

AMERICAN PILGRIMS ON THE CAMINO  
22ND ANNUAL GATHERING OF PILGRIMS

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## Cultivating Camino Connections



MARCH 28-31, 2019



YMCA BLUE RIDGE ASSEMBLY  
Black Mountain, NC

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WELCOME  
FROM THE  
CHAIR

Welcome to the 2019 Gathering of Pilgrims!

This year's Gathering theme reflects our recently adopted American Pilgrims' vision: We inspire all who seek the spirit of the Camino to connect with the global community of Pilgrims. As your board developed the vision, we focused on the Spirit of the Camino statement included on every credential we issue.

If you haven't read this statement recently, it's worth another look. It reminds us to remember those who came before, to imagine those who will follow us, and to appreciate those who are with us today. These words are particularly important as our community of Pilgrims continues to grow. They also reflect the purpose of this Gathering.

I hope you all enjoy the time we have together as we cultivate our Camino connections and imagine our future together.

- *Dave Donselar, Chair*

OUR MISSION

We 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.

OUR VISION

We inspire all who seek the spirit of the Camino to connect with the global community of pilgrims.

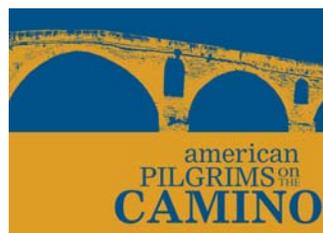
OUR VALUES

Our values are built upon the foundation of our collective experiences as Pilgrims on the Camino de Santiago. In every decision we make and every action we take, American Pilgrims strives to be in accordance with the values of **community**, **service**, **gratitude** and **simplicity**.

BOARD OF  
DIRECTORS

Dave Donselar - Chair  
Steve Lytch - Treasurer  
Emilio Escudero  
Tom Labuziensi  
Barbara Zang

Yosmar Martinez - Vice Chair  
Carmen Marriott - Secretary  
Sara Gradwohl  
Jeff Stys



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

American Pilgrims on the Camino is registered with the Internal Revenue Service as a nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization.

3:30 pm and on  
Blue Ridge Lodge

4:00 - 5:00 pm  
Blue Ridge Lodge

5:00 - 6:00 pm  
Washburn Auditorium

6:00 - 6:45 pm  
Blue Ridge Dining Hall

7:00 - 7:15 pm  
Washburn Auditorium

7:15 - 8:00 pm  
Washburn Auditorium

8:00 - 9:30 pm  
Washburn Auditorium

9:45 - 10:30 pm  
Robertson 2

### **Registration**

### **Guided Walk**

Led by the Raleigh chapter

### **Welcome Reception**

Hosted by the Western North Carolina chapter

### **Dinner**

### **Welcome Remarks**

### **Holy Year 2021 - News from the Xacobeo and Correos - Cecilia Pereira & Angel Pérez**

The Xacobeo will share all the new initiatives they are undertaking in the lead up to the next Holy Year in 2021 . In addition, together with Correos, they will present *The Way to Santiago. A Contemporary Experience of Pilgrimage*, a beautiful photographic exhibit that will be on display in the chapel throughout the duration of the Gathering.

### **Twin Guitar Concert**

The Paco Band, featuring Canadian guitarist Ed Stephenson, will demonstrate its virtuosity in the Classical Spanish, Flamenco and Flamenco Fusion genres. One of the most sought-after performers in the region, Ed has studied and performed in Spain and toured throughout North America as a soloist, a member of the North Carolina Guitar Quartet and The Paco Band.

### **12-Step Mingle**

Anyone interested in meeting others involved in 12-Step programs is invited to meet and talk about ways to maintain sobriety on the Camino, to share experiences, and to plan times together during the Gathering. Look for a designated alcohol-free table during meals when wine is served.

FRIDAY  
MARCH 29

7:00 - 8:00 am  
Blue Ridge Lodge

**Guided Walk**  
Led by the Atlanta chapter

7:45 - 8:45 am  
Blue Ridge Dining Hall

**Breakfast**

9:00 - 9:45 am  
Washburn Auditorium

**The Ignatian Camino: Recreating the Walk that Changed History - Chris Lowney**

The Camino Ignaciano, waymarked less than a decade ago, traces the route of an iconic 1522 pilgrimage from Loyola to Montserrat and Manresa, undertaken by Ignatius of Loyola, who later went on to found the Jesuit order of priests and brothers. Chris will present images of the route's picturesque and varied terrain and landmarks. He will also discuss the route's logistics and compare similarities and differences with the more famous Camino de Santiago.

