

SSVEC

# Currents

LOCAL STORIES ABOUT LOCAL COMMUNITIES

JULY | AUGUST 2025

## Best of the best

Khloe Markle earns spot on national archery team for world championship

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Rodeo magic for more than a century in Sonoita

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PHOTO BY MONIQUE VARGAS



# SSVEC Currents

JULY | AUGUST 2025

Volume 4, No. 4

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Sierra Vista teen, Khloe Markle, wins a spot on Team USA for the World Youth Archery Championships in Winnipeg, Canada in August. See the story on page 16.  
PHOTOS BY MONIQUE VARGAS



# The cooperative heart at work

**A**bout two years ago, one of our employees, Danna Judd, said something that stuck with me:

"We have a foundation for youth and a charitable trust for members in crisis, but nothing to help members with their utility bills. As a cooperative, we should."

She was right. And she wasn't alone in feeling it.

Across SSVEC, employees have quietly stepped in to help members in need—pulling from their own pockets, connecting folks to resources, or just going the extra mile when it mattered. We've also seen community members walk into our offices and donate generously—usually anonymously—to help prevent someone else's service from being shut off.

That spirit of giving led to something remarkable.

Last summer, a group of employees came together to launch the Sulphur Springs Valley Community Empowerment Fund. They incorporated it on June 12, 2024, and a short time later, earned approval as a 501(c)(3) nonprofit. It's now fully employee-run—funded by staff contributions, guided by an employee board, and supported by a partnership with St. Vincent de Paul to help deliver aid where it's needed most.

In just its first year, this fund is already provided over \$20,000 in direct support to members across our communities. No headlines. No red tape. Just people helping people.

That's what makes this cooperative different. Our employees don't just serve the community—they are the community. They don't wait for direction or recognition. They see a need, and they do something about it.

I couldn't be prouder of the team that brought this vision to life. And I hope the rest of us—myself included—can continue to learn from their example.

If you'd like to support the fund or learn more, visit [www.SSVCEF.org](http://www.SSVCEF.org) or stop by one of our offices.

Have a safe and meaningful Independence Day—and thanks for being part of the SSVEC family.

Sincerely,  
Jason Bowling, CEO, SSVEC

*Jason Bowling is the Chief Executive Officer at Sulphur Springs Valley Electric Cooperative (SSVEC). He can be reached at [jbowling@ssvec.com](mailto:jbowling@ssvec.com).*

# SSVEC celebrates 87th annual meeting



SSVEC board members joined awardees in celebrating the presentation of Phase 1 SSVEC Foundation grants.

A spirit of service, strength, and community lit up the 87th Annual Meeting of Sulphur Springs Valley Electric Cooperative (SSVEC), where members gathered Thursday evening at Buena High School to celebrate the co-op's achievements and future direction.

From honoring exceptional linemen to announcing a \$30,000 donation to support survivors of abuse, the event reflected SSVEC's deep commitment to both operational excellence and community care. U.S. Congressman Juan Ciscomani headlined the meeting with remarks about the role of rural cooperatives in Arizona's future.

"This is your meeting, and it's a reflection of what makes our cooperative different," said Jason Bowling, CEO of SSVEC. "Our mission is to provide safe, reliable, and affordable service. But our purpose is even bigger: it's about our relationship with the people who count on us and the communities we call home."

Bowling closed the event by recognizing four SSVEC linemen who represented SSVEC at the International Lineman's Rodeo in Kansas last fall—and who will return to compete again this



Longtime SSVEC Board member Curtis Nolan (at podium) was recognized by SSVEC Board President Randy Redmond and SSVEC CEO Jason Bowling (seated) for more than 40 years of service to the Cooperative.

October at the international competition testing the skill and safety of utility workers. "Their performance reflects the skill and dedication of our crews—they are the backbone of our safety culture and the heroes of our story," he said.

More than 200 members and their families attended the meeting, which also included highlights from the SSVEC Foundation. Board President Randy Redmond noted that the Foundation has awarded over \$275,000 in education grants so far in 2025 and is on track to meet its \$1 million goal for the second consecutive year. "These funds don't come from your electric bill—they're made possible by unclaimed capital credits and member donations," Redmond said.

Just before the meeting began, Sam Gonsowski of SSVEC announced a \$30,000 donation to Lori's Place, a Sierra Vista-based center that provides care for victims of abuse and trauma. The donation includes a \$15,000 direct contribution from SSVEC and a matching grant from CoBank, a national cooperative bank and SSVEC partner. "Their mission is urgent, their work is powerful, and we are proud to support them," Gonsowski said.

Bowling also addressed financial challenges and explained that SSVEC has submitted a rate case to the Arizona Corporation Commission. "Despite strong cost control efforts, rising expenses have led us to request our first rate increase since 2016," Bowling said. "If approved, members will see an eight percent increase beginning next year."

Congressman Ciscomani praised the cooperative and its members. Drawing from his own upbringing in Tucson as the son of a bus driver, he encouraged perseverance and pride. "I tell my kids every day that nothing is out of reach—and the same goes for this cooperative," he said. "Thanks to your support, SSVEC is meeting the growing energy needs of this region."

The results of the annual board elections were also announced. Directors Russ McNeill (District 8) and Janice Beam (District 10) were re-elected unopposed, and Dan Barrera won a contested race in District 6. All three were sworn in at the meeting.

Formed in 1938, SSVEC now enters its 88th year of service with a renewed focus on safety, reliability, affordability, and the enduring power of community.



SSVEC Linemen (from left) Marcus Olivares, Jacob Shull, Efren Gallego, and Chuy Hernandez were recognized by CEO Jason Bowling (at podium) as qualifiers for the upcoming international linemen rodeo competition in Kansas City, Kansas.



SSVEC board members re-elected to three year terms were sworn-in to office, including (from the left) District 8 Director Russ McNeill, District 10 Director, Janice Beam, and District 6 Director Dan Barrera.

# Governor's reps tour Fairbank project

Representatives of Arizona Governor Katie Hobbs toured the Fairbank wildfire mitigation project May 23, getting a first-hand look at SSVEC efforts to protect the environmentally sensitive national conservation area.

The project faced unique challenges due to its location along the San Pedro River, a designated critical habitat for species such as the Mexican garter snake, the yellow-billed cuckoo, and the southwestern willow flycatcher. To mitigate impacts on wildlife, construction activities were restricted to periods outside the nesting season, occurring only between December and March. Additionally, all construction work was monitored by certified biologists and archaeologists to ensure compliance with environmental regulations and cultural preservation requirements.

One of the project's primary goals was wildfire prevention. The dense vegetation in the area, combined with electrical infrastructure, posed a significant fire hazard. Utility poles, guy wires, and even minor electrical sparks could potentially ignite a fire.

Working closely with the federal Bureau of Land Management, SSVEC developed collaborative solutions that promoted safety and reduced the wildfire risk, while still providing electricity to the area.

At the May 23 tour, SSVEC Chief Executive Officer Jason Bowling was joined by Senior Vice President of Operations Nathan Hodges, Engineering Services Manager Megan Resor, and Vice President of Member Engagement Cory East.

Melany Edwards-Barton, Chief Executive Officer at the Sky Island Regional Partnership, also joined the tour.

Representatives of the governor's office included Nathalia Untiveros, Arizpe Ellinwood and Selina Valenzuela.



# Flag Day observed in Sierra Vista

1 - Community members joined with employees at SSVEC offices throughout the service territory to observe Flag Day.

2 - In Sierra Vista, the ceremony hosted at the maintenance and construction yard at 1348 Giulio Cesare Avenue featured CEO Jason Bowling, Mayor Clea McCaa, members of the Sierra Vista City Council, and Police Chief Chris Hizer. Bowling commended SSVEC Journeyman Meter Technician Brian Church for the initiative to erect a flag pole at the yard and host a Flag Day ceremony.

3 - In Benson, military veterans Steve Garate, Training and Development Manager, and Dominick Stamatopolus, Mechanic, joined in raising the flag while Operations Manager Deana Donovan spoke on the significance of the day.

4 - Other ceremonies were held in Patagonia, Elfrida and Willcox, where Foreman Journeyman Lineman Jesus Hernandez raised the flag.



# 2025 SSVEC scholarship winners

Forty area high school seniors were celebrated Wednesday evening, April 30, at the annual Sulphur Springs Valley Electric Cooperative (SSVEC) Foundation scholarship dinner, where awards of \$4,000 were presented to further educational pursuits in trade and academic studies.

The annual dinner invited graduating seniors and their families to dinner at the Multipurpose facility on the Benson High School campus.

"This event is a highlight every year for the SSVEC Foundation," said Randy Redmond, President of the foundation board of directors. "Utilizing funds generated from unclaimed capital credits to further the skills and studies of local students is an important mission for the Foundation."

Ten area high schools were represented by students who attended the dinner and ceremony Wednesday evening. Qualifying students ranked academically in the top 20 percent of their class.

