

BORDER **eco** 10 Years



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FREE ISSUE!

CONNECTING SOUTHERN ARIZONA



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Open Session AZ Legislature



Alfredo I. Velásquez
Santa Cruz County School Superintendent
&
Staff

FEBRUARY
Early Childhood
Education Awareness
MONTH



Mental
Health
Starts
at Birth



Border Eco Updates

"Border Eco is celebrating 10 years of connecting Santa Cruz County."

We are grateful for the ongoing support from our readers, sponsors, and supporters as we highlight the individuals, events, and organizations that make our bordertown special. As we reflect on the past decade, we are reminded of the incredible stories we have had the privilege to share with our community. From showcasing the vibrant cultural heritage of Santa Cruz County to shedding light on the pressing issues that affect our region, Border Eco remains committed to providing a platform for meaningful conversations and connections. **"We look forward to the next 10 years of fostering unity and celebrating the unique spirit of our beloved bordertown."**

"This is your opportunity to shine"

Please join our "Border Eco community Facebook campaign." We invite you to post a picture on our Facebook account and encourage your friends to like your picture as well as Border Eco. Every month, we will feature a picture of a community member who generates the most likes on our Facebook page.

We will feature your picture as well as a brief interview in our magazine and on our Facebook page. Likewise, it will help us build our fan base while putting you in the spotlight. For your picture to be selected, you must receive Likes directly from your photo and our page. Become a part of our Border Eco community!

10 Years



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SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENT

Border Eco Magazine now offers TV advertisement. Contact us for rates and channels to help promote your business in Santa Cruz County.

Our office is located on :
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Please send us information on any upcoming events, meetings, or programs to share with our readers.

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Echoes From the Hilltop

Echoes from the Hilltop Gallery is delighted to introduce Val Valencia, a talented musician and vocalist. Val, a Nogales native, is set to graduate from Nogales High School this year. At the age of 18, he is already an accomplished singer-songwriter with an unwavering passion for music. Growing up in a family of musicians, Val's love for music runs deep. As a child, Val Valencia was raised by his grandparents, Jesus and Delia Valencia.

Val's musical journey began in 5th grade when he learned to play the trumpet in his school band. Since then, he has continued to expand his repertoire by mastering various instruments. Currently in his senior year of high school, Val plans to pursue further studies in music and aims to release his own music to share with the world.

"Music has been an integral part of my life for as long as I can remember," Val shares. "Although I didn't start playing an instrument until I was around 11, I have been singing since I was a child." One of Val's biggest influences is his grandfather Jesus Valencia, who would serenade him with his guitar when he was little. "I vividly remember my Tata's melodic tunes, and from that moment, I knew I wanted to follow in his footsteps," Val reminisces. The creative process behind Val's music varies from song to song. Sometimes, a captivating melody sparks his inspiration, while other times, it's the lyrics that ignite his creativity. "The more I write, the more I discover new and innovative techniques," Val explains. "There is nothing in the world that I love more than music. Creating and sharing my music with others brings me a sense of fulfillment."

Val's ultimate goal is to inspire others to pursue their passion for music. "Just go for it!" he encourages. "If you want to be a singer, sing your heart out. If you want to be a songwriter, let your words flow. Often, it is our own self-doubt that holds us back from achieving our dreams. It's simply a matter of letting go and taking that leap of faith."

Val Valencia's music falls within If you want to be a songwriter, let your words flow. Often, it is our own self-doubt that holds us back from achieving our dreams. It's simply a matter of letting go and taking that leap of faith. Embrace the power of vulnerability and pour your emotions onto the paper. Allow your thoughts to dance with the melody, creating a symphony of heartfelt lyrics. Remember, every great songwriter started somewhere, so don't be afraid to share your unique voice with the world. Let your words become the soundtrack to someone else's story.

Val Valencia's talent and dedication to his craft make him a rising star in the music industry. Echoes from the Hilltop Gallery is honored to showcase his exceptional skills and looks forward to witnessing his musical journey unfold. Val's passion for music was evident from a young age, as he would spend hours practicing and perfecting his skills. His determination to succeed, coupled with his natural talent, set him apart from his peers. As Val embarks on his musical journey, he is poised to make a lasting impact on the industry and captivate audiences with his unique sound. With Val's melodic tunes, Echoes from the Hilltop Gallery looks forward to being part of his story. Val's partner, Alma Suarez, has formed a captivating duo known as 'Flowerroof'. They have been harmoniously creating music together for nearly a year, and Alma's profound influence has left an indelible mark on Val's life. Her unwavering support and boundless creativity have served as a profound source of inspiration for his musical endeavors. Together, Val and Alma have crafted a unique sound that seamlessly blends their individual styles and musical backgrounds.