10:00 - 10:45 am  
Washburn Auditorium

**The Vía Sanabrés, a Step Back in Time - Maryjane Dunn**

The Vía Sanabrés is a bit like a stepchild of the Portugués and southern Caminos. Still relatively unknown today, it offers a taste of walking a much longer route in terms of terrain, architecture, history and cultures. More important, it leads pilgrims directly to the Pico Sacro, so important to the legends of St. James' translation and later burial. In 2016 and 2018, Maryjane led student groups on this microcosm of the longer Caminos and will share the ups and downs of walking this route.

11:00 - 11:45 am  
Washburn Auditorium

**The Story of a Mulatto Pilgrim Accused of Impersonating a Priest - John Moore**

Despite its international attraction, the shrine of Santiago does not lure many pilgrims of color, including those of black African ancestry. Such was the case in the seventeenth century, too, which is part of what makes the true story of a traveler of blended African background named José Soller all the more valuable. This talk explores Soller's picaresque journey along the Portuguese Way from Lisbon to Santiago and from there on the Camino Mozárabe to Ourense, where he was arrested, jailed and put on trial for impersonating a priest.

12:00 - 12:45 pm  
Blue Ridge Dining Hall

**Lunch**

Draft Program - Subject to Change

1:00 - 1:45 pm  
Washburn Auditorium

**American Pilgrims on the Camino: So What Are We Up To? - American Pilgrims Board**

Get the scoop on the activities, statistics, financials, grants and future of American Pilgrims on the Camino.

2:00 - 2:45 pm  
Washburn Auditorium

**Breakouts (Choose one)**

**Camino Dharma - Community and No-Self- Deborah Hammond**

Many of us take the pilgrim path as a road to self-discovery. This session will attempt to connect the experience of pilgrimage with the Buddhist concepts of Inter-Being and No-Self. We can become most aware and connected when we let go of our belief in ourselves as separate, in-control individuals and realize our inseparable connections to the world and the people around us. The Buddha became a life-long pilgrim when he left his father's palace to seek answers to life's suffering, first as a wandering seeker and then, having discovered the Path, as an itinerant teacher. This workshop will mingle the Camino and the Eight-Fold Path to deepen our experience and understanding of the world as it really is.

Region Room

**Giving Back... Volunteering on the Camino - Cheryl Grasmoen**

Find out about the opportunities to volunteer on the Camino, including training and serving as an hospitalero or welcoming pilgrims at the Ribadiso albergue or the Pilgrims' Office in Santiago.

Robertson 2

**Don't Let Your Fears Load Your Pack! - Chris Slater and Rebecca Weston**

In this session, Chris and Rebecca will help participants determine the must-haves and optional items to pack for a Camino. They will cover differences for those staying in albergues versus those staying in other types of accommodations. They'll also discuss differences for those carrying their packs versus those having them transported. They'll take you inside their own packs and discuss why there is no single, definitive Camino packing list.

3:00 - 3:45 pm  
Washburn Auditorium

**Breakouts (Choose one)**

**So You Have a Camino Manuscript... Now What? - Yosmar Martinez and Stacey Wittig**

Many pilgrims return with a dream about writing a Camino book, yet they are dissuaded by the slim prospect of getting a book published with traditional publishers. Enter the world of self-publishing, which is rapidly growing and offers all sorts of opportunities to those with determination and perseverance to write a book. In this session, you will get tips and learn about the different paths to make your book idea a reality.

Region Room

**Meeting of Veteran Hospitaleros and Ribadiso volunteers**

This meeting is *specifically* for anyone who has *already* participated in the American Pilgrims on the Camino hospitalero training program, who has served as an hospitalero or as a volunteer at the albergue in Ribadiso. The focus will be on sharing information about the ways that hospitalero service is changing on the Camino as well as issues that are commonly arising. Of course, we'll have the opportunity to share information on serving at the various Spanish Federation and other albergues and to enjoy each other's company.

Robertson 2

**New Pilgrim Q & A - Amy Donselar**

Are you considering walking the Camino de Santiago and don't know where to start or are you already planning your pilgrimage and still have questions? This interactive session will focus on pilgrimage basics, including where to begin (literally and figuratively), costs, what to expect, and resources and support you can access. This session will not cover packing lists and equipment, but it is the place to ask, without fear of embarrassment, the questions holding you back from walking your first Camino.

