



5 Echoes from the Hilltop Gallery Cassidy Raeber

CONNECTING SOUTHERN ARIZONA



Happy New Year



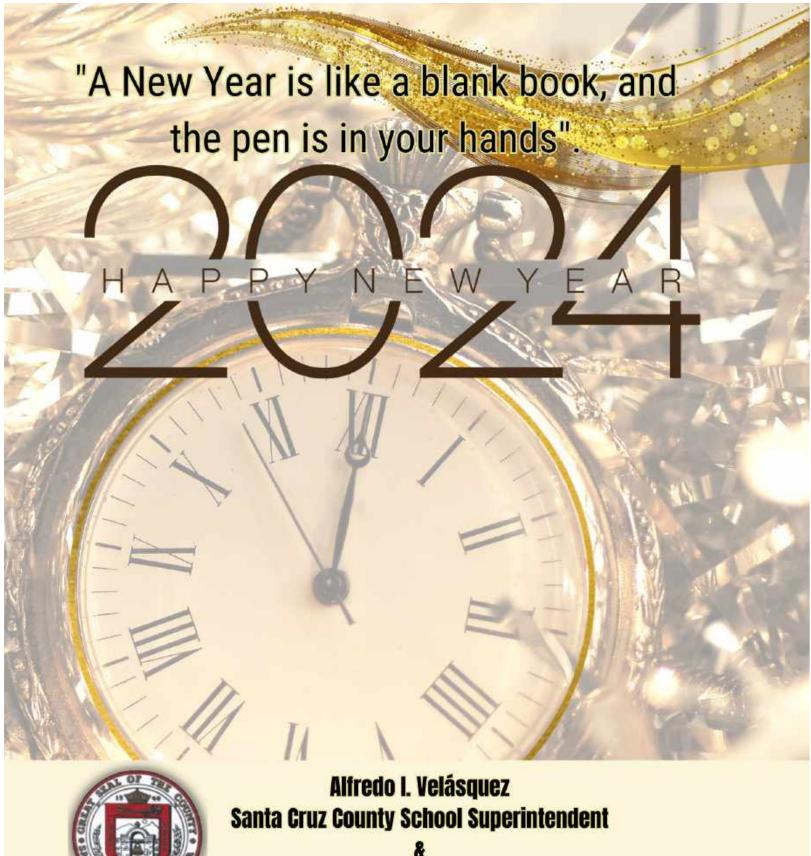
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Staff

Border Eco Updates

We want to sincerely thank our readers and customers for their ongoing support. Your support allows us to share stories about amazing people, exciting events, and meaningful organizations that impact our community.

We hope you have a wonderful holiday season with your loved ones, and we wish you the very best in the upcoming New Year! Our holiday treat to you is our way of saying thank you for your support!

As we reflect on the past year, we are grateful for the trust and loyalty you have shown us. Your continued support motivates us to strive for excellence in delivering quality content that resonates with our readers.

We look forward to bringing you more inspiring stories, captivating events, and impactful initiatives in the coming year. Thank you once again, and may the New Year bring you joy, success, and fulfillment.



SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENT

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

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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

Border Eco is delighted to introduce a remarkable educator and artist from Echoes of the Hilltop Gallery. Cassidy Raeber, our featured teacher this month, not only possesses exceptional artistic talent but also possesses the unique ability to inspire young minds to embrace the world of arts. Since 2019, Cassidy has been an invaluable art teacher at San Cayetano Elementary, where she has accumulated a wealth of experience in her field. With unwavering dedication, she imparts her knowledge to over 400 students each week, ranging from kindergarten to fifth grade. Her curriculum encompasses a diverse range of artistic disciplines, including drawing, painting, fiber arts, and sculpture. Despite the absence of a dedicated classroom, Cassidy conducts 40-minute classes in her students' own classrooms, fostering an environment conducive to creativity and selfexpression.

One of Cassidy's greatest strengths lies in her ability to design open-ended projects that encourage students to explore their own ideas. By doing so, she instills in them the understanding that art is a universal language, accessible to all. Her primary objective is to ensure that her students not only have fun while experimenting with new mediums but also develop essential skills such as creative thinking and fine motor abilities. Moreover, Cassidy strives to expose her students to the rich tapestry of historical artwork, innovative concepts, and contemporary artists that serve as a wellspring of inspiration.