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"Exploring Higher Education: C-CREO Gear Up College Campus Tours"

The Class of 2024 is making plans for their post-secondary education. In a recent survey, 81% of the senior class in all five area high schools, reported they want to attend either a community college, trade school, or four-year university. The C-CREO Gear Up Program in the Office of the Santa Cruz County School Superintendent, Alfredo I. Velásquez, is taking as many 12th graders on a college campus visit as possible in the spring of 2024.

Since 2018, Gear Up students have been exploring who they want to be, learning about many different careers, and researching what type of post-secondary education it takes to land that dream job. The goal of Gear Up is to help the youth in low-income, underserved communities to graduate from high school, enroll in some type of post-secondary program, and complete it. This can mean earning a Bachelor's Degree, Associates Degree, trade school certification, or even to enlist in the Military. Gear Up is not new to loading students on to buses and taking them to set foot on a campus of higher education. The college and career readiness program begins these field trips when students are in middle school. It takes visiting a campus and talking to the professionals who work there to really be able to imagine yourself as a part of that community. Once students see others who look just like them on a college campus, it reinforces the thought that they too can be a college student and earn a post-secondary degree.

Gear Up's field trips to college campuses have evolved over the last six years. They started as general tours of the most exciting parts of campus. The Student Union, sports venues, and the Bookstore were top priority. During the Covid-19 Pandemic, the students took virtual tours of campuses to stay safe and keep the idea of a post-secondary education alive. Once the students reached their junior and senior year, the trips became more focused. Students sign up for the college visits that most interest them based on educational programs, location, and costs. Students and Gear Up staff have visited the University of Arizona, Arizona State University, Grand Canyon University, Cochise Community College, various campuses of Pima Community College, Empire Beauty School, Pima Medical Institute, and the Santa Cruz Center.

This spring, students will add South Mountain Community College, Chandler/Gilbert Community College, and Northern Arizona University to their list of destinations. Programs of study that are of high interest are: health sciences, engineering, informational technology, culinary, arts, business, and trades such as welding, automotive, cosmetology, and construction. Students have learned that there are many pathways to reach their career goals and that dedication and perseverance will be necessary to earn a degree or certificate. Gear Up staff will be providing support services to students during the 24-25 school year by way of virtual and in-person meetings. This support will include registration assistance, financial planning, course of study advising, workforce development and soft skill training, and life skills workshops. For more information about the Gear Up program contact Director Maya Donnelly at mdonnelly@santacruzcountyaz.gov or 520-375-7947.



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Hope for Humanity

The world has changed, and our humanity has been eroded. World conflicts, technology, and other factors have created a desire to treat others with insults and disrespect. We see that around us daily.

These behaviors lead to unhappiness, bullying, and, in some cases, mental illness. The pressure to follow and duplicate erratic, unhealthy behaviors is high.

Studies have shown that positive attitudes and behaviors lead to a better life. Empathy, in particular, can help understand others. Putting ourselves in others' shoes can help us realize that we are different. Our life circumstances, in some cases, dictate our mental well-being.

Kindness and courtesy show how connected we are. We all need each other. If we interact with kindness, we feel better.

There are certain things that we can do to improve the lives of others. Active listening, a smile, a hug, opening the doors for others, offering good tips, and saying good morning and thank you build a strong connection in a community.

Let us come together and build a community of happiness, kindness, and goodwill. We will be stronger, not weaker.

Eladio Pereira, MD, MBA, MACP



Calendar of

January

- Winter Hoops Little League, January - February, hosted by the City of Nogales Parks and Recreation. (520) 285-5782.

February

- FC Tucson Youth Soccer in Nogales, Registration for Spring begins.
- OS3 Movement ¼ Marathon and Health Fair Registration begins: <https://www.os3movement.org/2252-2/>

March

- Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month, Mariposa CHC
- Read across America (A.K.A. Dr. Seuss week), various schools.
- Free Boys and Girls Football Camp begins, Mon/Wed weekly. See Santa Cruz Cardinals' Facebook page.
- FC Tucson Youth Soccer in Nogales, Spring Camp begins.

April

- Alcohol Awareness Day - April 12, 2024 - Hope, Inc.