4:00 - 4:45 pm  
Washburn Auditorium

**Bread and Culture on the Camino: *La Fiesta del Pan* - Allison Smith**

Sharing bread with fellow pilgrims is perhaps as much a part of the Camino experience as walking itself. The bread of the village of Cea stands out as the apex of bread culture on the Via de la Plata. The fresh loaves of Cea have been renowned since the Middle Ages; an annual festival celebrates the bread and those who bake it. In this session we explore the culture, taste and celebration of bread in Cea and the surrounding areas on the road to Santiago.

FRIDAY  
MARCH 29

5:00 - 5:45 pm  
Washburn Auditorium

**Santiago and Mohammed: Burgos and the Legend of El Cid- Cynthia Slagter**

Beneath the soaring dome of the Cathedral of Burgos lies the tomb of Rodrigo Díaz de Vivar, El Cid, the complicated hero of the medieval epic poem. At times a brave Christian warrior battling Muslim infidels in the name of God and Santiago, at times a wily ally of Moorish leaders, El Cid embodied the conflicts of his era. Learn more about the Cid of legend and history and gain a new understanding of the monuments and hidden historical corners of Burgos.

5:45 pm - 6:00 pm  
Washburn Auditorium

**Special Guest Appearance**

6:15 pm - 7:15 pm  
Blue Ridge Dining Hall

**Dinner**

7:30 pm - 9:30 pm  
Washburn Auditorium

**Screening of *Strangers on the Earth* followed by Q&A with Patrick Terry, film producer**

Dane Johansen is an American cellist who in 2014 walked the Camino with his instrument on his back and performed music for fellow pilgrims. He soon discovered that the paths we travel through life are often uncomfortably magnified by the reality of life on the Camino. Accompanied by the vast landscapes, the haunting music of Bach, and the personal struggles and joys of the pilgrims encountered along the way, *Strangers on the Earth* examines the physical, mental and spiritual aspects of the concept of "journey" and the vital role it can play as part of the human experience.

Draft Program - Subject to Change

SATURDAY  
MARCH 30

7:00 - 8:00 am  
Blue Ridge Lodge

7:45 - 8:45 am  
Blue Ridge Dining Hall

9:00 - 9:45 am  
Washburn Auditorium

10:00 - 10:45 am  
Washburn Auditorium

11:00 - 11:45 am  
Washburn

### **Meditative Walk - led by Deborah Hammond**

### **Breakfast**

### **Connecting with the Sacred - Kip Redick**

Sacred places serve as conduits between human beings and the holy. Pilgrimage involves humans traversing various landscapes in search of sacred encounters associated with particular places, which mediate sacred communication. Sacred communication in this context involves sojourners engaged in embodied praying, meditating and contemplating as they move across an environment. Along sacred journey routes, pilgrims encounter the holy through images, icons, social relations, architecture, landforms, wildlife and other varieties of symbolic communication rooted in concrete experience. This session will view these connections through a phenomenological exploration of sacred communication through sacred journeys.

### **Returning from the Camino - Alexander Shaia**

Often, we believe the Camino ends somewhere in Spain. We burn our clothes and celebrate its conclusion. Then we return home to discover we are interiorly wandering, disoriented or even acutely depressed. A core reason for these reactions is that we are not prepared for the months of work needed upon our return home. The return is not "post-Camino," but rather it is the final, essential piece of deep pilgrimage. In this session, Alexander explores the gifts and challenges of each part of the pilgrimage and especially the work of returning home.

### **Breakouts (Choose one)**

#### ***Encuentro Musical* - Jane Carter**

Music has always been an essential part of the Camino experience. Medieval pilgrims sang songs and played instruments to inspire and have fun and to build community. An *encuentro musical*, or musical meeting, still takes place in various ways across the Camino. Jane will lead an *encuentro* similar to what happens at Santa María Albergue in Carrión de los Condes. Participants will get to know each other and sing Camino songs. We will practice *Utreia!* so we can lead the singing during the Shell Ceremony. Bring your voice and instruments and be prepared to have a great time!

Draft Program - Subject to Change

11:00 - 11:45 am  
Region

**Breakouts (continued)**

**Strengthening the American Pilgrims Community - Carmen Marriott, Jeff Stys and Emilio Escudero**

If you want to have an impact in American Pilgrims on the Camino, consider becoming a volunteer for the organization. A variety of opportunities exist, from serving on an American Pilgrims committee to leading a local chapter to running for the organization's board. Learn how you can make a difference in the global community of pilgrims.

