

Ground Truth



A Publication of the Diablo Trust – A Northern Arizona Collaborative Grassroots Land Management Team

Diablo Trust President's Report

By Judy Prosser



The Diablo Trust is a 501(c)(3) land management team created in 1993 to promote the social, biological and economic sustainability of 426,000 acres of intermingled federal, state, and private lands southeast of Flagstaff, AZ by engaging in a collaborative stewardship process that is in harmony with the natural environment and the broader community.

The phrase "Learning from the land and sharing our knowledge, so there will always be a West" captures our mission.

Ground Truth is the publication of the Diablo Trust, mailed free of charge to everyone on our mailing list. If you would like to be added to, or removed from, the mailing list, please contact us at:

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Contributors are solely responsible for the content of their articles, and the opinions expressed in articles, linked materials, and comments are not necessarily those of the Diablo Trust.

As I stand here making a lamb stew (yes, you heard me--county fair lamb), I'm trying to think what to tell you that is inspirational and pertinent to our wonderful land base. I can tell you that our calves are full of vigor and excitement about this beautiful spring. Although their mamas have a fair distance to travel for water this year, their bellies are full and they have had green grass since May which they, like you, know is unusual here.

I learned a valuable lesson recently that I think is worth sharing. I was serving on a board that had the unpleasant experience of having a "leader" that had never heard the word "collaboration". He was intent in pushing through a serious plan which made sense only to him. Oblivious to the by-laws,

he formed a small committee to discuss the issue. Finding that only one member agreed with his plan, he ordered the CEO to implement the plan. Fortunately, the CEO refused saying he didn't have consensus or a majority. I was adamant that input from the balance of the board was extremely important. That intuition came from Diablo Trust experiences. Needless to say I was a thorn in the chairman's side. His grand finale was resigning to protest the fact that the other committee member and I did not acquiesce to his request. It was the first time I had ever seen this board have to face conflict such as that, and I have been on it for a long time. I then realized that we had been fairly dysfunctional since he had taken office a number of years before. We, the board, had not had much input and most things were decided before we ever got together. Apathy had set in and board members were no longer engaged. This was, however, nothing that a bit of collaboration didn't solve!

Although I learned this valuable lesson from my years with Diablo Trust, it put me on ALERT, hoping we are walking the talk and being inclusive in all that we do. I am reminded that collaboration is sometimes a longer process, but one that usually generates a better product in the end.

The Diablo Trust Board will be holding a retreat in September to visit our plan of work, and provide some historical information for new board members and our new Program Manager. It will be an opportunity for us to evaluate programs and insure that we are on the appropriate track with the activities and programs that we plan. This will be in lieu of our regular open September meeting, but it is necessary and we know that you will understand how important it is to do this occasionally. We would, however, like to hear from any of you that have suggestions about things you think we should be or could be doing. We will throw those ideas into the soup, and see what surfaces.

In this issue, we will cover the Annual Meeting, Sportsman's Day, and Vendor's Day, all of which occurred since January. You will be introduced to one of our newest board members, Diana Kessler. Please see the column from our past Program Manager, Carrie Eberly, who is now the proud mom

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Judy Prosser, Diablo Trust President

Diablo Trust



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Judy Prosser

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President's Report *(continued from page 1)*

of two lovely girls. You will also be introduced to Jeremy Krones, Carrie's successor. Jeremy is doing a great job and we urge you to give him a call or drop in to our office at NAU. Among other things you will hear about the wonderful financial gift we received from Derrick Widmark, owner of Diablo Burger, Flagstaff, and Diablo Burger, Tucson.

Best wishes to each of you for a beautiful summer and productive rains!

Education and Experience: My Story

By Jeremy D. Krones

Let me tell you: Arizona ain't Maryland.

From getting used to the few weeks of 'rainstorms' we have during the summer to the vast open spaces with nary a tree in sight, I went through quite a transition moving out here from my father's 10-acre lot in central Maryland, equidistant from the Appalachian hills and Capitol Hill. I was raised on the small farm, unknowingly but willingly participating in my parents' early dreams of being viticulturalists and oenologists. I barely remember our goats, which we sold when I was young, and I have no memories of our chickens (although I do have vivid memories of finding my first black widow spiders in the cobwebbed and dusty coop when my father asked for a tool or bucket stored within). We had an orchard of more than a dozen diverse trees, now down to just two apples and one pear; a vineyard, where I first learned the arts of both pruning plants and extricating wooden posts from their clay seats; a pond with the ever-rumored giant, mutant goldfish; and the greenhouse with its surrounding beds of asparagus, lettuce, tomatoes, and other crops that were easily transportable the 50 yards to the kitchen.