May

- Mental Health Awareness Month - May 3, 2024 - Hope, Inc. and Mariposa CHC
- Light the Night for the Fallen Family (NFFF), May 4-7th, 2024, All RRFD Stations.
- OS3 Movement ¼ Marathon and Health Fair, early May
- FC Tucson Youth Soccer in Nogales, Registration for Fall begins.
- Fire Prevention Month (First Station tours and presentations), Rio Rico Fire Departments and schools.
- Fire Prevention and Safety Day/Pancake Breakfast, late October, RRFD Station 3, 822 Pendleton Dr.
- Nickel's Diner Motor Classic Car Show, late October, Nickel's Parking Lot
- Breast Cancer Awareness Month

Events 2024

June

- LGBTQ Pride Month Education Awareness - June 14, 2024 - Hope, Inc.
- FC Tucson Youth Soccer in Nogales, Summer Camp late June - late July

July

- OS3 Movement Youth Summer Bike Camp; see <https://www.os3movement.org/programs/> for updates.

August

- Health Center Week Health Fair, hosted by Mariposa CHC
- Overdose Awareness Silent Campaign, hosted by Hope Inc.

September

- Suicide Awareness - September 13, 2024, Hope, Inc.
- FC Tucson Youth Soccer in Nogales, Fall Camp begins.

October

- Nogales Police Department National Coffee with a Cop Day, 10/04/2024.
- Mental Illness Awareness Week - 7-11th, 2024, Hope, Inc
- Drug Prevention Awareness - Red Ribbon Week, Nogales Police Department, Boys & Girls Club of Santa Cruz County, October 23-31
- Halloween Trunk or Treat, Nogales Police Department and Fire Department, 10/31/2024, RRMFD Station 1, 1194 Pendleton Dr.
- Bi-National Health Fair, Mexican Consulate
- Domestic Violence Awareness, Santa Cruz County Complex, SCC Attorney's Office (proclamation, peace walk) AM to 12:00 PM, and the first Saturday of every month.

Scan the QR-Code for a list of community resources



November

- Amado Chili Cook-Off - RRMFD Participation, Mid November, Amado Territory

December

- Impaired Driving Awareness - December 6th, 2024 - hosted by Hope, Inc.
- Rio Rico Community Santa's Garden of Light, early December
- City of Nogales Light Parade, early December
- FC Tucson Youth Soccer in Nogales, Winter Camp starts mid-December.
- Toy and Food Drive, RRMFD, all month
- Rio Rico Rotary Bike Event, all month
- City of Nogales Winter Hoops Little League - Registration starts this month. Call the Recreation Center at (520) 285-5782 for more information.

Rolling Events

- Food Pantry Food Drive, weekly, from Tuesday through Friday, 8:00 AM to 12:00 PM, and the first Saturday of every month.
- Free football camps for boys and girls, from March to August, Monday and Wednesday weekly. See the Facebook page of Santa Cruz Cardinals.

Additional Notes:

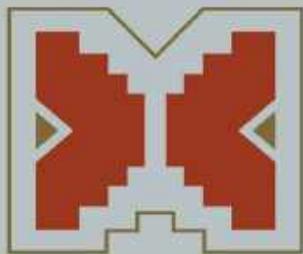
- Rio Rico Medical and Fire Department: Contact Chief Carlos Jimenez, cjimenez@nogalesaz.gov for information.
- FC Tucson Youth Soccer information: email Dave Cosgrove daclhc@gmail.com for information.
- Hope Inc. 1891 N Mastick Way Ste A, Nogales. Contact: 520-770-1197 / INFO@hopearizona.org for information.

The 2024 Calendar of Events was compiled by the Southern Arizona Area Health Education Centers (SAAHEC) Scholars as part of their 2024 Nogales Community Project in collaboration with the Nogales Community Leaders, Border Eco, and SAAHEC El Rio Health Center.

2022-2024 SAAHEC Scholars: Dina Balderas, Katelyn Frock, Steve Jackson, Elisa Loya, Nick Marcell, Blakely Meyer, and Kendra Unamba / Faculty Advisor: Nancy Johnson, RN, PhD



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LET'S TALK HEALTH

What about high blood pressure/Hypertension?

As per the American Heart Association "High blood pressure is a leading cause and controllable risk factor for stroke and heart disease" Therefore it is important that you know your numbers and work with a healthcare professional to control the levels and manage the risks. As per the CDC (Centers for Disease Control & Prevention) nearly half of the adults in the USA have hypertension. The good news – hypertension is controllable, and with proper management, you can lower your risks. Am I at risk for developing high blood pressure/Hypertension?

There are risk factors that increase your chances of developing high blood pressure, here are a few:

1. Those that can be controlled are:

a. Cigarette smoking and exposure to secondhand smoke, Diabetes, being Obese or Overweight, High cholesterol, Unhealthy diet (high in sodium, low in potassium), and drinking too much Alcohol. Also lack of Activity.