Recipients were selected based on participation in school extracurricular activities, community involvement, volunteer work, leadership, character, and promise.

"Celebrating and supporting these students in furthering their academic and trade education is a significant contribution to the betterment of our community," said Jason Bowling, Chief Executive Officer at SSVEC. "The Foundation continues to focus on making a positive difference in the lives of our members and their families."



Students earning scholarships, and the school they represent, include Shannon Frost, Avery Hartman, Roy Jones and Aubrey Moon of Benson High School; Daniel Castro and Nicholas Young of Patagonia High School; Steven DeLaCruz and Angela Vasquez of Valley Union High School; Ana Castillo and Charles Vesci of Veritas Christian High School; Kyla Gross, Joel Kotchikian and McKenzie Mazzanti of Tombstone High School; Kaylee Fierro, Ignacio Guillen and Hollie Keil of San Simon High School; Benjamin Glover, home school; Alayna Didion, Regan Haynie, Emma Spencer and Gannon Carrafa of St. David High School; Madison Carney, Ariella Antemann, Ongree Thrasher, Margaret Flissar, Leonidas Johnson, Lena Armstrong, Janessa Oudenhoven, Kade Spilsbury, Benjamin Warwick, Christina Gross and Jade Hinchcliff of Buena High School; and Caden Hooper, Madison Bennett, Luke Perolino, Elijah Bhasme, Wade Owen, Makayla Donahue, Morgan Allred and Alan Solis of Willcox High School.

## SSVEC board awards

### CREDENTIALED COOPERATIVE DIRECTOR PLAQUES PRESENTED

Randy Redmond, president of the Sulphur Springs Valley Electric Cooperative (SSVEC) Board of Directors, presented two fellow board members with Credentialed Cooperative Director plaques at the May 16 meeting in Sierra Vista. Above, District 1 representative Dave Collins received his plaque, and below, District 10 representative Janice Beam was presented her plaque.



The National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA) Credentialed Cooperative Director program requires attendance and a demonstrated understanding of the basic competencies contained in five core courses, including Director Duties and Responsibilities, Understanding the Electric Business, Board Operations and Process, Strategic Planning and Financial Decision Making.



### 25 YEAR PIN AWARDED

Dan Barrera (left), the District 6 representative on the Sulphur Springs Valley Electric Cooperative (SSVEC) Board of Directors, received a commemorative pin from Randy Redmond, president of the SSVEC Board, at the April 18 meeting in Willcox. Barrera currently serves as Secretary of the board.



PHOTOS FROM LEFT: SSVEC Board President Randy Redmond presented credential plaques to District 1 Director Dave Collins and District 10 Director Janice Beam. Redmond also presented a 25-year service pin to District 6 Director Dan Barrera.

# RODEO

## *magic* for more than a century

By Frank Whitehead

On a warm September afternoon in 1914, a collection of settlers gathered for a picnic under the shade of a cottonwood grove on the Hummel Ranch near the town of Sonoita. The topic of this small meeting concerned the task of organizing a formal county fair. For several years, this group of farmers, ranchers, and miners had been informally gathering on a nearly annual basis to share food and stories, and a proposal was made to schedule a proper county fair. The following year, Sonoita hosted the first Santa Cruz County Fair. The event proved so popular that the Southern Pacific Company arranged for an extended train schedule

to shuttle passengers from Nogales between 8:30 a.m. and 11 p.m., and the highway from Tucson was clogged with automobile traffic.

Among the horse races, livestock shows, and dances, that first county fair featured what the Nogales Daily Herald described as a "bucking contest" with a \$25 jackpot. Beginning a full ten years prior to the first Fiesta de los Vaqueros in Tucson, this small competition between local cowboys over who could ride the rankest broncs grew into the Sonoita Labor Day Rodeo, now entering its 110th year in 2025.

Over the course of its first ten years, the rodeo gradually added more events. The second annual Santa Cruz County Fair added "roping and branding contests" to the program, along with the bucking contest. By 1923, the rodeo also

included bulldogging, steer riding, and a trick roping competition. The prize money steadily increased as well. In 1924, a bronc or steer rider could expect to pay a \$5 entry fee, while calf ropers paid \$10. Those skilled enough to emerge victorious in their event would go home with \$40 in prize money for bronc riding, \$125 for calf roping, and a piddly \$25 for steer riding.

In just twenty years, the rodeo went from a relatively minor attraction among many at the Santa Cruz County Fair to what the Arizona Daily Star described in 1933 as the "principal feature" of the fair. The organizers of the event clearly agreed with this assessment, as in 1934

Settlers gather under cottonwood trees at a picnic held at Hummel Ranch to plan for a Santa Cruz County Fair Association, 1914.  
PHOTO COURTESY OF THE BOWMAN STRADLING HISTORY CENTER AT THE SONOITA FAIRGROUNDS



they invested significantly in new lumber corrals and chutes for the rodeo arena, signed contracts well in advance for high-quality bucking stock to be brought to Sonoita, and expanded the rodeo from a one-day to two-day event.

The height of the rodeo's popularity in the 1930's and early 1940's was exemplified by the frequent attendance of high-profile state politicians. Between 1938 and 1941, three consecutive governors all made sure to campaign at the rodeo. Earlier in its history, the rodeo also hosted the first Arizona governor, George W. P. Hunt, and later in 1953, new U.S. Senate candidate (and future Republican presidential nominee) Barry Goldwater.

Following a four-year hiatus due to World War II, the 1946 Sonoita rodeo returned with a distinct Hollywood flavor. John Wayne and the cast of *Red River* took a break from filming in nearby Elgin to lead the grand entrance

and enjoy the roping, riding, and festivities.

During the late 1940s, organizers again invested heavily in the rodeo, with a reported \$2,000 spent on expanding and renovating the arena, bucking chutes, and livestock pens, and more money added to the jackpots. The investment paid off, as it attracted the top contestants in rodeo, including 6-time world champion steer wrestler and Pro Rodeo Hall of Famer Homer Pettigrew, 3-time world champion team roper Asbury Schell, and two-time world champion calf roper Joe Glenn. As the rodeo's prestige grew, it was eventually sanctioned by the Rodeo Cowboy's Association (RCA) in 1954, meaning that winnings could count toward each year's world championship.

The 1960's saw the rodeo undergo several significant changes. First, in 1961, it switched from RCA sanctioning to the

Arizona Rodeo Association. That same year, the rodeo included women's barrel racing and a rodeo queen contest for the first time. Five years later, the Santa Cruz County Fair & Rodeo Association decided to separate the rodeo from the fair, moving it to Labor Day weekend.

Throughout the 1980s, the Labor Day Rodeo was once again sanctioned by the Professional Rodeo Cowboys Association (PRCA), but today it is sanctioned by the Grand Canyon Professional Rodeo Association. The 2024 event hosted over 5,500 attendees who witnessed over 300 contestants compete in many of the same events as cowboys did over a century ago. This year's Sonoita Labor Day Rodeo will take place August 30th through September 1st, 2025, at the Sonoita Fairgrounds. ■



**Cowboys gather in front of the bucking chutes at the Sonoita Rodeo during the 1950s.** PHOTO COURTESY OF THE BOWMAN STRADLING HISTORY CENTER AT THE SONOITA FAIRGROUNDS



**Ronnie Pyeatt (son of Buster) roping a calf at the Sonoita Rodeo, 1940.** PHOTO COURTESY OF THE BOWMAN STRADLING HISTORY CENTER AT THE SONOITA FAIRGROUNDS



**Team ropers speed after a steer during the rodeo, date unknown.** PHOTO COURTESY OF THE BOWMAN STRADLING HISTORY CENTER AT THE SONOITA FAIRGROUNDS

# COMING SOON...

\$1.7 million  
Willcox Theater  
and Arts complex close to opening its doors

By R.J. Cohn

One of the most significant construction projects in the history of Willcox has the potential to boost the city's tourism and expand its growing arts movement.

Scheduled to open this fall, the Center of Art and Heritage at the Willcox Theatre and Arts (WTA) complex on historic Railroad Avenue will preserve the community's history of western heritage, ranching, and agriculture for future generations.

The complex — backed by a \$1.7 million federal grant — will showcase renovations to existing historic buildings currently named The Palace and Studio 128. The new facility will feature a virtual reality studio, an exhibition center, and a two-story structure with an 11,200-square foot space to house a multi-purpose auditorium. Seating in the auditorium is adjustable to accommodate up to 150 patrons.

"Excluding the city's infrastructure projects, this is absolutely one of Willcox's biggest projects," said WTA Executive Director Dr. Gayle Berry, who spearheaded the drive for the facility. "The community has been behind it 100 percent since its inception, and they're becoming more excited, especially with the new construction in the rear part of the complex becoming a reality. I know I am."