Raising four children in a rural setting slowly but surely being buffeted by the growing DC and Baltimore suburbs, my parents found the need to expand their economic horizons past the homestead. Out of all my siblings, I was raised the least on the farm, but I've taken a strong path back to my roots. From taking a year off after high school to backpack and farm in Europe and Israel to managing the volunteer programs on two Washington, DC urban farms during college while helping other campus groups start their own educational gardens, I found a philosophy that suited me best: education through experience.

I take this idea to heart, which is why in the fall of my senior year I traveled away from the University of Maryland campus and instead spent four months backpacking, camping, and exploring northern Arizona through the interdisciplinary and experiential Grand Canyon Semester at Northern Arizona University. I first met Kit Metzger on our October field trip to the Flying M Ranch. Our professor for this trip was Dr. Tom Sisk, a Diablo Trust board member and a passionate researcher of the impacts the ranches have on the environment, both ecological and anthropological, of northern Arizona. At the end of the day's presentations by Tom and Kit, I approached Kit with a question too many of my peers don't ask when they should:

"Can I have a job?"

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Getting to Know . . . Jeremy D. Krones

Jeremy moved to the Flying M in March 2014. He met Kit during a study-away program at NAU called the Grand Canyon Semester. He managed the ranch gardens and farm market for about a year before being hired as the Diablo Trust's program manager in January, 2015.

Born in: Frederick, Maryland

Childhood Hero: Aquaman

Current Hero: My brother

Hobbies: Music, reading, gardening

Favorite Western: "The Frisco Kid"

Favorite Western-Wear: Wranglers

Favorite Ranch Recipe: Kit's biscuits

Book You Recently Enjoyed: "The Brothers Ashknazi" by I.J. Singer

Fondest Outdoor Memory: Completing the 4-State Challenge (50 miles in under 24 hours on the Appalachian Trail) with friends after winter finals, sophomore year of college. It was a full moon with enough snow on the ground so no one used a headlamp. We started at 3am, got back to the house at 3 the next morning, then had a pizza party when we all awoke.

Possible (or actual) Ranch Nickname: Button or Kid (I'm actually called both)

Currently Unrealized Life Dream: Traveling through every continent (including Antarctica)

Favorite Quotation: "If you're ever in life and you get bored, it's probably because you just stopped looking."

- Wayne Ranney



Getting to Know . . . Diana Kessler

Diana is the newest member to the Diablo Trust, although really she's returning to the fold, as the oldest Metzger sibling. For the last 30 years, Diana and her husband Alan managed the Orme Ranch. She is excited to continue her land management passions back at her childhood home.

Born in: Evanston, Indiana

Childhood Hero: Patsy Cline

Current Hero: Wendell Berry

Hobbies: Quilting, being with cattle

Favorite College Class: Geography

Favorite Western: "The Rounders"

Favorite Western-Wear: Wranglers

Favorite Ranch Recipe: Mom's stew

Books You Recently Enjoyed: "1491" by Charles Mann, "Killing Patton" by Bill O'Reilly and Martin Dugard

Fondest Outdoor Memory: Stumbling upon loads of ladybugs on Hutch Mountain (around age 6 or 7)

Currently Unrealized Life Dream: A contiguous biodiverse landscape, to educate and exemplify a healthy, stable ecoregion

Favorite Quotation: "Be the change you want to see in the world."

- Mahatma Gandhi



Family

By Carrie Eberly

“The bond that links your true family is not one of blood, but of respect and joy in each other’s life.”