Robertson 2

**Pilgrim First Aid - Daniel De Kay**

In this perennial favorite presentation, Daniel discusses and demonstrates the recognition and treatment of the most common pilgrim ailments. This session is useful for pilgrims, backpackers and travelers in general.

12:00 - 12:45 pm  
Blue Ridge Dining Hall

**Lunch**

1:00 - 1:45 pm  
Washburn Auditorium

**Breakouts (Choose one)**

***Albergues con Encanto* - Lynn Talbot**

Most pilgrims will recall memorable stays at a few albergues from their Camino. But what elements come together to make a specific albergue stand out? In this session, Lynn will discuss particular characteristics that influence our perceptions of why these special places stand out and will share her personal favorites.

Region

**Yes, You CAN Take Great Photos on the Camino with Your Smartphone - Sara Gradwohl**

Many people now carry a smartphone on the Camino, taking pictures and video, texting, emailing, and otherwise staying in touch with family and friends. How familiar are you with what your smartphone camera can do? The best camera is the one you know how to use. Struggling over the Pyrenees isn't the time to learn how to take quality pictures. In this session, you'll learn some easy tips and tricks to improve your photography. You'll gain the knowledge and skills to take photos you'll proudly share with family and friends and perhaps submit to La Concha.

2:00 - 2:45 pm  
Washburn Auditorium

**An Ancient Practice in the Modern World: Technology and the Camino de Santiago - Roni Jackson-Kerr**

In this session, we will discuss the myriad ways technology is affecting the Camino de Santiago and pilgrimage in general. How can we reconcile this ancient practice of pilgrimage within the demands and norms of the modern world? What considerations should we as pilgrims make to ensure that we are getting the most out of our pilgrimage in the midst of a hyper-connected world? Are the pressures of the digital world inspiring more people to seek out pilgrimage as an escape? Is pilgrimage doomed?

3:00 - 3:45 pm  
Washburn Auditorium

**The Chemin du Puy - Beth Jusino**

The 730-kilometer section of the Camino that begins in Le Puy-en-Velay is one of the oldest recorded pilgrim routes to Santiago. It passes through some of the most beautiful villages and countrysides of France, but it's still uncharted territory for many Americans. In this session, we will explore the Chemin du Puy, also known as the Via Podiensis, its history and spiritual significance. We'll also discuss the practicalities of housing, guidebooks and food as well as what sets this route apart from other, more familiar parts of the Camino route network.

4:00-4:45  
Washburn Auditorium

**Ecology of Pilgrimage - Peggy Eppig**

The relationship of pilgrims to the land on which they travel is a critical but often overlooked aspect of the experience itself. How can we as pilgrims connect deeply to our surroundings on the Camino, in both the natural and built environment, in ways that enrich our understanding of the sacred journey? Learn how to read the landscape, employ a nature journal, and write to enrich and enliven your pilgrimage experience.

5:00 - 5:45 pm  
Chapel

**Shell Ceremony**

Join us in honoring those departing on their first Camino.

5:45 - 6:00 pm  
Blue Ridge Lodge

**Group Photo**

6:00 - 6:45 pm  
Blue Ridge Dining Hall

**Dinner**

7:00 - 8:00 pm  
Washburn Auditorium

### **Raffle and Silent Auction**

8:15 - 9:00 pm  
Washburn Auditorium

### ***A Muiñeira de Chantada* (The Miller's Wife of Chantada) - Western North Carolina (Asheville) Chapter**

The Western North Carolina chapter will introduce and lead us in the beautiful Galician tradition of *A Muiñeira de Chantada*. The abundance of hills and rain in northwestern Spain led to a profusion of small, water-powered mills where local people would take their grain to be milled. Since this was a time-consuming process, it became the custom for the miller's wife (*muiñeira* in Galician, the local language) to organize some entertainment for those waiting, hence the regional folk dance with bagpipe accompaniment. Chantada, a delightful little camino town in the middle of Galicia, gives its name to the most popular *muiñeira*.

9:00 - 10:30 pm  
Washburn Auditorium

### **Camino Cabaret**

Camino Cabaret evokes evenings at the albergue, when pilgrims share tales, song and camaraderie. Gathering participants are invited to share Camino songs, poems or skits with other pilgrims in the informal setting and interactive showcase of Camino Cabaret. We encourage individuals as well as groups to participate.