2. Factors that can't be modified or are difficult to control such as: a. Family history of high blood pressure, Race/ethnicity, increasing Age, Gender (males), Chronic kidney disease, Obstructive sleep apnea.

The first step to take towards controlling your blood pressure is Lifestyle change. Here are tips to consider:

1. Eat Better: Aim for an overall healthy eating pattern that includes whole foods, lots of fruits and vegetables, lean protein, nuts, seeds without salt and cooking in non-tropical oils such as olive and avocado oil.

2. Be More Active: Adults need to participate in 150 minutes of moderate or 75 minutes of vigorous physical activity. Walking is great for moderate levels of activity. Kids need to have 60 minutes of physical activity every day, including play and structured activities.

3. Quit Tobacco: Use of inhaled nicotine delivery products, which includes traditional cigarettes, e-cigarettes and vaping, is the leading cause of preventable death in the U.S., including about a third of all deaths from heart disease. And about a third of U.S. children ages 3-11 are exposed to secondhand smoke or vaping.

4. Get Healthy Sleep: Getting a good night's sleep every night is vital to cardiovascular health. Adults should aim for an average of 7-9 hours, and babies and kids need more depending on their age. Too little or too much sleep is associated with heart disease, studies show.

5. Manage Weight: Achieving and maintaining a healthy weight has many benefits. Body mass index (BMI), a numerical value of your weight in relation to your height, is a useful gauge. Optimal BMI for most adults ranges from 18.5 to less than 25. You can calculate it online or consult a health care professional.

6. Control Cholesterol: High levels of non-HDL, or "bad," cholesterol can lead to heart disease. Your health care professional can consider non-HDL cholesterol as the preferred number to monitor, rather than total cholesterol, because it can be measured without fasting beforehand and is reliably calculated among all people.

7. Manage Blood Sugar: Most of the food we eat is turned into glucose (or blood sugar) that our bodies use as energy. Over time, high levels of blood sugar can damage your heart, kidneys, eyes and nerves. As part of testing, monitoring hemoglobin A1c can better reflect long-term control in people with diabetes or prediabetes.

8. And, if you have high blood pressure: Manage Blood Pressure: Keeping your blood pressure within acceptable ranges can keep you healthier longer. Levels less than 120/80 mm Hg are optimal. High blood pressure is defined as 130-139 mm Hg systolic pressure (the top number in a reading) or 80-89 mm Hg diastolic pressure (bottom number). @American Heart Association // Badria Bedri, MS, nutritionist at Mariposa Community Health Center.



"Vote Early"

February 20 Last day to register to vote / Update voter registration
February 21 Early voting begins / Early ballots are mailed
March 8 Last day to request early ballot by mail
March 12 Recommended deadline to mail back your ballot
March 15 Last day of early voting (in person)
March 19, 2024 Election Day



Anita Moreno
County Recorder

2150 N. Congress Drive, Suite 101
Nogales, Arizona 85621
Phone: (520) 375-7990
recorder@santacruzcountyaz.gov
voter@santacruzcountyaz.gov



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Voters with an affiliated political party of either Democratic or Republican, applicable to the 2024 Presidential Preference Election, will be eligible to vote in this election.
Check your voter registration status at <https://my.arizona.vote> or update your registration at servicearizona.com.

The Santa Cruz County Sheriff's Office in partnership with the community enables us to address our unique challenges while strengthening empathy and trust.



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Sheriff's Round-Up



Sheriff David Hathaway and his command staff organized an annual awards luncheon for the Sheriff's Office. Members of all divisions attended as peers were recognized for the past year's contributions. The awards were based on supervisors' nominations and also peer nominations recognizing a "Tradition of Service." Great job to all the recipients and non-recipients for all that they do!

Sheriff Hathaway was invited to a working lunch at Zula's with current Chief Justice of the Arizona Supreme Court, Robert Brutinel and upcoming Chief Justice of the Arizona Supreme Court, Ann Timmer and was then asked to brief them on Santa Cruz County issues at the Santa Cruz County judicial complex after lunch. During this unique visit to Santa Cruz County by members of the Arizona Supreme Court, the media from both sides of the border were invited to a press briefing by the Justices.

During the month of January, Carlos Cervantes and Jesus Ibarra graduated as new Detention Officers upon completion of the 7-week academy at the Correctional Officer Training Academy in Tucson, Arizona. We welcome them to our Detention Division as newly certified officers. Job well done to both!