- Richard Bach

So many times we go to meetings, we smile and nod, we agree or we don’t, but given the chance to participate or collaborate, to work towards a solution to a local and pertinent problem; well, that is where the magic happens. When we open our minds to a different kind of discussion, one that involves putting aside differences (personal, political or otherwise) in order to do meaningful work for the land and systems that it supports, that is where the solutions begin to add up to more than the sum of the parts. The Diablo Trust has been creating opportunities for the public and countless other interest groups to get involved in these kinds of meaningful discussions for decades and in doing so they have created an extended family that is focused on finding solutions despite differences. These familial interactions transcend the normal working relationships between user groups and regulators, ranchers and hunters, or land users and owners, and instead they work as a family for the betterment of all.

In 2010 I started working with Diablo Trust and I’ll admit it was a little daunting to find a meaningful niche in such a long-standing and innovative group. The Bar T Bar and Flying M families provided me the opportunity to explore their lands, learn their business and help where I could in order to find my place. Everyone’s willingness to make the memorable connections, to reach out to the new kid, meant the world to this Idaho country girl over a thousand miles from home and opened my eyes to the role that personal connections and family can play in the collaborative land stewardship.

While working for Diablo Trust, we met, we talked, we frequently disagreed more than we agreed, we discussed countless projects and visited the land and saw the progress. All important pieces to the collaboration puzzle, but most importantly, as we worked towards solutions we treated each other with the respect that one might find in a family. And now, as I move into a more permanent stay-at-home-parent role and leave my post as the Program Manager of the Diablo Trust, I feel honored to have worked with such a diverse and hard working group of individuals. They helped expand my knowledge of the value of family, the land, and the meaning of work.

So, thank you Diablo Trust family for taking joy in my life and giving me the opportunity to take joy in yours.

Carrie Eberly was Program Manager of Diablo Trust from 2010 to 2015.

The Unexpected Benefits of Local Beef

By Ellen Parish

When I was asked to write an article on local beef for the Diablo Trust newsletter, I have to admit, I rolled my eyes and groaned. Honestly, if Jeremy were not such a cherished friend, I would have said no. The trouble is that most of us have heard the same old story over and over again: *“grass fed beef is better for you, better for our environment,” “it’s good for our local economy,” “less pollution, it helps protect open space,” “helps people feel more connected to their community,” “protects watersheds, provides opportunity for wildlife.”*

What could I possibly write about that this audience hadn’t heard many times before? As I was stewing about Jeremy’s request for an article my life continued in its normal fashion. As the wife of a busy wildlife biologist, mother of two teenage girls, business owner, volunteer firefighter, gardener, and pet owner, not to mention doer of several great hobbies, I am a busy lady. This is the middle of summer vacation for my girls and I want to spend as much time as possible with them; writing an article didn’t fit into my plans.

It was while talking with my oldest daughter Emma about her recent boyfriend that I realized I didn’t have to think up some-

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Getting Outside with Diablo Trust



Most of the attendees of Sportsman’s Day on the Land, in the discussion circle, on Flying M Ranch (04/18/2015)



Jeremy talking with participants in the USFS International Seminar on Watershed Management (04/27/2015)



The attendees of Vendor’s Day on the Land, in the discussion circle, on Bar T Bar Ranch (07/25/2015)



Norm Wallen and Jeremy representing Diablo Trust at NAU’s Sustainability Awards (04/16/2015)



Kit Metzger, Steve Cassady, Denis Humphrey, and Will Sommers monitoring forage on Flying M (03/11/2015)

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Please check out our “Support” page at our newly-renovated <http://www.diablotrust.org>

Education Through Experience *(continued from page 2)*

My fellow students were in the midst of planning their trips home when the semester ended, but I had little reason to return to Maryland for the winter, and what was the harm in asking for a job? I'd worked with chickens, goats, sheep, horses, hares, and cattle on farms and ranches in the US, Spain, Italy, Israel, Wales, and Jamaica, but I'd never worked on a real Arizona ranch, complete with the wide-brimmed cowboy hats I'd only seen in John Wayne movies, and the very real concerns of wild predators, droughts, and real estate agents.

After working through the winter on the ranch, Kit invited me back after graduation, which is why I ultimately landed on the Flying M Ranch in March 2014 to manage the vegetable gardens and market full-time, as well as to cowboy whenever an extra set of (inexperienced) hands or eyes were needed. After about nine or ten months, however, the isolation was getting to me. Despite having the farming background, the farms on which I worked were usually much closer to a population center. This isn't a problem with the ranch in particular, but rather an issue many farms encounter with their workers. My generation certainly has issues with isolation and distance from reliable technology and entertainment.