8:00 - 8:45 am  
Blue Ridge Dining Hall

### **Breakfast**

9:00 - 9:45 am  
Washburn Auditorium

### **Transformation Through Hospitality and Pain - Sharenda Barlar**

In today's global and political environment, the idea of hospitality to strangers can seem a lost virtue. In addition, Western culture in particular seeks to avoid pain and suffering at all costs. However, hospitality and pain/suffering are two constants along the Camino. These elements often work hand in hand and are essential in the transformative process that can take place while walking the Camino.

10:00 - 10:45 am  
Washburn Auditorium

### **Connecting on Camino and Beyond... - Elaine Hopkins**

Have you noticed how the Camino brings out the best in us? It enables us to connect more deeply with ourselves, others and our surroundings. Ever wondered what's at play? Join Elaine as she weaves pilgrim encounters and coaching concepts into a story that explores how the Camino can lead us to live beyond our labels and how we can bring that treasure home.

11:00 - 11:45 am  
Washburn Auditorium

### **Bringing the Camino Home: The Asheville Camino Story - Mark Cobb**

Over cups of coffee at a weekly *tertulia* in Asheville, a group of veteran *peregrinos* mused about developing a 10-15 mile walk through town. Around that time, a local couple shared a GPS route they used as their training walk for an upcoming Camino. In this session you will hear how the Western North Carolina chapter developed a waymarked, 16-mile Camino that has become a monthly chapter event. The chapter has hosted two other chapters of American Pilgrims on the Camino for weekend "mini-Caminos" and communal pilgrim dinners.

12:00 pm

¡Adiós and Buen Camino! Sack lunch available for take out.

Sharenda Holland  
Barlar

Sharenda Holland Barlar has taught Spanish at Wheaton College since 2000 and has directed programs to Spain for the last 16 years. In 2015 she walked the Camino Francés for the first time and fell in love with its history, art, culture and community. In 2017, she piloted a Pilgrimage to Santiago program at her college, and she and 10 students walked the Camino Francés for Spanish language credit. She has published several articles on the transformative nature of the Camino. In 2019, she will again walk The Way of St. James with students.

Jane Carter

Jane Carter walked the Camino Francés with her husband, Richard, in 2008. They have returned every year since to serve as hospitaleros. For the past six years they have volunteered at Santa María Albergue in Carrión de los Condes, "the house of the singing nuns." Jane loved the daily *encuentro musical* and decided to learn to play the guitar so she could share music with pilgrims. She is excited to share this experience with pilgrims at the 2019 Gathering.

Mark Cobb

Mark Cobb walked his first Camino from St. Jean Pied-de-Port to Santiago in 2012. He has returned to Spain and Portugal multiple times to walk the Camino Portugués, Camino del Norte, Camino Lebaniego, Camino Vadiniense, Camino San Salvador and Camino Primitivo. In the past few years, he has extended his walking to trails in Switzerland, Italy, Ireland and Wales. Mark is a co-coordinator of the Western North Carolina chapter of American Pilgrims on the Camino.

Daniel De Kay

In 2002 Daniel De Kay walked from St. Jean Pied-de-Port to Finisterre and back. He has since returned to the Camino Francés several times and has walked the Voie du Puy, Via de la Plata and Camino Portugués. He has been a volunteer hospitalero multiple times, and he served on the American Pilgrims board of directors for five years. Since 2004 he has been the lead trainer for the Hospitalero Training Program of American Pilgrims on the Camino and is a liaison with the Spanish Federación de Asociaciones de Amigos del Camino. Professionally, he has taught wilderness medicine courses around the world.

## Amy Donselar

Amy Donselar walked the Camino Francés in July/August 2013 with her husband and son. She was, at first, skeptical that she could complete such a trek. She felt too out of shape. She had never heard of the Camino. And the thought of dorm-style accommodations was not her ideal vacation. But being a goal-oriented type, she thought collecting those stamps was appealing. As was easing up on the dieting when walking 12-15 miles a day! So, she trained, they walked, and like so many others, she was hooked. She has since walked the Voie du Piemont route through the Pyrenees, finishing where her first journey started in St. Jean Pied-de-Port.