According to Cassidy Raeber, as I contemplate my fifth year at San Cayetano, I have come to recognize that I have developed a greater level of adaptability in my teaching approach, granting my students the space to make errors. I firmly hold the belief that when students are granted the opportunity to engage in play and exploration, their enthusiasm for learning is ignited. Furthermore, this freedom empowers them to learn from their mistakes and foster personal growth. By offering guidance without exerting excessive control, I ensure that they are able to showcase their own ideas and exhibit genuine excitement for their academic endeavors.

Cassidy Raeber's impact as an art teacher extends far beyond the confines of her classroom. Through her unwavering passion and dedication, she ignites a spark within her students, fostering a lifelong appreciation for the arts. Her ability to seamlessly blend education and artistic expression is a testament to her exceptional talent and unwavering commitment to her craft. We are honored to showcase Cassidy as a shining example of the transformative power of art education. Her students not only learn the technical skills required for their chosen art forms, but they also develop a deep understanding of the emotional and cultural significance of their work.



Cassidy's teaching style encourages creativity and self-expression, allowing her students to explore their own unique artistic voices. Under her guidance, they gain the confidence to pursue their dreams and make a positive impact on the world through their art. Cassidy's impact extends far beyond the classroom, as her students go on to become successful artists, educators, and advocates for the arts in their communities.

Mrs.Raeber is a resident of Santa Cruz County, although she was originally born in Orange County, California. Her formative years, however, were spent in Tucson, Arizona, where her family relocated when she was just 13 years old. Cassidy resided in Tucson until the age of 21.

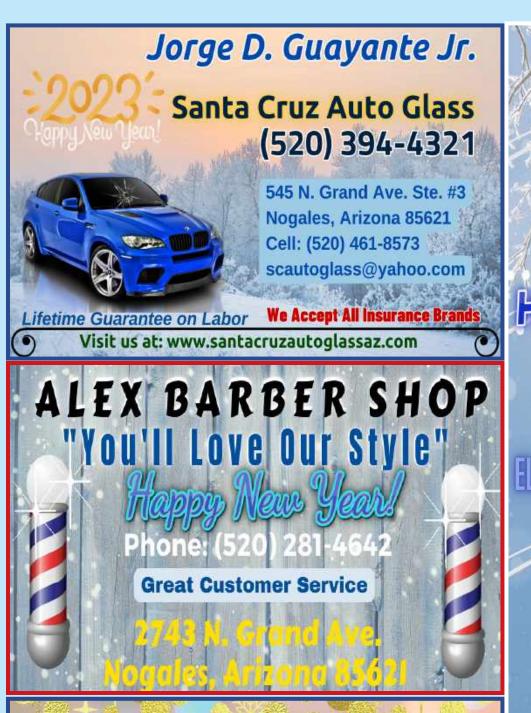
Following her time in Tucson, Cassidy moved to Prescott, Arizona, where she pursued her studies at Prescott College. It was during this period that she crossed paths with her nowhusband, Francisco Cota. Together, they made the decision to relocate to Nogales, Sonora,

For a span of 7 years, Cassidy dedicated her professional efforts to Mexicayotl, before eventually transitioning to her current position at San Cayetano. She has been an integral part of the San Cayetano team for the past 5 years, contributing her expertise and skills to the organization.

In addition to her professional pursuits, Cassidy is also a proud mother to a young daughter named Bellamy Cota, who is currently enrolled in the 2nd Grade at San Cayetano. Bellamy is 7 years old and brings immense joy to Cassidy's life. Her dedication to her work and her commitment to her family are evident in her accomplishments and the positive impact she has made in her community.













This year, we have chosen an individual who has truly made a remarkable impact in our community. As an inspiration to everyone around us, this person demonstrates that anyone can achieve anything with the right mindset and unwavering determination. This year, we are honored to introduce Sandra Moraga, our "Person of the Year" Community Specialist at South 32. Sandra's diverse background and exceptional abilities make her a great fit for the position.

According to Sandra. "Our community relies on each member's active involvement and participation. Every action we take, no matter how small, has a lasting impact on future generations, economic sectors, and the overall health, safety, and well-being of everyone within our community."

Her career has allowed Sandra to work with organizations like the City of Hogales, Esplendor Resort, NUSD, and the Santa Cruz County School Superintendent's Office. These invaluable experiences have not only allowed her to establish significant networking relationships, but have also given her profound insights into our community's dynamics.

She has extensive experience in our community, so she has a deep understanding of its needs and aspirations. This understanding allows her to make significant contributions to promoting and supporting our county. Having exceptional skills in networking, communication, and problem-solving, Sandra has been able to meet the needs of our community and contribute to its growth and success.

The extraordinary contributions she has made to the community and her unwavering commitment make her a deserving recipient of such recognition. We are very proud of her as our

person of the year, and we hope to see her continue to make positive contributions to our community.