Jeremy helping herd cattle on the Flying M, January 2014

Just as I started thinking of my next step, however, Carrie announced her departure from Diablo Trust and the door opened for me to stay involved with my new community. I could continue to build my connections in the Southwest and to learn and experience more about how the public interacts with their local agricultural community.

This isn't the East. The landscape is different, the weather is different, the people, food, politics, popular trends . . . there are more differences than I can list here between the place where I was born and bred and where I am now. One similarity, however, and it's one with which I deal on a regular basis, is the connection (and lack thereof) the general public has with their neighborhood farmers, be they small-scale gardeners with just an acre or two, or cattle ranchers with more than 300,000 acres to utilize for economic, ecological, and social resources.

This year's theme, introduced at our Annual Meeting in February (see page 8), is The Impacts of Northern Arizona Ranches on the Flagstaff Community. This theme can be replicated for every agricultural enterprise, everywhere. In DC, I was responsible for introducing my students - college kids from places like New York or Atlanta - to the world of where food comes from. I also had to plan to keep them involved so that regardless of their academic major, from business to dance to linguistics, they understand where their food comes from, who produces their food, and what impacts, both ecological and anthropological, food production has upon their environment.

It is these questions that drive me and so many others towards environmental conservation, towards collaboration in the field, and towards community education. I hope I can affect Diablo Trust just as it will certainly affect me for the better, so that we can all continue working towards a healthy future.

I am humbled to be a part of the strong community of Diablo Trust, and I'm excited for what we can all accomplish over the years to come. Please feel free to contact me at any time at the office via email or phone. I'd love to hear your stories of how you got to be a part of Diablo Trust, and where you'd like to take our goals of conservation, collaboration, and education in the future.

Jeremy D. Krones is the program manager of Diablo Trust. You can find him at the office in Peterson Hall on NAU's campus in Flagstaff, or contact him by phone: (928) 523-0588, or by email: info@diablotrust.org



The Unexpected Benefits of Local Beef *(continued from page 4)*

thing to write about: so much of my life was about the benefits of local beef. This may sound like the story of a workaholic, but that's not me. I believe my work should fit into my life and be a part of it, and not that my life should fit around my work.

I come from a long line of cattle ranchers and was missing my roots when Kit Metzger and I came up with the idea for me to sell Flying M Ranch beef to the public. At the time, my girls were 8 and 10 and I was homeschooling them. We spent a lot of time traveling with my husband as he worked in the field as a biologist. On the weekends I began attending the local community markets in Flagstaff and Payson. As usual, I had both the girls in tow, and we hit the road early for a busy day of selling beef. This entails a lot more than sales and ends up being a bit of hard work: setting up and breaking down the booths, packing and unpacking ice chests, loading and unloading trailers. My girls quickly got the hang of our routine and were such good help that other vendors often hired them to help at other booths when I didn't need them.

It was at these farmers' markets that Emma and Anna learned to make change. I stood by as my very patient customers smiled and waited for 8-year-old Anna to count back the money into an adult hand twice the size of hers. Sometimes she made a mistake and we would all wait as she started over, red faced with embarrassment and shoulders set with determination.

The girls learned all the cuts of beef, where they come from on the animal, details of how the cattle were raised and slaughtered, cooking tips, how to have good manners and smile even when you are tired, and how to deal with customers, happy and unhappy ones.

They worked long days by my side and I expected them to pull their weight. One of the perks of the job was that we also got to help out on the ranch once in a while. This meant time in the corrals while sorting and branding, hours on horseback moving cattle on Anderson Mesa, eating lunch with Kit and the cowboys at the cookhouse, playing with Kit's endless supply of kittens, puppies, goats, chickens, and turkeys, and bouncing around through the forest while driving a quad. They got kicked by calves, had dirt in their nose, ears and eyes, worked when they wanted to stop, got hungry and had to wait, completed a tough job and felt proud. They have visited slaughter facilities and dissected beef hearts, worked in the walk-in freezer in mid winter stacking heavy boxes of frozen meat, learned how to drive off-road, change a tire, and work with others even when they didn't want to.

