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# New Campbell Blue Bridge opened

By Philip Ronnerud

Although the Campbell Blue Bridge site remains a construction zone, traffic is allowed to use the bridge. The Blue Road, which is about three hours from Clifton, serves local residents, land managers, hunters and recreational users.

The road is also the only year-round access to the one-room Blue School.

To the best of our knowledge the Campbell Blue Bridge was



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Excitement at the bridge opening! [Watch the video.](#)

## Starting out with strengths

From the RCAC

*Editor's note: This is our philosophy as well: Start from strengths, and Greenlee County has them in large quantities.*

For the past 35 years, Rural Community Assistance Corporation (RCAC) has provided training, technical and financial resources and advocacy so rural communities can achieve their goals and visions.

In a recent USDA blog, Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack notes that the latest Census results tell of unlimited potential and growing opportunity in modern rural America.

RCAC's Building Rural Economies initiative has been created to ensure that rural communities through-out the West will be vibrant, healthy and enduring.

RCAC has a straightforward approach to build rural econo-

mies: we start with assets. Too often, community planning focuses on needs and problems. RCAC concentrates instead on local resources, markets and opportunities, then

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**Creating vibrant, healthy and enduring rural communities**

**About RCAC**

RCAC serves rural communities in the western United States and other Pacific Islands

For more information on RCAC's Building Rural Economies Program, contact:

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www.rcac.org

**Building Rural Economies**

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## Bridge . . .

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built during the 1930s then improved in early 1950s. As were most major drainage ways, the Blue River was used by native Americans and explorers. The European settlers improved the path to a road which became the route from Clifton, Arizona to Reserve, New Mexico.

The first historical record of the road was the creation of a Road Maintenance District in 1895. While the County has rights to use the road at this location (due to the topography) the road actually goes into New Mexico for about  $\frac{3}{4}$  of a mile.

The storm on Sept. 13, 2013 washed out the bridge, but the Greenlee County Board of Supervisors was determined to replace it. After dozens of calls and coordination meetings with multiple agencies; funding from the Arizona Department of Transportation was secured.

The County asked Federal Central Lands, a division of the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), to deliver the project. After several hic-ups, the development process commenced in earnest in late 2016. Preliminary concepts were approved, Environmental permits secured and final bid document were completed. For a project tied to Federal funding, this project moved at breakneck speed.

In September 2017, only four years after the bridge was washed out a preconstruction conference was held in Alpine. The FHWA, Country, Forest Service,

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*Theresa Campbell and Isabella Campbell sing the Star Spangled Banner. [Watch the video.](#)*

## 2018 Clarion has a new look

By Ákos Kovach

Over the last few years the look, photo's, articles as well as the overall feel of the Greenlee Clarion has changed. Today's issue marks yet another change to the 'look' and use of the Greenlee Clarion.

We are actually creating a two section, or two-part, issue to better serve the two primary audiences we serve: those mostly interested in Economic Development pages 1-4, while community outreach, calendar of events, and articles of general interest will be found in the section beginning with page 5. They will be posted separately on the Growing Greenlee Newsletter archive pages.

"But that isn't economic development" — those words were spoken to me recently about the promotion of the Labyrinth Jam Session on the third Saturday of each month. "It's at a church and has nothing to do with economic development." My answer to these comments follows: Estab-

lishing a foothold for the music community here in Greenlee County is as important as developing the Arts Community through events such as the Colors of Copper.

Music transcends language barriers, cultural differences and cares little for borders of any kind — with or without walls or fences.

The happenstance the monthly activity is held at Sts. Philip and James in Morenci should not dissuade anyone from participating or simply coming to listen. Many public events are held in church buildings, especially in small communities, so few people will have a problem with that.

We hope you enjoy the February 2018 issue of the Greenlee Clarion as much as we enjoyed creating it and spicing up the pages with economic development as well those pages that will focus on community news and public service outreach. Your feedback is always welcome.



# Greenlee workers highest paid in AZ

## From the Copper Era

PHOENIX — Increases in wages for Arizona workers are not keeping pace with the rest of the country.