Organization of the Year

The Border Eco team selected Crossroads Hogales Mission as the recipient of their organization of the year. As a result of exorbitant rents and rising food prices in recent years, a large number of people have faced immense financial challenges. Homelessness is a pervasive issue across the nation, and many families are finding it increasingly hard to make ends meet. The Crossroads Hogales Mission, however, stands out among these distressing circumstances for its unwavering commitment to addressing the needs of these vulnerable families. Our Crossroads Hogales Mission is dedicated to helping individuals and families who are suffering from addiction, homelessness, and abuse, and is a transformative force in our community. Its uniqueness lies in its status as the only homeless shelter and recovery center in South Central Arizona. Among the services offered by Crossroads Hogales Mission are food and shelter, addiction recovery programs, refuge from domestic violence, spiritual guidance, job placement assistance, and housing support, as well as spiritual guidance. The Crossroads Hogales Mission's mission lies at the heart of all of our efforts: to transform the lives of homeless and distressed individuals through the Gospel's power of transformation. Ultimately, we want to lead individuals away from the perils of homelessness and addiction, and guide them toward lives that are fulfilling and fulfilling. Crossroads Hogales Mission executive director Alejandra Martinez sums up their mission perfectly stating, "Our goal is to transform people from homelessness and addiction into productive, meaningful lives." For those in dire circumstances in our community, Crossroads Hogales Mission stands as a beacon of hope. Our unwavering dedication and comprehensive range of services strive to uplift individuals and families, giving them the tools and support they need to overcome adversity and achieve their goals.











This year, Arizona@Work took the reins as the host of the highly anticipated event of the year. Their job fair, which has experienced remarkable growth and unwavering popularity, continues to serve as a beacon of hope and opportunity for job seekers and employers in the Santa Cruz County community.

"We are thrilled to announce our return, with an unwavering commitment to delivering an even more impactful event. Our main goal is to connect local employers with job seekers who may not be aware of the abundant employment opportunities available in the area. By facilitating these vital connections within our community and helping restore a sense of normalcy, we are dedicated to contributing to the recovery of the workforce," stated Irasema Olvera, WIOA Director.

In a truly remarkable display of dedication, Santa Cruz County Arizona@Work has surpassed all expectations this year. Going above and beyond the call of duty, they have not only organized the event but have also provided free bus transportation from various locations. Taking full advantage of the diverse opportunities available in Santa Cruz County is made easy with this thoughtful gesture. The Santa Cruz County Arizona@Work shows their unwavering commitment to ensuring seamless and enjoyable experiences for all attendees by removing

the potential barriers of transportation.







Rising Star of the Year

We are proud to announce Stephanie Bermudez as our Rising Star of the Year, a remarkable young woman whose vision and passion have been making waves throughout our community. As the CEO and founder of Startup Unidos, Stephanie has dedicated over 15 years to understanding the local culture, forging relationships, and earning the respect and loyalty of individuals and organizations at all levels. Her innovative ideas have led to the creation of cross-border communities that foster collaboration and co-inspiration across national boundaries.

Stephanie not only organizes events, provides training and consulting, and conducts research within the Southern Arizona area, but she also establishes entrepreneurial communities and networks. Her tireless efforts have made a significant impact on the region's business landscape. Beyond her professional achievements, Stephanie is a single mother with a 21-year-old son. In her spare time, she enjoys hiking with friends and prioritizes her health and well-being. Her dedication to both her personal and professional life is truly commendable.

Stephanie's exceptional leadership and contributions have not gone unnoticed. She has received numerous accolades throughout her career, including being named a Top 20 Woman of Impact by Tucson Lifestyle Magazine in February 2020, Minority Business Owner of the Year by Inside Tucson Business Women of Impact in March 2019, and the recipient of the TENWEST Idea Funding Larry Hecker and Sherry Hoskinson Bright Futures Award in October 2018. Additionally, she was honored as the 40 under 40 Woman of the Year by the Arizona Daily Star and Tucson Hispanic Chamber of Commerce in December 2016. Stephanie Bermudez is an inspiration to us all, and we are privileged to have her as our Rising Star of the Year. Her dedication, innovation, and unwavering commitment to building thriving communities serve as a shining example for aspiring entrepreneurs and leaders.







Empowering Schools with CSTAG

Over 45 school officials, resource officers, counselors and teachers attended CSTAG training on November 29th at the Santa Cruz County Complex in Nogales, AZ. Sponsored by Santa Cruz County School Superintendent, Alfredo I. Velasquez, through Promoting Healthy Students Initiative (PHSI), the workshop was provided by The Trust.