**Construction of the Center of Art and Heritage at the Willcox Theater and Arts complex is taking place next door to Studio 128 and is expected to be completed this fall. PHOTO BY MONIQUE VARGAS**

Berry spent close to a year writing a grant application to the U.S. Department of Commerce through the Economic Development Administration. She felt the city and nonprofit theater group had a strong chance to receive the award.

It was a daunting undertaking for the former Ohio State University professor that included an impact analysis study along with other critical assessments.

"I've written some grant proposals before, but nothing on a level as this," she said. "I felt the city fit into the parameters of the grant, and I had a strong feeling we just might get it."

Berry's hunch was on the money.

As part of the grant requirement, \$397,528 in matching local funds were raised. When completed, the project is expected to create up to 30 jobs and generate \$90,920 in private investment.

The grant, which was awarded in September 2023, was part of the \$240 million competitive American Rescue Plan for Travel, Tourism, and Outdoor Recreation programs. The federal funds are intended to support the recovery of the tourism sector in Willcox through improvements to the downtown historic district.

"After all the planning that went into this and finally seeing the complex materializing before our eyes is almost like watching a baby growing up," said Berry. "We're almost there."





Inside one of the theaters at the Willcox Historic Theater and Arts on Railroad Avenue in Willcox. PHOTO BY MONIQUE VARGAS

ADBE STOCK IMAGE BY 愛要 黃

Berry said when it's completed, the complex will be a model showcase she believes will become a destination for tourists from all over the world fascinated by the heritage of Wild West.

"We've been doing things for years in buildings that are hundreds of years old," she said. "This will allow us to hold events and programs in a much bigger space that will be linked together. Along with Willcox's viticulture industry, this will add another pole to our tourism that has great economic potential for our area."

Grouped with the city's annual Rex Allen Days, Willcox West Fest, the Cowboy Hall of Fame, the Chiricahua Regional Museum and Research Center, the Rex Allen Museum and the Old Pioneer Cemetery with graves from the late 19th and early 20th century – including Warren Earp – the new complex adds another "must see" element to Willcox.

Berry has always believed in developing the arts in Willcox, where opportunities for rural residents are often limited. Several years ago, she led the effort to purchase the two historic buildings adjacent the theater and transformed them into 'Studio 128' and 'The Palace,' where live stage programming, arts workshops, along with STEAM and digital programming, are currently held.

Offering those opportunities has made a huge impact on students and other art-and-technology-minded residents in the Sulfur Springs Valley.

"It's my hope that the new complex will pull more and more people from surrounding communities to make Willcox a vibrant center of the arts," said Berry. "With Studio 128, we opened a window to the arts. We want to see that continue when the complex is up and running. I think it's going to be tremendous." ■



Skilled tradesmen work on the interior of the Center of Art and Heritage at the Willcox Theatre and Arts (WTA) complex.

# Think you

Laurie Ann's paint parties unlock the artist inside you

By Robert Cohn

I've always been envious of artists like Laurie Ann Carlisle.

A former U.S. Air Force parachute rigger who never held a brush until she painted a flower at a paint party at Fort Huachuca when she was 55, Carlisle not only became an accomplished landscape artist; since 2019, she has become a passionate art teacher for thousands in Cochise County who thought they had no ability to paint anything but a dining room wall.

She has been so inspiring teaching people who always wanted to paint but were too intimidated to try at her paint parties that even people like me — who never got beyond drawing crooked stick figures — leave with a canvas graced with competent brush strokes and a compelling composition that can be put on a wall.

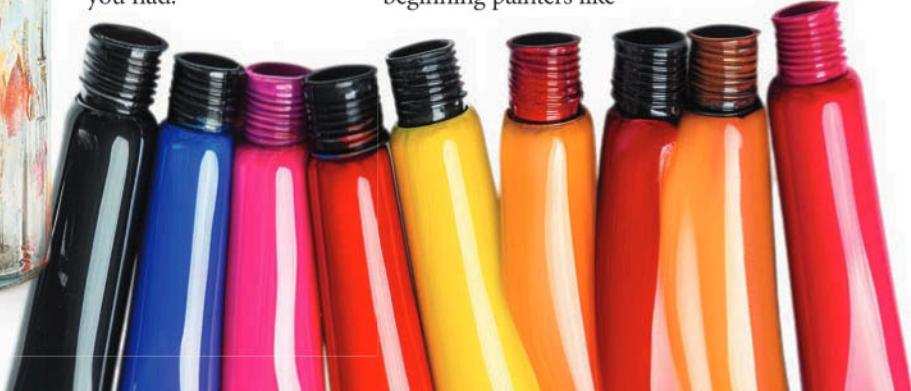
Try telling Carlisle you have absolutely no artistic talent, and the Sierra Vista artist will sit you down in front of an easel with



bottles of acrylic paint, look you square in the eyes and will tell you this: "You CAN paint." And after two-and-a-half hours at one of her paint parties, you're going to walk away with a landscape painting that touches the fringes of an ability you never thought you had.

"She's an awesome teacher," said Denise Malin, who has been attending her paint parties for three years. "I couldn't even draw a stick figure. Painting intimidated me. Laurie has made this an important part of my life where I have the confidence to paint a landscape, understanding how paint works. I would never have gained the ability to do something like this on my own. Her techniques have made painting a joy."

Unlocking the artistic talent for beginning painters like



# can't paint?

Malin and others might never have happened if Carlisle hadn't broken her ankle while mopping a floor as a housecleaner.

While nursing her injury for the next six weeks, she watched painter and art instructor Bob Ross, who hosted the instructional Joy of Painting TV program on PBS. She began painting for the first time in her life with an unquenchable passion.

"It was a big wow to me when I started painting because I realized I was really good at it," she said. "Suddenly I was painting all night, up past 2 a.m. I began to find my own style and technique and passed that on to people in my paint parties who thought painting a flower in a vase would be impossible. It's still weird for me to say I'm an artist because I would never have imagined in 1,000 years."

When she started holding paint parties — in Bisbee, Tombstone, Sierra Vista, Sonoita, along with private ones — Carlisle realized the passion she had for teaching beginners was as strong as it was for her to paint.

**OPPOSITE PAGE:** Dorinda Ross, along with other aspiring artists, work on a painting at one of Laurie Ann Carlisle's paint parties at Huachuca City's Mountain View Resort RV Park. Carlisle has been hosting paint parties throughout Cochise County for the last six years.

**RIGHT:** Artist Laurie Ann Carlisle helps aspiring artist Robert Cohn on a painting at one of Carlisle's paint parties she has been hosting since 2019 throughout Cochise County. The former U.S. Air Force parachute rigger has been inspiring people who always wanted to paint but felt too intimidated to try for years.

"The reception has been tremendous," she said. "I began with about four students, and now they're often filled with about 28 in places like Bone Dry, High Heat Sports Grill, Mt. View RV Park and other venues thanks to word-of-mouth and my own networking. I'm a really good teacher. People don't trace patterns and fill them in with paint. I teach blending, composition and how to lay paint on a canvas with various brushstrokes, using one of my paintings as a model."

Carlisle's paint parties are not only fun; first timers realize that they, too, have the ability to paint.

"When people come to these, they're going to do something they never thought they could do," she said. "And that's to paint a really good landscape

that they can be proud of and hang it on their wall."

For someone who could hardly draw a decent stick figure, I felt my finished painting of a wintery forest under a snow-capped mountain range fronted by a frozen lake was pretty good, considering it was the first time I ever did something like this.

More importantly, I learned that you never know what kind of ability you have until you try.

But it helps to have a teacher like Laurie Ann Carlisle looking over your shoulder, encouraging you one brush-stroke at a time.

To learn when you can attend Laurie Ann's paint parties, call 520-508-3713 or visit Paint Parties and Workshops by Laurie Ann on Facebook. ■



# [On the] [front line] Rescuing the unwanted

Border Animal Rescue is on a mission to save, neuter neglected pets

By R.J. Cohn

They're the frontline of an endless effort to save dogs and cats that have been left for dead, abandoned or abused, a passionately dedicated group of volunteers who will go anywhere to help Cochise County's unwanted.

Despite limited funds that come solely from donations and a handful of grants, what Border Animal Rescue (BAR) has accomplished since 1998 when the nonprofit group started has been miraculous.

The network of BAR's unpaid volunteers has been like a Hail Mary heave in the night for dogs almost on their last breaths and untreated, free-roaming cats continuously breeding throughout the county.

"It's definitely heartbreaking at times, but that's why we're here doing this," said 10-year volunteer David Kelso. "We're trying to make a better life and outcome for these pets."

BAR has done that and more.

In the last five years, BAR has managed to save an incredulous 3,360 cats and dogs – 93% of which were felines – through



Volunteers David Kelso, Mary Anne Behnke (center) and Claire Peachey stand by two traps they set at a Sierra Vista home that will attract a group of feral cats that infiltrated the property. PHOTOS BY MONIQUE VARGAS

**RIGHT:** Volunteer Claire Peachey sets a trap for feral cats at a Sierra Vista West End home where a proliferation of cats were roaming through the property. David Kelso, a BAR volunteer for 10 years, looks through the property for free-roaming cats.

foster care and adoption, while treating 2,142 cats, many which were feral, through its spay/neuter, vaccinate and return program.

