were breath taking.

But none of these places was so extraordinarily beautiful as to hold me back. The Camino is beautiful enough to keep you walking because The Way was, in fact, my destination.

Walking the Camino was like reading a good book. When you reach the end you are sorry that you have finished it! ♦





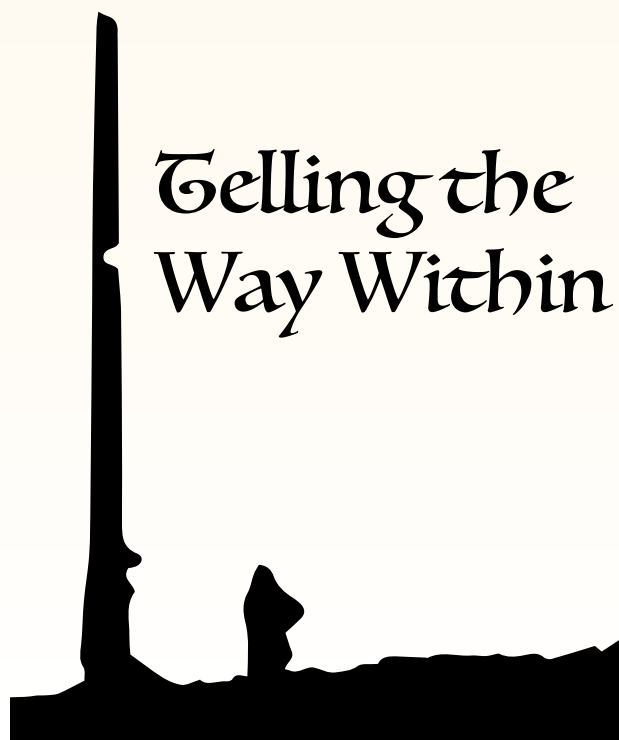
## Welcome, New Members!

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

- |                                |                           |                                    |
|--------------------------------|---------------------------|------------------------------------|
| ◆ Leah Acus                    | ◆ Malcolm Feied           | ◆ Connie & Bill Knauf              |
| ◆ Patricia Anastasi            | ◆ Laurie Ferris           | ◆ Kim Kolb                         |
| ◆ Cara Anthony                 | ◆ Lourdes Figueroa        | ◆ Hana Kornbluh                    |
| ◆ Anton Ascanio                | ◆ Victoria Fineberg       | ◆ Iola Charmaine Kresch            |
| ◆ Mary Sue & Marty Austin      | ◆ Kevin Foley             | ◆ Liz Labby                        |
| ◆ Judy Barnes                  | ◆ Robert Fowler           | ◆ Christina Laberge                |
| ◆ Rod & Ginnie Beamguard       | ◆ Lisa Frankel            | ◆ Roberto, Mercedes, Jennifer Lage |
| ◆ Charles Bell                 | ◆ John & Tracy Friedman   | ◆ Cherrie Langston                 |
| ◆ Charles Bell                 | ◆ Alma Garcia             | ◆ Ashley Lee                       |
| ◆ Helen Belletti               | ◆ JoAnn Garcia            | ◆ Cynthia Lenk                     |
| ◆ Joanna Bennett               | ◆ James Geier             | ◆ Jean-Claude Leon                 |
| ◆ Brian Bernhardt              | ◆ Skip & Alex Gill        | ◆ Annie Lewkowich                  |
| ◆ Susan Bishop                 | ◆ Andrea Girman           | ◆ Don & Susan Lundman              |
| ◆ Moo Bishop                   | ◆ Jon Goddard             | ◆ Kimberly Lupo                    |
| ◆ Ronald Blakley               | ◆ Ryan Goodman            | ◆ Sandra MacKinnon                 |
| ◆ Glen Blakley                 | ◆ Richard Goulette        | ◆ Bertha & Lucio Marineo           |
| ◆ Michael Blankschen           | ◆ Rachel Gross            | ◆ Toresa Martell                   |
| ◆ Brian & Kelli Boardman       | ◆ Sheila Gunning          | ◆ Darlene Maxwell                  |
| ◆ Silvia Bollinger             | ◆ M. Christine Hale       | ◆ Abby McCandless Sparkman         |
| ◆ Diane Brisse                 | ◆ Laurice & James Haney   | ◆ Jeanne McConnell                 |
| ◆ Deborah Brower               | ◆ Timothy Hart            | ◆ Eric McGrath                     |
| ◆ Clinton Brown                | ◆ Norma Hearn             | ◆ Carolyn McGrew                   |
| ◆ Lisa, Patrick & Nathan Brown | ◆ Emily Heim              | ◆ Miles McKeown                    |
| ◆ Mabel Cabatingan             | ◆ Tristen Heinzke         | ◆ Patrick & Alice McMahon          |
| ◆ Becky Caruthers              | ◆ Jame, Brian & Paul Helm | ◆ Sean McVey                       |
| ◆ Margaret Charpentier         | ◆ Jane Helton             | ◆ Joli Mercado                     |
| ◆ Christina Clough             | ◆ Ronald Henry            | ◆ Daniel Moore                     |
| ◆ Albith Colon                 | ◆ Jane Herring            | ◆ Donna Mosello                    |
| ◆ Ellen Cope                   | ◆ Neomi Heyman            | ◆ Richard & Denise Moxley          |
| ◆ Michael Costelloe            | ◆ Jesse High              | ◆ Lawrence Nelson                  |
| ◆ Kay, John & Maria Cramer     | ◆ Bill Hoopes             | ◆ Deborah Nelson-Campbell          |
| ◆ Diego Cuevas                 | ◆ Frederick (Fred) Horgan | ◆ Kim Nielsen                      |
| ◆ Elizabeth Cullum             | ◆ Maureen Horgan          | ◆ Kelly O'Connell                  |
| ◆ Thomas Curry                 | ◆ Sandra Hruska           | ◆ Leah O'Leary                     |
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| ◆ Michael & Katrina Elmer      | ◆ Karen Kenna             | ◆ John Rafferty                    |
| ◆ Kay & Vicki Erwin            | ◆ David & Pat Kissinger   |                                    |