New figures from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics say the average weekly wage for Arizonans for the second quarter of last year, the most recent available, was \$943. That's up 2.5 percent over the same period a year earlier. But state workers, overall, continue to lose ground nationally.

That \$943 compares with \$1,020 a week for the rest of the country. More to the point, the BLS reports that national wages increased by 3.2 percent.

In fact, the report says wages went up faster in 34 other states than here.

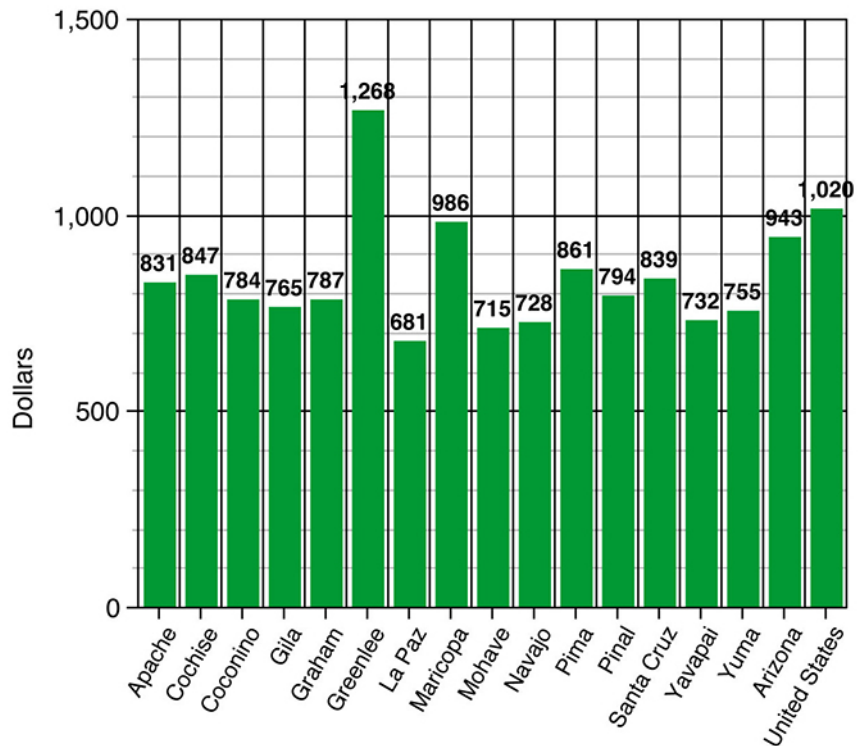
Still, BLS says the average weekly wage in Arizona, while below the national average, is 23rd in the country.

Not surprisingly, what people are paid in Arizona depends on where they live.

Greenlee County posted the highest weekly wage at \$1,268, no doubt driven by the relatively high percentage of the small work force there who are employed in the high-paying mining industry and related businesses.

Maricopa County, where 70

Average weekly salary 2nd quarter 2017



Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics

percent of the state's labor force is located, comes in at No. 2. But the BLS said wages in the state's largest county rose just 1.6 percent in the one-year period ending last June 30.

By contrast, the federal agency found that Pima County wages

are up 4.2 percent over the same period. Still, that left the average weekly wage there at \$839.

The worst wages on average were paid to employees in La Paz County, which posted an average weekly wage of \$681, or just a hair more than \$17 an hour for a 40-hour work week.