That's no easy feat, especially in Cochise County, which Kelso says has an incredulous 15,000 feral cat population that continues to grow.

"In Bowie, the fire department estimates there's at least 3,000 feral cats roaming the streets," said Kelso, who serves as a board member for Sulphur Springs Valley Electric Cooperative. "We put 10 traps on a driveway, and when we turned around, a cat was already inside one. They were everywhere."

That weekend, BAR volunteers descended on Bowie, trapping 170 cats while a veterinarian surgical van neutered every single one before releasing them.

"That was a major project," said volunteer Claire Peachey. "It took all of our volunteers to pitch in to make it work. It was a long weekend."

Border animal rescues like BAR have been on the rise for decades in various states in the U.S., particularly those bordering Mexico and Canada with high shelter populations. Some organizations try to lighten the burden on shelters by transporting animals to more adoptive homes, according to Stateline.org, the nation's largest state-focused nonprofit news organization.

Locally, what BAR does in Cochise County comes with a big price tag.

"Last year, medical expenses ran between \$85,000- \$88,000," said Kelso. "Like with everything else, it's only going to keep going up."

Ten years ago, those expenses ran \$68,000.

Like their mission itself, finding money to pay for surgeries, vaccinations and food is a constant challenge for BAR, which became a 501(c)(3) charity in 2006. While Kelso said private donations, ranging from \$25 to \$1,500 per year, come from compassionate community members, it's grants the group applies for annually that often pick up the slack.

"Sometimes we receive up to 10 a year, in amounts from \$500 to occasionally \$15,000," said Kelso, who learned how to become a grant writer on-the-fly. "We receive support when people donate to Arizona's Spay and Neuter of Animals Fund by purchasing a pet license plate, which has been extremely helpful for keeping us afloat."

Along with fostering animals for adoption, the heart of BAR's mission is its spay/neuter- vaccinate-and-return program (TNR) that traps free-roaming cats and returns them to where they were caught as well as feeding feral cats colonies. It also helps low-income families who can't pay for neutering or spaying their pet.

BAR is never not busy. Calls for help, or reporting colonies of feral cats come in almost on a daily basis, never stop.

"We probably average 2-5 phone calls a day," said Kelso, who is currently fostering about 20 cats at his home. "Some-



times we get 10 calls, some days none, so it averages out."

Since 2020, BAR has adopted out 800 pets.

But the bulk of its frontline work is setting traps for feral cats like it did at a mobile home park on Sierra Vista's westside in late April.

"We get calls from compassionate people who see two roaming cats and know that can quickly become 30," said Peachey. "Laying out traps with food is a big part of what we do."

BAR isn't Superman, and Kelso and the volunteers know they can't help or save every animal when calls come in.

"Last week I had a call from Douglas where eight puppies were dying from parvo," said Kelso. "I thought we might save one, but it didn't work out. Sometimes it's like that."

There are more good outcomes than bad ones, thanks to PetSmart adoption centers, where BAR places treated cats for potential families to adopt.

"There's a meet-and-greet room, where people get to know them and many get adopted," said Peachey. "We foster them until they get a permanent home. Eventually the right person comes along."

For now and the immediate future, BAR's mission of helping the unwanted is never-ending.

"It's a big part of our lives," said longtime volunteer Mary Anne Behnke, who started when the organization first began. "I can't imagine not doing this."

Interested in donating or volunteering? Call Border Animal Rescue at 520-432-7964. ■

# Best of the **BEST**



Local teen earns spot on national archery team for world championship



**Khloe takes aim in the shooting area at Crocket Bro's Archery in Sierra Vista. PHOTOS BY MONIQUE VARGAS**

By R.J. Cohn

Wielding a compound bow with a 56-pound draw weight at 50 meters, Khloe Markle is practically flawless.

She is so dead-on that she can zing the tip of a carbon-wrapped aluminum arrow through the center of a target with such rapid consistency it's almost uncanny.

Seven years after she first placed an arrow into a bowstring, the 15-year-old Sierra Vista sharpshooter has become one of America's most talented young archers in a growing sport with more than 18 million participants popularized in part by *The Hunger Games* movie.

Unphased by top-level competition she faced two months ago from skilled female archers under 18 from around the country, Markle beat the best of the best at the World Archery Youth Trials in Newberry, Florida in April to represent Team USA for the 2025 World Archery Youth Championships in Winnipeg, Canada in August.

After shooting 1,500 arrows during five days of competition with arrow speeds close to 300 feet per second, the ASU Prep Digital Academy freshman won a spot as the youngest of three on the U18 Women's Compound Division team.

Now, Markle is in the hunt to win a gold medal.

"I don't think any of it set in for at least a couple days afterward," said her mother Jessika Peer-Markle. "By the time she flew home, she was exhausted but was still on an adrenaline-rush. She said she was going to do this in 2023. She's pretty remarkable. Sometimes I forget she's 15."

Markle is more than remarkable.

She's absolutely driven.

After taking first place in team rounds at the USA Archery Junior Olympic Archery Development Nationals and earning a bronze medal at the U15 Compound Bow Division two years ago, the wunderkind with a sharpshooter's eye and a ton of



Grady Crockett of Crockett Bro's Archery, where Khloe Markle often works, stands by the Sierra Vista archer. Crockett says Markle is breaking Arizona archery records every time she shoots.

determination set her sights on winning a spot on Team USA.

Similar to firing an arrow through the center of an 80-centimeter target, Markle didn't miss.

Ask Markle what drives her to practice shooting 200 arrows a day from 50 meters (164 feet) at the Fort Huachuca range to become one of the best under-18 archers in the U.S., and you'll get one of the most confident, self-assured answers you'll ever hear from a 15-year-old with a smile as wide as the San Pedro Valley:

"I feel I can do big things in this sport, really big things, and I want to make a real impact in it. I feel I have the ability that can take me there, that I can be good enough to go to the Olympics and be number one someday."

Markle has been gearing up for the World Archery Youth Championships in Canada for years and has been training with a coach in Phoenix since her parents recognized her ability. She has participated in more than 100 top-level competitions in California, Arizona, Texas, Hawaii, Florida and New Mexico and has won a slug of medals.

She knows the World Youth Archery Championship is the big stage, the Super Bowl of youth archery, and if there's pressure of being in the spotlight for the competition she'll be facing in August, she's not letting it get in her way.

She's focused on one thing: Beating the world's best in uber-competitive knockout brackets of elimination rounds in the compound division for Team USA in August.

"She's phenomenal," said Grady Crockett of Crockett Bro's Archery, where Khloe works several days a week. "She's breaking Arizona records all the time, and she'd destroy me shooting at paper targets. As an archer, she has it all together in hand-eye coordination, strength, drive, ability and mentally, which comes from shooting 200 arrows a day. That's why she made Team USA. She's after her personal best every time she shoots."

At the Florida trials, Markle said she didn't feel much pressure despite a 13-hour day where she shot 72 arrows in a qualifying round, winning all but two matches. She said she wasn't that tired.

"It was a long day, but it was fun," said Markle, who serves as secretary for Sierra Vista's Youth City Council. "When it was



Flanked by her parents, Joe and Jessika-Peer Markle, 15-year-old archery sensation Khloe Markle hopes to bring gold medals back to Sierra Vista from the World Archery Youth Championships in Winnipeg, Canada next month.

over, I went to play in a nearby playground, which was a lot of fun. I went (to Florida) to compete my hardest without any expectations, stay focused and have fun. Never for one moment did I think I had this."

From the first time she picked up a bow when she was 8 at a beginner's archery class in Sierra Vista, the sport seemed to come to her with an almost intrinsic ability.

"She took to it immediately from day one, and though she didn't know the mechanics of archery, everything about it felt natural to her," said her father Joe Markle, shop foreman at Ed Morse. "She was hitting the target repeatedly. The instructor moved her to the advanced class in a week."

Competing for Team USA in Canada against the world's best U18 archers isn't the beginner's class at a city rec program. Markle is well-aware of what she's up against.

She's also aware of what she can do with an 11-pound compound bow with a 56-pound weight draw — a bow her mother said male adults generally use — and she doesn't feel pressure bearing down on her. She still shoots daily at the base and in her backyard, and practices "blank-bailing," a routine where archers shoot at shorter distances to concentrate more on form and technique.

"When I shoot more than 200 arrows a day, I don't do so well, so I try to keep under that," said Markle. "Mentally, I write everyday about how I'm doing with a checklist of certain things I'm trying to improve. It keeps my progress focused."

Despite the long ride to Phoenix for training, shooting 200 arrows a day, and the hundreds of tournaments her parents have taken her to, at the end of the day Markle is still that 15-year-old in pigtails who loves art, enjoys school and plays ball with her younger brother.