## New Members continued

- |                            |                               |                             |
|----------------------------|-------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| ♦ Trudy Ramirez            | ♦ I Paul Scheer               | ♦ Maritza Soto              |
| ♦ Robert Reimann           | ♦ Heidi Schlaya               | ♦ Alison Stauver            |
| ♦ Laurie & Ross Rettig     | ♦ Janis Schmidt               | ♦ Mary Sullivan             |
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| ♦ Teresa Roman             | ♦ Joseph & Adelaide Seemiller | ♦ Richard Utter             |
| ♦ Leopoldo Romero          | ♦ Jim & Maureen Seibert       | ♦ Steven Watkins            |
| ♦ Claudia Rose             | ♦ Geoffrey Seifert            | ♦ Clara Webster             |
| ♦ Jennifer Rozean          | ♦ Jeri, Brett & Olivia Senor  | ♦ Craig White               |
| ♦ Mary Carol Ruppen        | ♦ Alexander Shaia             | ♦ Sue Wightman              |
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| ♦ Joseph Santiso           | ♦ Diane Shoos                 | ♦ Geoff Williams            |
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| ♦ Deborah Schafer          | ♦ Andrew Singer               | ♦ Kevin & Corazon Wrede     |
| ♦ Kristen Schafer          | ♦ Martyn Smith                | ♦ Jan Yarnot                |



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Way Within

**SAVE THE DATE!**

**Gathering 2016**

**19th Annual  
Gathering  
of Pilgrims**

April 7-10, 2016  
Belleville, IL



*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 15, 2015. We welcome your questions, comments, and submissions at [newsletter@americanpilgrims.org](mailto:newsletter@americanpilgrims.org).

¡Buen Camino!

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

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Mona, Zita & Peg  
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Zita & Peg  
Martha, Jeff, Yosmar & Cindy  
Zita  
Martha, Carlos & Zita

### Other Key Volunteers

Webmaster: Gene McCullough

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