## Maryjane Dunn

Maryjane Dunn's path has followed the Camino since before there were yellow arrows. After her initial pilgrimage from St. Jean Pied-de-Port to Santiago de Compostela in 1979 she continued her journey (allegorically speaking) to shrines of knowledge (libraries) in order to co-author a bibliography of all-things-Santiago-pilgrimage related. She tries to stay on the medieval Camino of the *Codex Calixtinus*, having co-edited and translated the Miracles and the *Translatio* and is currently working on Book One's sermons and liturgy. She often finds herself on less well-traveled paths, such as those leading to late-19th-century pilgrim stories and to discerning what medieval and modern pilgrims have in common.

## Peggy Eppig

Peggy Eppig is a professor of environmental studies and environmental history at Goucher College in Baltimore, MD. Pilgrimage has long been her passion, walking long trails in the United States or in Spain, England and Scotland. Her book project, *Ecology of Pilgrimage*, will explore how engagement with nature and landscape help us find meaning and guidance in our journeys. She is a 2017 recipient of the George Greenia Fellowship in Pilgrimage Studies.

## Deborah Hammond

Born and raised in New York, Deborah Hammond has lived in Tacoma, WA, for the past thirty years. A primary and hospice care physician, she became a pilgrim after retirement, walking the Camino Francés in 2015 and the Norte-Primitivo route in 2017. She has volunteered as an hospitalera in Carrión de los Condes and Nájera on the Camino Francés and Alcuéscar on the Vía de la Plata. Deborah is a yoga teacher and practitioner. She is also a meditator and dharma student in the Insight Meditation tradition.

## Sara Gradwohl

Sara Gradwohl is a traveler with an incurable case of wanderlust, having visited more than 100 countries. Happiest outdoors, she has walked the Camino three times (Francés and Portugués). Sara has climbed Mount Fuji, and in 2018, she walked Japan's Kumano Kodo, an ancient Shinto pilgrimage route. She is a board member of American Pilgrims on the Camino as well as a member of the Hoosiers on the Camino chapter. She looks for shells and yellow arrows wherever she goes as she plans her next walk.

## Cheryl Grasmoen

Cheryl Grasmoen served on the board of directors of American Pilgrims on the Camino for six years and as the board's chair for almost three. Since 2007, she has walked four Camino routes and has volunteered as an hospitalera three times and in the Pilgrim's Office in Santiago twice. She also is one of the trainers in the American Pilgrims' hospitalero program. When not working on American Pilgrims projects, she spends many hours each year volunteering with a hospital in the middle of Tanzania. A retired attorney, Cheryl lives with her family in Minneapolis, MN.

## Elaine Hopkins

Elaine Hopkins is an author, speaker and coach. Since 2014, she has walked over 5,000 pilgrim kilometers in France, Portugal, Spain and the UK - in spite of having no sense of direction. She has also volunteered twice as an hospitalera and serves on the editorial board of *La Concha*. Elaine has just published the first volume of her Camino memoirs.

## Roni Jackson-Kerr

Roni Jackson-Kerr completed her doctoral work at the University of Oklahoma in 2017. Her research centered on the impact of technology on culture, with special emphasis on the influence of technology on the Camino de Santiago. She conducted two months of field research along the Camino de Santiago in 2015.

## Beth Jusino

Beth Jusino has spent more than 100 days on the Camino de Santiago. In 2015, she and her husband walked from Le Puy to Finisterre, a story she shares in her award-winning memoir, *Walking to the End of the World*. She returned to the Camino Francés in 2017 and walked half the Camino del Norte in 2018. When she's not carrying a backpack across Europe, Beth is a writer and editor in Seattle, a volunteer editor for *La Concha* and a member of the American Pilgrims Puget Sound chapter.

## Chris Lowney

Chris Lowney, a one-time Jesuit seminarian, later worked at J.P. Morgan & Co. in New York, Tokyo, Singapore and London. Since 2001, he has written seven books. He has co-authored the *Guide to the Camino Ignaciano*, the official travel guide to the Ignatian Camino from Loyola to Montserrat/Manresa, and *On the Ignatian Way*, which includes pilgrim accounts and a spiritual guide. Chris's only attempt at the Camino Francés ended with a high fever and chest congestion in Carrión de los Condes after two weeks on the road.

## Yosmar Martinez

Yosmar Martinez has walked the Camino four times. In 2015, she also walked the Kumano Kodo, an ancient pilgrimage route in Japan. In addition, she has volunteered twice at the Pilgrim's Office in Santiago and founded the South Florida chapter of American Pilgrims on the Camino. She currently serves as a board member of American Pilgrims. She recently published her first cookbook, *Tastes of the Camino*, featuring recipes for foods found along The Way of St. James.