In August, she'll put on her game face, her blue USA Team jersey, draw back on her bow and try to win one individual and two team medals in the biggest competition of her life.

"I can't wait to experience this," she said. "I'm ready. ■

*To participate in the World Archery Youth Championships in Winnipeg, Khloe Markle needs to raise \$6,000. Donations can be made at Crockett Bro's Archery, 81 S. Garden Ave., Sierra Vista, or at KMarkleArchery through Venmo, a digital payments app owned by PayPal. You can contact Jessika-Peer Markle at 520-456-7662.*

# Gimme shelter: A dog's plea



Nancy J. Brua Animal Care Center celebrates renovation

By Pepper (as told to R.J. Cohn)

Being an abandoned dog hurts so much.

Especially when you thought the family that loved you doesn't want you anymore. I'll never forget the day they took me to Sierra Vista's Nancy J. Brua Animal Care Center and walked away.

place is almost like being at the Ritz.

I'm with 79 other dogs of all shapes, sizes and breeds – 14 of which are in brand new kennels. There are also 72 cats in this wonderful 12,500-square foot facility that gets a bit overcrowded sometimes. I'm really not a complainer, but it can get extremely noisy when a

for by the shelter staff and volunteers. They are our makeshift family and go out of their way to look after us. They exercise and feed us regularly, talk to us on our walks, and give us as much attention as they can in this clean, well-maintained facility that just underwent a \$2 million expansion to make life here more comfortable for us.

Especially for some of my canine mates who were rescued after their so-called owners dumped them in the desert. We all become a little barking and nervous around strangers, but the shelter volunteers seem to understand what we're going through and show a great deal of compassion with how they treat us.

"The number of new animals that keep coming into the shelter regularly never seems to slow down," I heard Animal Control Supervisor Arleen Garcia telling someone at the shelter's expanded kennel grand opening in April. "There are adoptions, of course, but more pets still come in than go out. We have such a great variety of wonderful animals (like me!) who really deserve to have homes."



Animal Control Officer R. Truong posing with adoptable dog Boomer.

I'm Pepper, a 4-year-old terrier mix, and it's a scary feeling not being wanted by people I once loved, who also called me Baby Boy. I shook nonstop for five days in my kennel after I was abandoned.

But if you've been dropped off like me and hundreds of pets left here, this

lot of dogs bark their heads off because, like me, we're frightened about the uncertainty of having a real home again.

But here, even though we all hope it's a temporary stay, we're loved and cared



# for adoption

She should get a medal for saying that. Or, at the very least, 79 kisses from all 79 of us.

There's been a lot of activity in here the last several months during work on the expansion. As a lively terrier mix, I get excited when I see people coming into the kennel area, thinking maybe – just maybe this time – someone is coming to adopt me.

Don't get me wrong. Being together 24/7 has built a strong bond among us pups and has made some of the more high-strung ones less skittery. Though I miss being adored, played with and called Baby Boy again, I'm in great hands here.

But sometimes when I feel down about being abandoned, I remember lyrics from a song I heard when I was with my former family. It was by The Rolling Stones... "If I don't get some shelter, I'm gonna fade away."

I hope not.

I really want to mean something to somebody. I'd be the best, most wonderful pet they ever had.

Thinking about adopting one of us? The shelter is open Tuesday-Friday, 10 a.m.-5 p.m. and Saturday from noon-5 p.m. You can call (520) 458-4151, but it's better to come and see what incredible pets we really are at 6799 E. Highway 90. ■



ABOVE: Local Sierra Vista residents gathered in the Lobby to celebrate the Grand Reopening and expansion of the Sierra Vista Animal Shelter.

**Nancy J. Brua Animal Care Center**  
**HOURS: Tuesday-Friday, 10 a.m.-5 p.m.**  
**Saturday, Noon-5 p.m.**  
**(520) 458-4151**

# Benson's Geo

## A "pusher locomotive service" for local business

By Larry Scott



George Scott, life-long Benson resident and the Executive Director of the Southeast Arizona Economic Development Group, sat back in his chair and reflected for a moment.

"So exciting! I'd slip out back from Dad's machine shop and climb the bank to the railroad. On the other side, I could see the roundhouse, switch yard, and those huge-and-awesome steam locomotives. But I had to be careful. If those scary railroad workers saw me, they would chase me away."

Even though George and I were classmates, I later learned Southern Pacific trains could cross the country east to west and back again — no problem. But when they dropped into the San Pedro, they needed help to get back out of the valley. The grade was too steep. So, the railroad had a fleet of 'pusher steam locomotives' waiting.

A west-bound train would drop from Dragoon to Benson. After crossing the river bridge, they would stop, and a pusher would connect and help them up the grade to Mescal. The train would then continue Westward, and the

pusher would hurry back to Benson. East-bound trains were helped up to Dragoon.

"Great memories! My brother and I spent summers among the trees along the nearby San Pedro River, concocting wonderful adventures with Indians, cowboys, and banditos," Scott said.

The story begins in 1946 when his parents, George and Laura Scott, moved to Benson from Tucson.

According to 'Son-George,' Dad and Uncle Bill built a shop next to the railroad, down by the river. The structure served as a machine shop during the following years, as they raised their two sons.

After graduating from Benson High School, George served in the Army from 1966 to 1969. When he returned home, he established a sand, gravel, and ready-mix concrete operation on the North-East side of town.

In the late '90s George and his wife Mary Ann established Pato Blanco RV Park in the same area, just South of I-10. The beautiful establishment was sold to new owners in 2005. Still quite attractive, it now primarily serves permanent residents in park-model modular homes.

"We've always been involved in community affairs," George noted. "During the late '60s, Dad was involved with City Council and

# George Scott

served as Mayor. I also served from 2000 to 2007 on the Council, as Vice Mayor, and as Mayor."

Then, in 2007, George partnered with local business associates David DiPeso, Mark Fenn, and Larry Dempster to launch Southeast Arizona Economic Development Group - SAEDG; a sort of 'pusher locomotive service' for local business.

"Our goal was to work with existing and prospective business owners and other stakeholders in Benson and the surrounding area to identify, develop, and expand opportunities."

"We believe the prosperity of Southeast Arizona depends on the stability and vitality of all area businesses, large and small. Expanding and strengthening economic activity helps ensure healthier communities."

"Over time, our organization has matured and grown to serve the business community across five counties."

SAEDG is now a 501(c)(6) nonprofit organization working closely with partners across private, public, and nonprofit sectors to promote business ownership and related support channels throughout Southeast Arizona.

Their website, SAEDG.org provides a stunning wealth of information and statistical data on the counties and communities they serve.

"Now in our 18th year, we have about 65 full-time members," George says.

It's been a great train-ride! George has been married to Mary Ann, a Real Estate Broker, for 32 years. Between them, they now have five adult children, 12 grandchildren, and 3 great-grandkids. ■

Over time, our organization has matured and grown to serve the business community across five counties.

— George Scott, Executive Director of the Southeast Arizona Economic Development Group

# 100 years ago in Willcox



1



2

By Kathy Klump

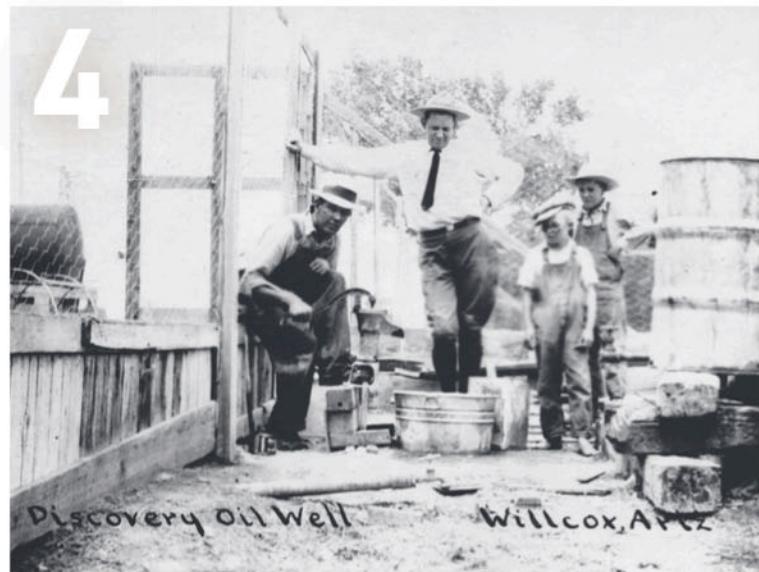
**1. The Boy Rangers of America** was organized in Willcox in March 1925 for boys ages 8 to 12. There were 15 original members. The uniform pictured belonged to Bruce Huffman, and is on display in SSVHS Research Library. Besides teaching woodcraft, the boys learned good moral values including kindness, charity, unselfishness, and always practicing doing good and right. It was based on Sioux Indian culture. All Rangers learned a whoop call, a special salute, and a secret handshake. When a boy accomplished all the requirements to become a "Brave", he was given a name from an actual Sioux. Bruce's name was Big Eagle, Tom-tom

Beater. The treasurer, known as the wampum keeper, took care of the wampum paid each week by money the boys earned doing chores at home. Tombstone, Tucson, and Willcox had the only three chapters of Boy Rangers in Arizona. This organization later became the Cub Scouts.