It's been six years of selling beef and both girls have learned many lessons. As their mom I'm grateful for the opportunities we have had to share these valuable lessons. They are choosing their own ways in life and I see now some of the unexpected benefits of local beef. Anna is so good at dealing with the public that she now works as a wrangler, leading horseback trial rides. Both girls work training young horses. Emma has taken on part of the sales at farmers' markets and now helps me run the business. At 15 and 17 they both drive trucks, pull and back up trailers better than most adults, are honest and work hard, have good manners even when they don't want to and can make correct change with no help from a cash register! Local beef has made them part of their community, helped develop confidence and work ethic, and opened the doors to many other job opportunities. It's been a lesson in biology, economics, psychology, mechanics, physics, natural resource management, animal husbandry, sales, cooking, personal responsibility, and much more. They have developed relationships that will last a lifetime and have the firm foundation to build that life on.

Now when someone asks me about the benefits of "local beef," I have a whole new list of things they may have never considered.



The Flying M Beef stand at the Flagstaff market



Ellen Parish is the local beef vendor for Flying M Ranch. You can find her at the Flying M tent at the Flagstaff Community Market on Sunday mornings at City Hall. You can learn more about Flying M's local beef business and contact Ellen at: <http://localbeef.webs.com/>

From the Calendar: Community Events

The Annual Meeting: February 20th

Our annual meeting this year was held on the morning of Friday, February 20th, at Thornager's on Kiltie Lane in Flagstaff. Our theme for the day – reflective of our theme for the year – was "Impacts of Northern Arizona Ranches on the Flagstaff Community." Approximately 50 Diablo Trust members attended, including representatives from the City of Flagstaff, Coconino County, and public lands agencies. In the first half of our program we had a short lineup of speakers. First up was Diablo Trust president Judy Prosser, who gave a brief update on the Trust, introduced Jeremy Krones, our new program manager, and presented a gift to Stephen Williams in honor of his retirement from the Arizona State Land Department and to thank him for all the hard work he's done for the Trust and our community.

Bob Prosser and Kit Metzger reported on the states of their ranches, and Derrick Widmark spoke about the current direction of Diablo Burger and the importance of supporting conservation projects and networks, such as Diablo Trust. Derrick again contributed a generous donation to the Trust on behalf of Diablo Burger. We cannot thank him or his business enough for their continued support of Diablo Trust.

Our keynote speaker was Billy Cordasco, the president of Babbitt Ranches. He presented on the format of Babbitt

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Sportsman's Day on the Land: April 18th

The first Day on the Land this year was held on Saturday, April 18th, on the Flying M Ranch. The focus of the day was sportsmen: the members of our community who use our public lands for hunting, fishing, trapping, recreating, and having fun. In attendance were members of the public, representatives from AZ Outdoor Sports, Phoenix Varmint Callers, Inc., and the Arizona Game and Fish Department (AZGFD), including Commissioner Pat Madden.

We started with a lively discussion about issues and concerns some community members have with the current state of sportsmen-rancher relations, including the distribution of misinformation about areas of the ranches that are or aren't closed, transparency with where, when, and how hunting-related funds are distributed, and the future of public lands management.

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Voice Your Choice Raffle: April 15th - 30th

In April, Mountain Sports of Flagstaff, a member of 1% for the Planet and our Conservation Exchange, held a vote raffle this spring for a \$5,000 grant. The participants were environmental and educational non-profits in the greater Flagstaff area: Flagstaff Mountain Film Festival, Friends of Camp Colton, the Grand Canyon Wolf Recovery Project, Grand Canyon Youth, Terra BIRDS, Willow Bend Environmental Education Center, and Flagstaff Biking Organization, who was the grant recipient! They put their winnings towards the maintenance of Fort Tuthill Bike Park.



Jeremy casting his vote at Mountain Sports!

Vendor's Day on the Land: July 19th

Our second Day on the Land this year was focused on our vendors: any business with whom either Bar T Bar or Flying M ranches does business. Participants included representatives from the Flagstaff CSA, O'Haco Tire, The Scoop and High Country Informant, PetroReps, and The Sign Shop. We met at Hay Lake Ranch, the summer headquarters of Bar T Bar, for a short discussion with Kit and Judy, followed by a delicious lunch prepared by Bob and Judy and desserts by Kit and her Flying M crew.