## John Moore

John Moore has walked the Camino Francés and other Santiago routes with students, colleagues and friends since 2000. In between journeys, he has co-edited *The Road to Santiago and Pilgrimage*, a monographic issue of the journal *La Corónica* and has written various articles on the Camino and St. James. Most recently he has produced *Mulatto-Outlaw-Pilgrim-Priest: The Legal Case of José Soller, Accused of Impersonating a Pastor and Other Crimes in Seventeenth-century Spain*, a bilingual edition and in-depth study of the previously unpublished criminal trial against this transatlantic man of black African descent.

## Kip Redick

Kip Redick is professor and chair of the Department of Philosophy and Religion at Christopher Newport University in Newport News, VA. He has walked the Camino Francés five times with students and the Primitivo once. He has thru-hiked the Appalachian Trail and has taken students on other long-distance trails with a focus on spiritual journey. Among his publications are "Interpreting Contemporary Pilgrimage as Spiritual Journey or Aesthetic Tourism Along the Appalachian Trail," "Spiritual Rambling: Long Distance Wilderness Sojourning as Meaning-Making" and "Profane Experience and Sacred Encounter: Journeys to Disney and the Camino de Santiago."

## Alexander Shaia

Alexander John Shaia is an author, speaker and pilgrim mentor. One of life's great gifts was for him to be a student of Joseph Campbell in the 1970s. Now, Alexander leads an intimate band of pilgrims on the Camino as an intentional rite of passage or the Hero/Heroines Journey. He recently published *Returning from the Camino*, which explores the gifts and challenges of each part of the pilgrimage and especially the work of returning home. When not on the pilgrim's road, his home is the high mountains of Santa Fe, NM, or a fishing village on the Galician coast.

## Cynthia Slagter

Cynthia Slagter first walked the Camino de Santiago in 2006. Since then she has led three student groups and three faculty groups and walked on her own an additional three times. She was a host at the Ribadiso albergue in 2017 and has served as a grant reviewer for American Pilgrims on the Camino.

## Chris Slater

Chris Slater has walked 11 Caminos in Portugal, France and Spain over the last 15 years, the longest being 1,600 kilometers from Arles to Santiago. He has volunteered as an hospitalero, accompanied by his wife, Esther, four times in Spain and once in France. They are founding members of the Western North Carolina chapter of American Pilgrims on the Camino, which is based in Asheville. Chris has contributed a number of articles for *La Concha* and for *The Bulletin of The Confraternity of Saint James*.

## Alison Smith

Alison Smith first walked parts of the Camino by accident while hiking the GR 10 trail in the French Pyrenees in 1995. It was through the study of film, however, most notably Luis Buñuel's *The Milky Way*, that her intellectual and personal exploration of the Camino got its start. She has walked sections of the Camino in France and Spain—with colleagues, with students and alone—and she has published a handful of articles on her research and her experiences.

## Lynn Talbot

Lynn Talbot walked her first Camino in 1974. Since then, she has walked many times, with her son, friends, students and alone on several different routes. She is a professor of Spanish at Roanoke College in Virginia where she is known for her enthusiasm for the Camino. With her son, she edited a collection of essays, *Following the Yellow Arrow: Younger Pilgrims on the Camino (2011)*. She has also volunteered at the Pilgrim's Office in Santiago de Compostela.

## Patrick Terry

Since graduating from New York University, Patrick Terry has consulted and collaborated with many distinguished theaters and production companies including New York Stage & Film, MegaloMedia, Public Arts and The Hamptons International Film Festival, among many others. His most recent project is the award-winning documentary, *Strangers on the Earth*, which chronicles American cellist Dane Johansen on a physical - and musical - pilgrimage through Spain's legendary Camino de Santiago. The film has been praised as "transcendent, enlightening, and even occasionally funny" by NOW Magazine.

## Rebecca Weston

Rebecca Weston became a Camino addict in 2012, when she was hired by BustedHalo.com to document her first Camino. She's walked four Caminos in Portugal, France and Spain. In 2015 and 2017, she volunteered at the albergue in the Convento San Antón -- where pilgrims dine by candlelight thanks to the lack of electricity. She is a chapter coordinator of the Western North Carolina chapter of American Pilgrims on the Camino, manages its monthly newsletter on the AshevilleCamino.org web site and leads walks on the Asheville Camino.