CSTAG stands for Comprehensive School Threat Assessment Guidelines. Every participating school received a CSTAG Manual. This program, developed by Dr. Cornell Dewey, provides a step-by-step framework to evaluate the credibility of a school threat. Throughout the 6-hour training, Ms. Kaylee Sorenson led the group through the protocol providing extensive examples and using real-life incidents. Participants also practiced interviewing skills using the forms.

In exit surveys, ninety-seven percent of participants felt that the information was helpful. Their feedback focused positively on the ease of use of the forms, the interviewing procedures and the discussions on liability. PHSI will continue to provide follow up training opportunities in 2024 in order to expand knowledge of school safety for all county schools. For more information, contact Teresa Sprigg at (520) 375-7952.







"Vote Early this New Year"

March 19 Presidential Preference Election
August 6 Primary Election
November 5 General Election

Yolanda Kory, Chief Deputy
Rosa Anna Fajardo, Recording and Elections Clerk
Athena Lopez, Recording and Elections Clerk
Esmeralda Castelo, Recording and Elections Clerk

Anita Moreno County Recorder Angel Aguilar, Recording and Elections Clerk
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This holiday season has been a busy one for the Office of Mayor Jorge Maldonado. The City of Nogales, in collaboration with the Office of Mayor Jorge Maldonado, has successfully organized a highly anticipated Christmas parade. Veronica Weatherbie and Chonito from the Maxima were the first-ever bilingual MCs at this event, resulting in a huge success.

A crucial meeting with Governor Hobbs was held by City Manager Roy Bermudez and Mayor Jorge Maldonado, who discussed various pressing issues, including the migration issue and port closure. There was a clear demonstration of the Mayor's Office and City of Nogales' commitment to addressing and resolving important community issues at this meeting. The Mayor and City Manager also met with community members and stakeholders to discuss potential solutions. In addition, they promised to continue to work together to address the issues faced by the community.

In addition to these significant endeavors, the Mayor's Office actively participated in the Delivering Smiles 2023 initiative at the Bowman Center. This remarkable initiative distributed 125 care boxes to seniors within the community. We extend our heartfelt gratitude to all the sponsors and volunteers who generously contributed their time and resources to bring joy and happiness to our beloved seniors during this holiday season. We would like to express our sincere appreciation to Croppers, CSL Plasma, Safeway, Borderlands Food Bank, Nogales Housing Authority, City of Nogales, Margarita Elias, Making Connections 4U, Villa's Market & Southern Arizona Community Food Bank for their invaluable support. Without their unwavering dedication, this initiative would not have been possible.

Mayor Jorge Maldonado and his team remain committed to serving the community of Nogales with utmost professionalism and dedication. We look forward to continuing our efforts in making a positive impact on the lives of our residents.



DELIVERING SMILES

On Wednesday, December 20th at 3:00 p.m., a remarkable event took place at the Bowman Center for the senior community. This event, known as the Delivering Smiles 2023 initiative, was a collaborative effort between several respected organizations. These organizations included Croppers, CSL Plasma, Safeway, Borderlands Food Bank, Nogales Housing Authority, City of Nogales, Margarita Elias, Arizona@Work, Making Connections 4U, Villas Market, and the Southern Arizona Community Food Bank. The primary objective of the Delivering Smiles initiative was to bring joy and support to the senior community. Each senior was presented with a special "care box" that contained a variety of thoughtful items. These included earmuffs, knitted hats, gloves, socks, scarves, coffee tumblers, cookies, and a food box. A total of 125 of these care boxes were distributed to the deserving seniors.

The Nogales Housing Authority staff played a crucial role in ensuring the success of this initiative. They diligently distributed the care packages to seniors residing in various housing properties. These properties included Kitchen, Anza, Legleu, Siqueiros, MacNab, Western Place, Esperanza, Guerrero, Las Americas, Bungalow, Thelma, Lydia Castro, Joe Cordova, Via Jovita, and Bowman.

The Arizona@Work youth program, in collaboration with the housing authority staff, actively participated in packing the items into the care boxes. Additionally, these dedicated youth also assisted in distributing the boxes to the seniors. Alongside them, the Nogales Housing Authority staff, Cropper's staff, and CSL Plasma staff worked tirelessly to ensure that each senior received their care box.