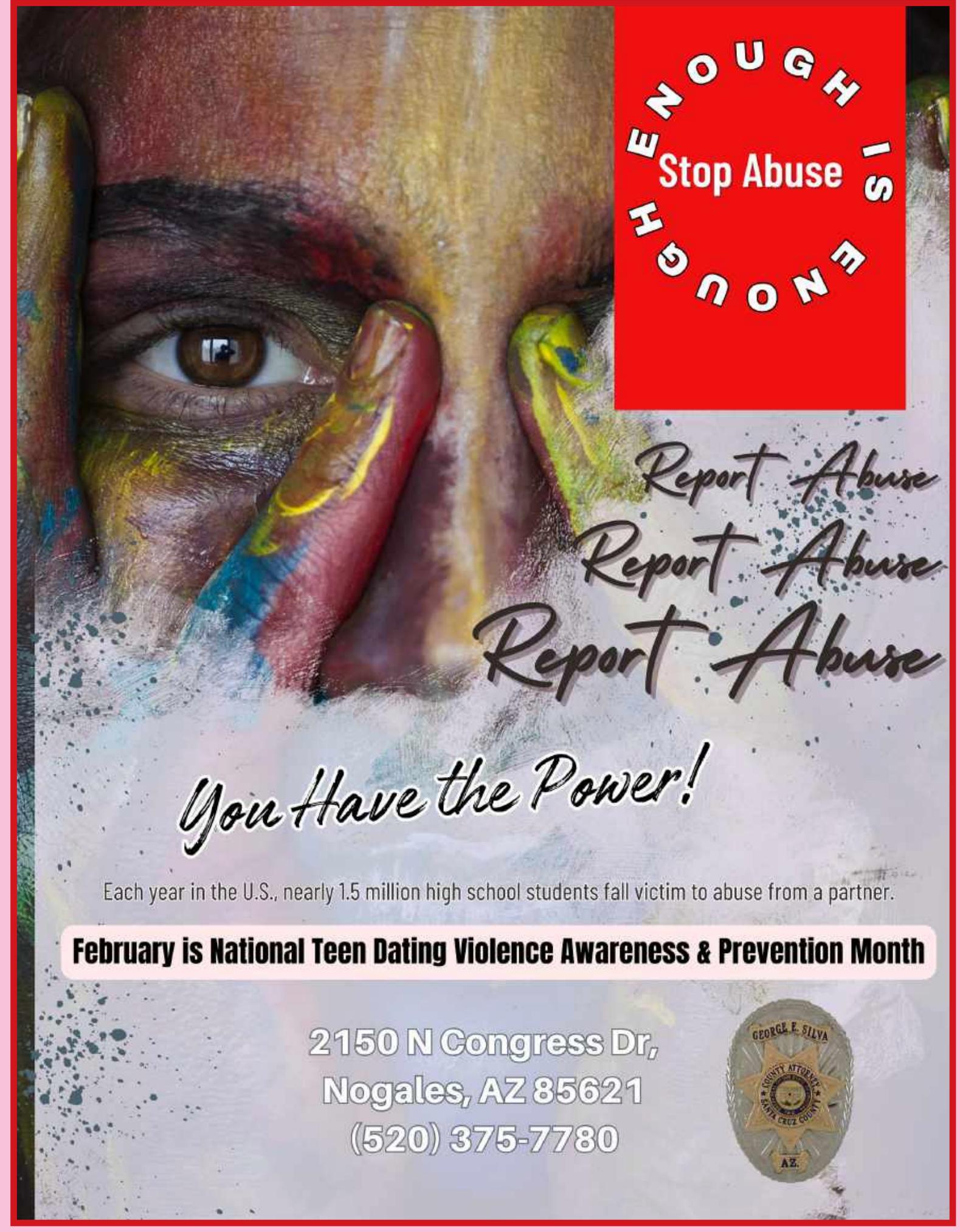
We are also very happy to announce that Alexis Cirerol was promoted to the Public Safety Lead Tele-Communicator position. We are honored to have Lead Supervisor Cirerol join Communications Supervisor Huerta and all of our staff that work in our Dispatch Operations and 911 Center!

Sheriff Hathaway was sponsored by Arizona State Representative Consuelo Hernandez to attend the opening session of the Arizona legislature and to meet and be recognized by the full House of Representatives. Nogales native and Secretary of State Adrian Fontes also joined with Representative Hernandez and Sheriff Hathaway in Phoenix to discuss Santa Cruz County issues and to reminisce.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank all of the employees of the Sheriff's Office and all of the volunteers for everything they do for our Office. We would like to also extend our utmost appreciation to the community at large for all the support we received from the community throughout 2023!

Your Sheriff,
David Hathaway





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February is National Teen Dating Violence Awareness & Prevention Month

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