## Stacey Wittig

Freelance writer Stacey Wittig completed her eighth Camino pilgrimage last year after starting in Bordeaux, France. She's written and self-published two spiritual and walking guidebooks since her first Camino experience in 2005. One has been translated for a German audience. After researching various avenues for getting her writing published, she chose Amazon's CreateSpace and Kindle. Since then, her third book, a guide for Camino Primitivo co-authored with Johnnie Walker and published by The Confraternity of Saint James, London, was released last year.

## USEFUL INFORMATION

### Venue

The YMCA Blue Ridge Assembly is located at 84 Blue Ridge Circle in Black Mountain, NC, just 16 miles from Asheville. The Gathering activities will take place in three different buildings. Therefore, we recommend that you wear comfortable shoes and bring an umbrella.

### Accommodations

The accommodations will be double occupancy rooms with private baths. Linens and towels are provided. Hair dryers are not provided.

### Airports

The closest airport to the venue is Asheville Regional (AVL), 25 miles away. Charlotte International (CLT), 111 miles away, offers more flights on a variety of airlines, resulting in more affordable fares and greater flexibility.

### Airline Discount

American Airlines is graciously providing Gathering attendees an airline discount of 5% on flights to Asheville and Charlotte. The discount applies to all eligible fares, with the exception of basic economy. Travel must occur between March 25, 2019 and April 3, 2019. To take advantage of this discount, book your ticket on AA.com and enter promo code **9439EQ** when finalizing payment. Alternatively, you can call 1-800-433-1790.

### Ground Transportation

The following companies provide transportation from the Asheville and/or Charlotte airports:

Asheville Shuttle  
(828) 808-0013  
[www.ashevilleshuttle.com](http://www.ashevilleshuttle.com)

Asheville Airport Shuttle  
(828) 231-1053  
[www.ashevilleairportshuttle.com](http://www.ashevilleairportshuttle.com)  
[Harry@ashevilleairportshuttle.com](mailto:Harry@ashevilleairportshuttle.com)

Paragon Coach Lines  
(828) 552-4959  
[www.paragon-coach.com](http://www.paragon-coach.com)  
[paragoncoach@gmail.com](mailto:paragoncoach@gmail.com)

GrandyCo  
(828) 273-3214  
[www.grandyco.com](http://www.grandyco.com)  
[grandyco@gmail.com](mailto:grandyco@gmail.com)

Ground Transportation  
(cont.)

In addition, Uber and Lyft are viable options from the Asheville airport.

Finally, members of the Asheville, Charlotte and Atlanta chapters have graciously offered to help bring people to the venue. To connect with others willing to provide a ride, we have created a Gathering 2019 Facebook Group (see below for more information).

Facebook Group

To help you connect before, during and after the Gathering we have created a Facebook group dedicated to the Gathering and exclusive for confirmed attendees. To join, please visit [www.facebook.com/groups/2019Gathering](http://www.facebook.com/groups/2019Gathering). You must be registered in order to be accepted into the group.

Donations to Raffle and  
Silent Auction

Every year, we hold a silent auction and raffle to help fund our grants program. If you would like to donate an item, please bring the items with you or contact us for mailing information at [registration@americanpilgrims.org](mailto:registration@americanpilgrims.org).

Need more  
information?

Please email us at [registration@americanpilgrims.org](mailto:registration@americanpilgrims.org)

Volunteers &  
Presenters

American Pilgrims on the Camino relies on a great many volunteers to run our operation, including the Hospitalero Training and Gathering. Thank you to all our great volunteers and presenters who have given so generously of their time, skills and knowledge.

Venue

A huge thank you to the staff at the YMCA Blue Ridge Assembly.

Silent Auction and  
Raffle

All proceeds benefit Camino programs sponsored by American Pilgrims on the Camino. We thank all those who generously contributed raffle and auction items.

Partners and Friends

American Pilgrims on the Camino offers a hearty *muchas gracias* to our friends from the Xacobeo organization in Galicia, Spain, who have provided encouragement and support for American Pilgrims on the Camino. Visit the Xacobeo web site, [www.xacobeo.es/en](http://www.xacobeo.es/en). It is an outstanding resource for pilgrims.

In addition, American Pilgrims on the Camino is grateful to Correos for underwriting the North American tour of the photographic exhibit, *The Way to Santiago. A Contemporary Experience of Pilgrimage*.



XACOBEO  
Galicia

