

VLACHOS' VIEWS

America through the lens of PAUL VLACHOS



1. Wilson, NC - 2015

The hidden hand that painted this, the generations of Wilsonians who walked by and took note, who maybe had a tingling of the tastebuds, then went and bought a pack of Wrigley's gum, as the sign exhorted them to do. There's a lot we don't know here. Just a fragment on the wall. Very simple on the face of it, but what dramas unfolded in front of this little advertisement, placed at eye level? That's going to be the theme of this issue's photos - "mysteries and secrets." I actually didn't plan it that way, but I had to pull a bunch of photos to prepare for this issue and I knew I'd be writing it on the road. I'm in Lincoln, Nebraska at the moment, but that's another story. A long one. After I pulled this batch of photos, then let them sit for a day or two, I looked them over and it struck me that they were all about secret and hidden things. Of course, that's true for almost every photograph ever taken. I recall Diane Arbus's famous quote: "A picture is a secret about a secret, the more it tells you the less you know." Think about that quote, maybe, as you scan these other photos, presented here for your enjoyment and delectation.

2. Mina, NV 2005

I love to pass through Mina. It's filled with untold stories. A small, empty town on a busy, yet lonely road, it sees a lot of traffic passing through. Not the worst place to put a car out for sale. This car has seen a lot if you look at long enough.



3. Ukiah, CA - 2006

How many high school games ended up at the Frostie? Young birthdays with the whole, awkward family? Dates and heartbreaks? How many old guys secretly got a cone on the way home before dinner? Seems like a real loss for this town in the northern part of the Golden State. All that's left is the concrete pad and the sign. And a million memories.



4. Comstock, TX - 2014

A lot going on in this long-shuttered store so close to the border with Mexico. Jesus on the cross, what looks like a doll to his right, a wicker basket, a set of crutches, loosely tied together with light twine. There's more, but we can't see it, of course. And why "Lunch Meats" in the window over all else they could have painted there?



5. Pecos, TX - 2014

I have a soft spot for corrugated metal buildings. I was shooting the magnificent one next to this little structure when I became more interested in this, with its corrugated shutter and doors, borrowed from its neighbor. Was it a store, a little bar, a small workshop? Somebody in Pecos probably knows. I wonder what's inside?

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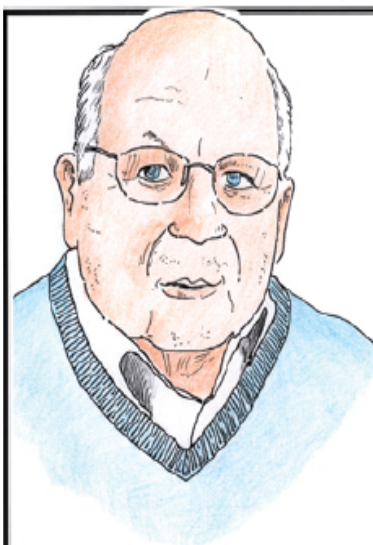
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