We learned a lot about the ranches, especially when it comes to numbers. Did you know Bar T Bar has maintained over 617 miles of fence? Or that Flying M has about 250 tires on its working equipment and vehicles? Also, Bar T Bar has 322 earthen reservoirs and stock ponds, and it takes over 300 pounds of coffee a year to keep the Flying M going!

The Annual Meeting *(continued from page 8)*

Ranches and the pros and cons of running an agricultural business in this day and age, especially with fewer youth entering the agricultural workforce. A topic he pushed, as we do at Diablo Trust, is collaboration. Specifically: collaboration within the board of directors, collaboration amongst the membership and workforce, and collaboration between the organization or business itself and the general public. The more the public knows about what the ranches are and what they do for the environment, natural resources, and local economies, the more they will support such efforts.

After a short break we reconvened the meeting for a Q&A panel session with six active members of the greater ranch community: Steve Cassady, the Landowner Relations Program Specialist for Region 2 with AZGFD; Tom Mackin, current chair of the Diablo Trust Wildlife Committee; Craig McMullen, AZGFD Region 2 Supervisor; Kit Metzger; Ellen Parish, local beef vendor for Flying M Ranch; and Bob Prosser.

The morning wrapped up with a presentation by Tom Mackin about current projects and future goals of the Diablo Trust Wildlife Committee. Keep your eyes peeled for upcoming projects, events, and volunteer opportunities so you can join Tom and the others on the land, working to benefit our wildlife and rangelands. Finally, Jill Rundall, one of our newest board members, led the wrap-up and thanked everyone for coming that morning.

Thank you to everyone who came out to our annual meeting, and we hope to see more of our members next year!

Sportsman's Day on the Land *(continued from page 8)*

Our second stop was at the Dry Lot, the first gate you reach driving east from the Flying M headquarters. Here Kit Metzger discussed how the ranch gets most of its water from a series of pipes and tanks from a natural springbox on Anderson Mesa. She also explained how different weather patterns can impact water quantity, flow, and distribution on the ranch.

Lunch was served at Flying M headquarters, a delicious spread of ranch foods prepared by Flying M employees. During lunch we heard from Jon Cooley with the AZGFD, who presented on the current and future goals of the Mexican Wolf reintroduction project. The day closed with presentations by Tom Mackin (DT Wildlife Chair) and Steve Cassady (AZGFD), who spoke about current land and wildlife management projects on the ranches.

We enjoy these Days on the Land, and encourage everyone to join us throughout the year! Come explore the ranches, meet the people who keep them running, and learn about the Diablo Trust and its members in an experiential, interactive environment.



Stephen Williams receiving a gift of appreciation from Judy.

Annual Diablo Trust Camp-out: 2015!

**You're
Invited!**

The annual Diablo Trust camp-out this year will be from
Saturday, August 22, through Sunday, August 23,
at Ashurst Run on Flying M Ranch.

For more information, please go to the calendar at our website or contact Jeremy by phone: (928) 523-0588 or email: info@diablotrust.org.



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Upcoming Diablo Trust Events

Saturday, August 22: Diablo Trust Camp-out hosted on Ashurst Run, Flying M Ranch, overnight.
Please bring good cheer and a potluck contribution of appetizer/fingerfood/dessert.

Friday, November 13: Monthly Meeting: Water & Vegetation Projects Update Location TBA, 10:30AM - 12:00AM
Discussion meeting about the water and vegetation projects underway on Bar T Bar and Flying M ranches.

Friday, November 13: CROP Meeting Location TBA, 2:00PM - 4:00PM
Second CROP meeting of 2015, to discuss the collaboration and projects between the ranches and agencies.

Friday, December 18: Diablo Trust Christmas Party at Bar T Bar headquarters, hosted by Judy & Bob Prosser, 5:00PM
Please bring good cheer and a potluck contribution of appetizer/fingerfood/dessert.

For further information on all events, please email info@diablotrust.org or call (928) 523-0588
Please visit our website, <http://www.diablotrust.org/>, for details and further information on these and all future events.



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