**2. Bruce's parents, Julia and Thomas Huffman** opened the first Toggery clothing store in 1916 in the Moyer building in Willcox. It was part of a nation-wide chain. In 1925, they built a brand new brick building across the street on Maley. They opened for business on St. Patrick's Day, 1925. Bruce,



3



4



5

his wife, Hazel, and their family operated the store until 2002. Then, Sulphur Springs Valley Historical Society bought the building in 2004 for their research library and museum. Many of the original glass display cases and some of the historic merchandise are on display.

**3. Two women in Willcox advertised expert Marcelling for the first time in 1925;** Mildred Moore at her house and Mrs. Higgins at the Ida May Shoppe. Marcel hair waves were very popular in the 1920s and are often seen in classic movies. This procedure was named after Francois Marcel, who invented a spring-clamp, electric model curling iron in 1918.

**4. The May 1, 1925 newspaper reported** that a young man, from Willcox, strained some of the oily substance from the top of the Southern Pacific Railroad water tank. He put it in his automobile and drove to Bowie completing 23 miles in 40 minutes. The next week, railroad officials arrived on a special train from El Paso to test the oil. By May 15, the Range News reported that, "Nearly every train brings in

some oil men who are inspecting the oil in the S. P. well...So many are coming that it is difficult to keep track of them." By June 12, an oil rig was being shipped from Los Angeles and timbers had been ordered to erect a derrick. The site chosen to drill was about two and one-half miles south and east of Willcox on the Mascot and Western Railroad. On June 29, Willcox Oil Well #1 was spudded in at 3 p.m. Over 60 autos arrived and were parked around the well site. "As the big drill started to bore its way into the earth, the crowd of about 300 people cheered lustily."

**5. The first cotton gin was built in Willcox in 1925** south of the railroad depot at a cost of \$2200. The first cotton was baled there in September 1925 brought in by Ernest Wilson of San Simon. He received a \$50 award for bringing in the first bale. That bale was taken to Douglas to be exhibited at the County Fair. The bale caught fire from within, due to spontaneous combustion. Firemen had to pour several quarts of coal oil into the bale after chopping a hole down into it with a pickaxe to extinguish the fire. ■

# The GLOBULAR CLUSTERS of SUMMER

By Ted Forte

Globular clusters are the largest and most massive type of star cluster. They are named for their closely packed spherical form. They can contain tens to hundreds of thousands of stars, most of which are very old. Most galaxies contain globular clusters, and in spiral galaxies they seem to orbit in a roughly homogenous halo. We know of about 150 globular clusters

orbiting the Milky Way, with more probably hidden from our view by our galaxy's obscuring dust.

Summer's evening sky is chock full of these impressive celestial baubles. In fact, their very abundance toward the galactic core led astronomer Harlow Shapley to deduce the sun's location within the Milky Way. In 1917, he mapped the location of 69 of the Milky Way's globular clusters to determine

the shape of our galaxy and the sun's position within it.

A good pair of binoculars will reveal dozens of these compact star cities in the summer sky. A few are even detectable with the unaided eye, appearing as bloated stars. In fact, the largest globular cluster associated with the Milky Way was catalogued as a star long before the invention of the telescope and still bears a stellar designation: Omega Centauri.



ABOVE: Rik Hill captured globular cluster M4 while viewing from the Loudon Observatory in Tucson.

RIGHT: Richard Pattie captured a photo of the M13 Hercules Globular Cluster.



That magnificent jewel is better placed in spring, but the summer sky abounds with great clusters of its own.

My favorite summer globular is perhaps Messier 22 (M22) which is located just above the lid of Sagittarius' Tea Pot asterism. The star that forms the knob of the Tea Pot's lid is Lambda Sagittarii or Kaus Borealis. It forms the tip of the Archer's bow in the classical depiction of the constellation. M22 lies 20°26' to the northeast. Your binoculars or finder scope will show it as a fuzzy patch. A small telescope will show a remarkable profusion of 11th magnitude stars. It is estimated to contain 500,000 stars. With an apparent diameter of 32', the cluster would be about 97 light years in diameter at its estimated distance of 10,400 light years.

M22 is one of the nearest globular clusters to the Earth and is the third brightest in the sky. It's one of the easiest clusters to resolve all the way to its core. This beautiful cluster is slightly elliptical in shape with multiple arcs and streams of stars.

Messier 4, next door in Scorpius, is another of the closest globular clusters. It too, is very well resolved. It's the only

globular cluster that Messier, himself, could resolve into stars with his small telescope. Its distance is probably 7,200 light years although some sources put it at just 5,500 light years away. M4 is thought to contain about 100,000 stars and it's believed, were it not heavily obscured by dust, that it would appear far brighter than its 5.63 magnitude.

M4 is located 1.30 west of Antares, the brightest star in Scorpius. The cluster is rather loose; its brighter core is not at all concentrated and can be resolved in a 4-inch telescope. A bright bar-like structure cuts across its middle, and several chains of stars flow outward in curved loops. Observers seeking more of a challenge might try to spy the much smaller and fainter globular NGC 6144 that sits even closer to Antares and about a degree northeast of M4. This small fuzzball will require that you keep the first magnitude star out of your field of view in order that it not be overwhelmed.

Probably the most famous globular in the northern sky is the Great Hercules Cluster, Messier 13, and it's perfectly placed, high in the sky, on summer nights. Visible to the naked eye, it's quite easy to locate. Just find the Keystone

asterism that forms the body of the giant which will be located along an imaginary line connecting the bright stars Vega and Arcturus. The globular is located between the stars Eta and Zeta Herculis that form the western (longer) side of the Keystone. Discovered in 1714 by Edmund Halley, it was added to Messier's catalog in 1764. Sir William Herschel described it:-- "a most beautiful cluster of stars, exceedingly compressed in the middle, and very rich."

M13 contains several hundred thousand stars with a few sources reporting more than half a million. It's about 23,000 light years away and probably about 145 light years in diameter. See if you can detect one of its more famous features: a dark propeller shape, off center in its core.

These few exceptional examples are just the tip of the iceberg. There are about 90 globular clusters visible on a summer evening and 26 of them are brighter than 8th magnitude making them suitable for observing with just binoculars. There are 29 globular clusters on the Messier list and 20 of them are prominently placed on summer evenings, just waiting for you to enjoy them. ■

LEFT: Rik Hill captured global cluster M13 while viewing from the Loudon Observatory in Tucson.



ABOVE: Rik Hill captured global cluster M22 while viewing from the Loudon Observatory in Tucson

LEFT: Rik Hill captured global cluster M13 while viewing from the Loudon Observatory in Tucson.

# Is there a doctor in the house?

Part II features new local practitioners



Dr. Dorlyne Brchan,  
Neurology



Dr. David Cohen,  
Interventional Cardiology



Dr. Michael Nuzzo,  
Sports Medicine



Dr. Nathan Ptak,  
Podiatry



Dr. Amanda Arrington,  
Surgical Services



By Ruth Quinn,  
CVMC Board of Trustees

**Neurology:** Dr. Yanny Phillips established the outpatient Neurology Clinic at Canyon Vista when she joined the medical group in 2022, offering treatments for Epilepsy and Headache. Dr. Dorlyne Brchan expanded the service line when she joined the medical group in 2024, with her special interest in integrative/functional headache management.

**Interventional Cardiology:** SVMG employs two Interventional Cardiologists. Dr. Fadi Fahad came to Sierra Vista in 2021, specifically to build out the cardiology program at CVMC, and Dr. David Cohen joined him in 2024. Between these two specialists, they can handle interventional cardiology, intravenous procedures and cardiac implants.

**Orthopedic, Sports Medicine, and Spine Services:** Dr. Brian Daines established the first Bone and Joint Institute at CVMC. He, along with fellow general orthopedic surgeons Dr. Lawrence Susini, and Dr. Barry Bohlen, and spine specialist Dr. Max Berdichevsky can handle anything from total joint replacements to arthritis and other degenerative diseases. To round out the team, SVMG welcomed Sports Medicine Orthopedist Dr. Michael Nuzzo, this year in April. The Ortho team also includes three excellent Physician's Assistants: Jared Haymore and Dean Marturello. Bottom line: If it involves the shoulder, knee, ankle, hand, hip, or spine, it can likely be treated by the ortho team at SVMG.

**Podiatry:** Dr. Nathan Ptak, joined late 2024, has re-started

the SVMG podiatry services. His expertise allows SVMG to once again offer treatments for foot and ankle injuries, tumors, wounds, complications from diabetes, fungal infections and poor circulation in the feet.