Economist Dennis Hoffman, of the W.P. Carey School of Business at Ar

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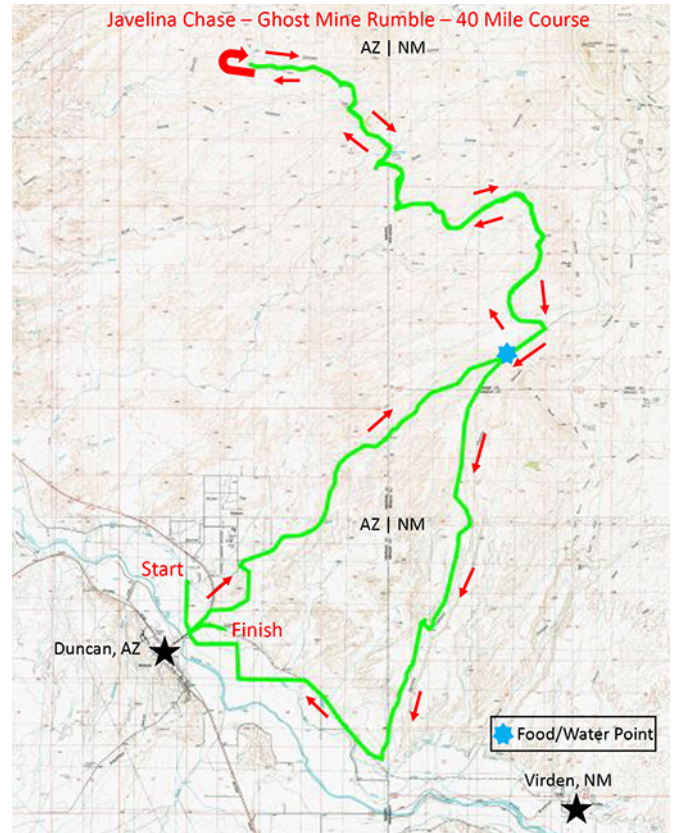
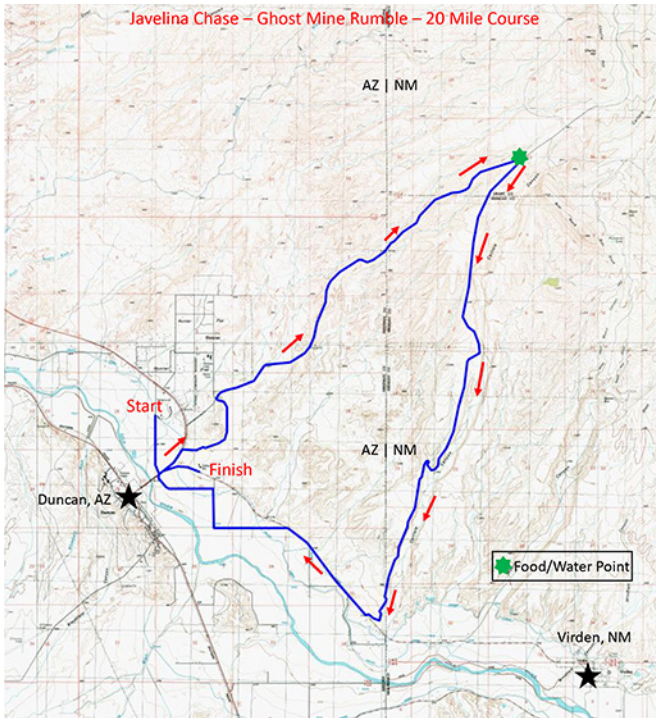
[See mining's total impact on Eastern Arizona](#)

DEVELOPMENT





# Javelina Chase coming April 14



This year's Javelina Chase / Ghost Mine Rumble is coming up April 14. The challenging bike race will include three distances to attract competitors with different interests: 20, 40 and 60 miles.

The Chase is one of Greenlee County's many annual events that brings hordes of visitors to the area.

The 60-mile route riders will leave Duncan at 0745, then the 40 milers, then the 20 milers.

All of the routes traverse plenty of hills and valleys and all have beautiful vistas and scenery, but the 60-mile route is the most rewarding, starting in the creosotes and winding its way up to the pinyon pines at over 5,000 feet in elevation and back down.

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## Chamber annual meeting

The Greenlee County Chamber of Commerce annual meeting will be held Feb. 28, starting at 5:30 p.m., at the Greenlee County Fairgrounds at Duncan.

Keynote speaker will be Ben Menges, past president of Greenlee County Cattle Growers, and chairman of the Graham County Farm Bureau's Young Farmer/Rancher Program.

[Click here](#) for more information about the annual meeting and for an application for Chamber membership.

Each course crosses two state lines and three county lines as they wind their way along the remote mining country of western New Mexico and eastern Arizona.