This heartwarming event not only brought smiles to the faces of the senior community but also showcased the power of collaboration and compassion. The efforts of these organizations and individuals truly made a difference in the lives of the seniors, providing them with much needed support and showing them that they are not alone in their journey. The unity displayed during this event serves as a reminder that when we come together, we can create a positive impact on the lives of others. It is through acts of kindness and selflessness that we can build a stronger and more caring community for everyone. This event serves as an inspiration for future collaborations and a testament to the incredible generosity and dedication of these individuals and organizations.

The Arizona@Work youth program and staff from the housing authority helped to pack the items into the boxes. The youth also helped to distribute the boxes to the seniors along with the Nogales Housing Authority staff, Cropper's staff, and CSL Plasma staff at the Bowman Center. Thank you for joining us in bringing smiles to those in need by participating in this collaborative effort.

Thank you to all the organizations, staff, & volunteers for bringing a smile to someone who needs one this holiday season!

CSL Plasma Staff: Crystal Alvarez, Ivan Lopez, Mariana Munoz, Antonio Lira, Cielo Lopez, Jennifer Cheang, and Rebecca Mungia Ortega.

Cropper's Staff: Otillio Garavito, Miguel Lopez, Johnny Hawkins, Carl Krause, and Kalani Krause.

Arizona@Work Staff: Tania Hernandez, Cresencio Mata, and Adrian Chamberlain. Arizona@Work youth participants: Lenis Melendez, Mitzia Gastelum, Maria Lopez, Mariela Alvarez, Liz Ramirez, Jocelyn Cota.

Nogales Housing Authority Staff: Frida Rodirguez, Manuel Garcia, Federico Encinas, Eduardo Galindo, Manuel Gonzalez, Joaquin Serrano, Viviana Rivera, Javier Angulo, and Trini Matus

Why eating healthy matters no matter,

Food presents a challenge for many people during the holidays. Most people think that it is ok to indulge now and worry about the weight or the health latter. For many people this causes stress and anxiety. That's why adopting a healthy eating mindset is important throughout the entire year.

To start this journey of eating healthy no matter the Occasion:

- * Start with identifying the reasons you want to eat healthy.
- * Have a plan and avoid "decision fatigue."
- * Scan what is offered to you first and then Decide what you want to eat and how much you want before adding food to your plate.
- * When offered unhealthy foods don't panic always allow yourself a few unhealthy food options but decide when and where you will make those choices.
- * Bringing your favorite fruits or/and vegetables to holiday gatherings to create more options for yourself and others.
- * Eating a light snack before attending holiday events to lessen the likelihood of overeating.
- * Measuring and portioning your food over the holidays.
- * Increasing your level of activity and exercise.
- * Committing to making changes with someone close to you.
- * Banking your calories if you know you'll attend an event with more food options available.
- * Finally, be aware of your negative emotions and manage those through healthier means rather than using food to deal with them.

Join us the third Thursday of every month at the Community Food Bank of Southern Arizona, located at 2636 N. Donna Avenue in Nogales from 9-12 for free healthy cooking demos! For more information, please call Mariposa Community Health Services, Platicamos Salud at 520 375-6050.

Badria Bedri, Mariposa Community Health Center.

Source: Lisa Hardesty, Ph.D., is a clinical psychologist in Psychiatry & Psychology in Mankato, Minnesota.









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"The best part of this time of year is the memories we make"



Sheriff's Round-Up

Sheriff David Hathaway and his wife Karen enjoyed greeting many joyous people as they attended different Holiday events during the month of December including the first annual Christmas Tree Lighting ceremony at the Garrett's shopping plaza in Rio Rico. Chief Deputy Gerardo Castillo and Commander Santiago Gonzales attended the graduation of the newest addition to our patrol division, Deputy Joel Bustamante, who received his Peace Officer certification after graduating from the South-Eastern Arizona Law Enforcement Training Academy. Congratulations Deputy Sheriff Bustamante!

Commander John Marquez and Sergeant De La Riva attended the graduation ceremony for the latest class of the Correctional Officer Training Academy in Tucson, Arizona where they welcomed Angeline Astorga and Erika Ainza to our Detention Division as newly certified officers upon their completion of the 7-week academy. Well done to both!

We are also very happy that Communications Supervisor Lizbeth Huerta was awarded the Merit Award for Professional Staff Member of the Year by the Arizona Sheriff's Association at a special ceremony in Mesa, Arizona. We are honored to have you Supervisor Huerta on our staff in charge of our Dispatch Operations and 911 Center!

Members of all divisions participated in several Holiday events held throughout the County to assure the safety of all involved and to share in the good cheer. Thank you to the organizers and to the attendees for continuously coming out to plan and support these events and for providing resources and information to our community.

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 receive from the community throughout the year. Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year to all!