**Surgical Services:** SVMG employs a full team of general surgeons who are skilled and experienced in a wide range of surgical procedures including the DaVinci™ Robotic platform allowing surgeons to make smaller incisions leading to shorter hospital stays, less pain, faster recovery times, and fewer complications. Last year, Dr. Jody Jenkins, Dr. Michael Thompson and Dr. Roland Haj welcomed Dr. Amanda Arrington to the team, who has additional training in surgical oncology.

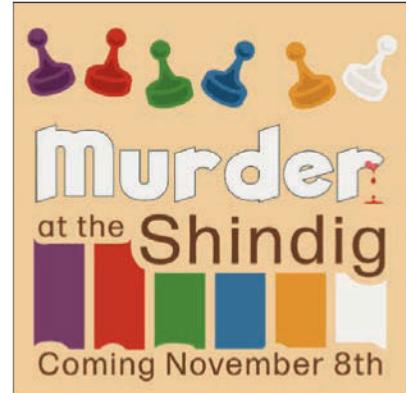
**Urology Services:** Dr. Peter Niemczyk (pronounced "Nim-check") and Governor Henderson III, Doctor of Nursing Practice, offer specialized care for prostate problems, kidney care, and both men's and women's specific urology needs. They were excited to add the Aquablation™ technology to their tool kit last year, allowing for a much less invasive treatment to traditional prostate surgeries.

**Advanced Wound Care Center:** Dr. Roberto Molina and Andrea Ruble, a Family Nurse Practitioner, work together to heal your persistent wounds, teach you how to care for your wound at home, and how to protect yourself from further injury.

Check out the SVMG website at: [svmedicalgroup.org](http://svmedicalgroup.org) to take a health assessment, learn more about the specific procedures these physicians can provide, or read the bios of any provider. To schedule an appointment call SVMG at 520.263.3001. ■

*Ruth Quinn has been on the CVMC Board of Trustees for 10 years (and counting), having served as Board Chair for the past six years. She is committed to helping CVMC's mission of "Making Communities Healthier" by sharing the knowledge and experiences gained in that role with others in Cochise County*

## UPCOMING EVENTS



### WILLCOX CONSTRUCTION:

#### The Center of Arts and Heritage

After five years of planning, fundraising, and relentless effort, WTA's vision is becoming a reality. Construction is now underway on the new Center for Arts and Heritage. The nearly 12,000 square foot facility is the first new building to rise on Railroad Avenue in decades, signaling a revitalization of the area and a renewed investment in local culture.

Inside, visitors will find a heritage experience, dynamic exhibit space, fully-equipped creative studios, the open-air heritage courtyard, and a state of the art multi-media theater featuring three screens. This means more movies in Willcox, more hands-on art workshops, and more opportunities to explore our rich ranching and farming history—all in bold and innovative new ways.

The Willcox Center for Arts and Heritage isn't just a new building—it's a new era for creativity, learning, and community in our town.

### THE SMITHSONIAN EXHIBIT: SPARK!

Sep. 21, 2025 - Nov. 1, 2025

Spark! Places of Innovation is a Museum on Main Street exhibition organized by the Smithsonian Institute. Touring Arizona in 2025-26, highlights innovation in rural America from the perspective of the people who lived it. It will be exhibited in Willcox at Willcox Theater and Arts' (WTA) new Center of Art and Heritage in the historic district of downtown Willcox!

*This program was made possible by Arizona Humanities*

### STEAM FEST: LOCAL FAMILY FUN

Aug. 23, 2025

We at Willcox Theater and Arts are happy to announce that we'll once again take part in this year's Willcox STEAM Fest! Be sure to keep an eye out and catch our booth where we'll be showing off all the best aspects of our STEAM involvement!



Consider making a contribution to our building efforts by scanning the QR code and donating!



Find more news and event information in our newsletter! Scan the QR code to sign up today!

## SULPHUR SPRINGS

# CALENDAR of EVENTS

Visit the many festivals, historical sites, deserts, national parks, and mountains of southeastern Arizona on a scenic hike, a road trip, or a mountain climbing expedition to test your endurance.

### JULY 18 AND JULY 19

#### St. David Pioneer Days

Come celebrate this year's theme, "Honor the Past - Build the Future." Participate in the art show, family dance, parade, old fashioned games, engine show, historical and musical presentations, BBQ beef luncheon, vendors, fireworks, prizes, Heritage quilt, and more! For schedule details and entry information, go to [stdavidpioneerdays.com](http://stdavidpioneerdays.com). This event is a favorite for all ages.

#### ST. DAVID

### JULY 24 TO JULY 27

#### 80th Chiricahua Ranchmen's Camp Meeting

The Chiricahua Ranchmen's Camp Meeting (not just for Ranchmen) is an old-fashioned Christian camping experience for the whole family with singing, preaching, food and fellowship. Come on out and camp or come just for the day. Youth games three to four times daily. Children's Bible study and game time two to three times daily. Supper on Thursday starts at 6 p.m., with service to follow at 7:30 p.m. Friday, Saturday and Sunday, meals are offered at 6:30 a.m., noon, and 6 p.m. Services on Friday and Saturday are at 8 a.m., 10:30 a.m., 2:30 p.m. and 7:30 p.m. Sunday, services at 9 a.m. 10:30 a.m., 2:30 p.m. and 7:30 p.m. Prayer time is at 4:30 p.m., daily. For more information call Bruce at (520) 403-0094, or Terry at (520) 405-6252.

#### PEARCE

### AUGUST 3 AND AUGUST 4

#### SAILA Show Tour

The Southern Arizona International Livestock Association (SAILA)

### AUGUST 3

#### Apple Annie's Orchard's Peach Mania

A celebration of Willcox Peaches, featuring sweet and juicy tree-ripened peaches! The annual Peach Mania starts with a delicious "all you can eat" peaches and pancakes breakfast served from 7 a.m. to 10:30 a.m. each Saturday and Sunday. Take a free wagon ride and experience the fun of picking your own peaches! Enjoy free samples of peaches and dozens of peach products. Sit in the shade of our peach orchard and enjoy a slice of homemade peach pie or a bowl of homemade peach ice cream. Apple-smoked burger lunches will be served daily from 11:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Enjoy hot roasted sweet corn at our farm location. A perfect way to spend a memorable day with family and friends! Call and confirm our events at (520) 384-2084.

#### WILLCOX

will be at the Santa Cruz County Fairgrounds in Sonita August 3 and August 4. Through its acclaimed jackpot shows and other fundraisers, SAILA continues to work toward the advancement of junior exhibitors in the state of Arizona and the Southwest, not only promoting youth education and leadership but also providing a place in every area of the state where a junior exhibitor can gain valuable experience before exhibiting an animal at a major show. SAILA has been serving junior exhibitors since 1935. Find out more at [sailashows.com](http://sailashows.com).

#### SONITA

### AUGUST 7

#### San Simon Diaper Bank

The San Simon Diaper Bank is held every first Thursday of the month at the same time as their Commodities program, from 11 a.m. to noon at the San Simon Volunteer Fire District, 2249 W Firehouse Lane, San Simon, Az 85632. This is conducted by Northern Cochise Community Hospital in partnership with the Arizona Diaper Bank.

#### SAN SIMON

### AUGUST 13

#### Willcox Diaper Bank

The Willcox Diaper Bank is held every second Wednesday of the month at the Willcox Senior Center, 990 Scott Street, on the corner of Bowie and Scott Streets from 4 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. This is conducted by Northern Cochise Community Hospital in partnership with the Arizona Diaper Bank.

#### WILLCOX





# A vision to end cancer

By Janet Morlock

For 40 years, passionate supporters have come together to advance the American Cancer Society's vision to end cancer as we know it, for everyone. Relay for Life celebrates survivors, honors caregivers, remembers loved ones lost, and raises funds to ensure everyone can have the chance to prevent, detect, treat, and survive cancer. It all started with a single man's passion to raise money for Cancer Awareness.

In 1985 Surgeon, Dr. Gordy Klatt, ran/walked in Tacoma, WA for 24-hours without a break in memory of a young man who lost his life to Cancer; his

goal was to raise research money for the American Cancer Society (ACS) and raise cancer awareness for the public. His efforts raised \$27,000 with people paying to walk/run with him.

Thanks to a little media attention it has grown stronger every year since, with events popping up in 1986 throughout the U.S. and funding to ACS for research and awareness both grew; hearing about the success of these fundraisers throughout the country ACS made Relay for Life its signature event in 1992!

In 1995 Relay for Life went Global

with events in the United Kingdom. Today Relay has worldwide events in 31 countries with more than 250K participants celebrating survivors and caregivers, remembering loved ones lost, and raising money for research and support for patients, caregivers, families, and friends. Relay is always a Community Celebration of Hope.

Sierra Vista has been a Relay for Life Community since 1994 and we are looking forward to Celebrating 31-years of Hope with a fun filled day of caring and support for those impacted by cancer. We are asking Sierra Vista and surrounding communities to start or join a team, sponsor the event, donate and most importantly come out and support those battling cancer and those who help them stay strong on October 25th. Help us Celebrate, Remember, and Fight for the Cure!

This year, the annual relay is planned October 25 at Veterans' Memorial Park, with events planned from 2 p.m. to 10 p.m. Information/Registration/Donations: [www.relayforlife.org/sieravistaaz](http://www.relayforlife.org/sieravistaaz). Check us out on Facebook: [www.facebook.com/groups/svrelayforlife](http://www.facebook.com/groups/svrelayforlife) Event point of contact: Nina Sanchez / [relayforlifeofsv@gmail.com](mailto:relayforlifeofsv@gmail.com), (520) 249-3615.

## AUGUST 25

### Photography Show

Attention all photographers in the greater Southeastern Arizona area! The annual San Pedro River Arts Council (SPRAC) Photography Show is quickly approaching. It is open to all ages and levels of photographers. You can enter up to three pieces in the following categories: Youth, Color for Amateurs, Color for Advanced Pro, Monochrome, and Digital Artistry. The entry fee is \$15 per piece for non SPRAC members. \$12 for members. Drop off for the Photography is October 1st at Cochise College on the Benson campus. Hanging will be October 2nd and judging on October 3rd with a critique at 1:30 p.m. There will be a reception (date to follow). Entries can be done at [sprarts.org](http://sprarts.org), by mail or at the Endeavor Gallery, 298 E 4th St, Benson, AZ 85602.

### BENSON

## AUGUST 28

### ReadAround

Beginning at 11 a.m. ReadAround located at the Mall at Sierra Vista area near Playland. "I Am The Shark" is the book we'll read this month. Paper bag sharks are going to be a super fun (not) scary craft. Free "Hark A Shark!" book to attending families. This PreK program is sponsored by

the Sierra Vista Woman's Club and is open to all ages. Get to know us on Facebook and learn about community service organization.

### SIERRA VISTA

## AUGUST 30

### Sonita Labor Day Rodeo

Come out to the annual Labor Day Rodeo at Santa Cruz Fairgrounds and enjoy some bronco busting fun! Gates open at 10 a.m., the junior rodeo scheduled for noon and the main performance at 2 p.m. The event will include a steak fry and live music on Saturday and Sunday.

### SANTA CRUZ

## SEPTEMBER 25

### ReadAround

Beginning at 11 a.m. "Where's Spot?" Is the question we will be asking at ReadAround as we read this book. Join us at the Mall at Sierra Vista near Playland We will each craft a home for Spot and his family. Attending families receive a free book. Sponsored by the Sierra Vista Woman's Club. Get to know us on Facebook.

### SIERRA VISTA

# Salad days

By Chef Chris

ClownChef@yahoo.com

Confession time: I'm not all that salad-y! Or perhaps I should say, I have never been all that into salads. But for some reason this year, I am. I've actually been craving them.

It could be the new plate bowls I got (featured here in the pics) that make everything look irresistible, but whatever it is, I have been salading up a storm of late.

I will remind you that the farmers market is one of the best places to get the freshest ingredients, and that freshness brings with it increased nutritional value. Ask the farmers what they recommend for salads from what they have. This is how I discovered that the stems of Swiss chard can be finely

chopped and eaten raw. One of the salads here is a "warm salad" that I'm offering for those who aren't in the mood for a cold salad or a steaming bowl of stew either. When roasting veggies, remember that the residual heat as they come out of the oven will wilt spinach and arugula, making them more palatable for some.

In cooking school, I learned on day one that raw shallots are an ideal onion in things like salads, and that they can be added to vinaigrette as well. Roasting thickly sliced shallots

makes an amazing addition to any salad, and if you've fired up the grill for dinner, pop some on for your salad the next day. Same goes for sweet potatoes, which are remarkably good grilled.

While a little planning can make for a perfect salad, taking a "clean out the fridge" approach can yield equally tasty results, even if you might never make that particular salad again. Who knew salading could be so adventuresome?

## CUCUMBER AND CHICKPEA SALAD WITH AVOCADO DRESSING

This hearty salad checks all the boxes for a nourishing, cooling, and satisfying meal. I do add a little bread and butter. You can use  $\frac{1}{2}$  an avocado in the salad if you wish. About 2 hearty servings.

$\frac{1}{2}$  avocado

1 Tbsp. rice vinegar

3 Tbsp. olive oil

$\frac{1}{2}$  cup finely shredded cabbage

$\frac{1}{2}$  English cucumber, chopped

$\frac{1}{2}$  can chickpeas, drained well

$\frac{1}{2}$  bunch parsley or cilantro

In a blender or mini food processor, combine the  $\frac{1}{2}$  avocado, vinegar and oil, then blend until smooth, adding a little water if too thick. Season with salt and pulse a few times.

Divide the cabbage between two plates or salad bowls. Put the cucumbers and chickpeas in a medium bowl and toss with some of the dressing, adding more if desired. Divide mixture over the cabbage. Chop cilantro or parsley coarsely and scatter over salads, then finish with freshly cracked pepper.





## SWEET POTATO AND BLACK BEAN SPINACH SALAD

This is sort of a taco salad reinvisioned. It manages to be both comforting and seriously nutritious at the same time. You can use the avocado dressing from the cucumber salad if tahini is new to you.

- 8 oz baby spinach
- 1 cup roasted sweet potato
- ½ can black beans, rinsed and drained
- 1 avocado, cubed
- ½ bunch cilantro, chopped
- 3 scallions, chopped

Divide spinach between two plates, then divide remaining ingredients between the plates.

### DRESSING:

- 3 Tbsp. tahini
- 3 Tbsp. orange juice
- 1 small clove garlic, chopped

In a small bowl, whisk together the ingredients, season with salt and taste. If too thick, add a little water and whisk again. Drizzle over prepared salads and enjoy.

## WARM BROCCOLINI AND MEATBALL SALAD

I like to have meatballs in my freezer for last minute cooking when I haven't planned very well and they defrost quickly. I use a plant based version, but as you wish. Regular broccoli will work, of course. About 2 hearty servings.

- 8 small meatballs
- 2 cloves garlic, chopped
- ½ water
- 1 bunch broccolini, roasted
- 1 cup chopped cabbage
- ½ cup chopped walnuts
- 2 Tbsp. soy sauce

Heat a skillet over medium high heat, then add a little oil. Add the meatballs and let brown well on all sides. Add the garlic and let cook 30 seconds, then add water and stir up any brown bits in the bottom of the pan. Reduce heat and cover. Let cook a few minutes, or until cooked through.

Remove the lid and add the broccolini, cabbage, walnuts and soy sauce, then toss to coat. Remove from heat, adjust seasoning as needed, and serve.

## Dressed to Impress

**VINAIGRETTE: A.K.A. SALAD DRESSING**  
Whether you whisk it together in a bowl or blam it up in the blender, salad dressing is officially easy to make, and one of the best ways to ensure your salad is indeed good for you. Bottled dressings are made with loads of things to help shelf life, but not necessarily you.

In a blender you can really have fun, and I have been known to say you can make vinaigrette out of anything in the blender with a little oil and vinegar. To the basic proportions listed here you can add half an avocado, a small raw beet, a scallion or two, a small clove of garlic.

I once blended together a leftover hunk of pâté, a couple of cornichons (little fancy pickles) with a bit of Dijon mustard and called it "Country French Vinaigrette." It was a big hit. So, be brave and have fun. As long as you taste as you go, you'll be fine

Proportions means parts. One part could be a tablespoon (vinegar) and then 3-4 parts would be 3-4 tablespoons oil, and then essentially  $\frac{1}{2}$  a tablespoon for the emulsifier. It sounds a little more mysterious until you make it once. If you make a bigger batch of basic vinaigrette it will keep for weeks and you can just add flavors or other ingredients for the specific salad you are making. This would be easiest in the blender, otherwise it can be a lot of whisking.

**The classic proportions are:**

- 1 part acid - vinegar or lemon juice
- 3-4 parts oil - I like olive oil
- $\frac{1}{2}$  part emulsifier - Dijon mustard or honey

For the bowl method, place your vinegar and emulsifier in a bowl and whisk together. Then while whisking, slowly dribble in the oil, making sure it is mixing into the vinegar and mustard. Season with a little salt and taste. Does it need more oil? More vinegar? Maybe a little honey?

To this you can add chopped garlic, fresh herbs, a bit of mayo, yogurt, or sour cream.

Orange juice can be used as a slightly sweet "acid" either by choice or in a pinch. Tahini can be used as an emulsifier. If your vinaigrette is too thick, whisk in a tiny bit of water, adding more as needed.

SSVEC

# Currents



## Our social media has moved!

That's right! In order to provide you with a more integrated experience, SSVEC Facebook and Instagram have relocated!

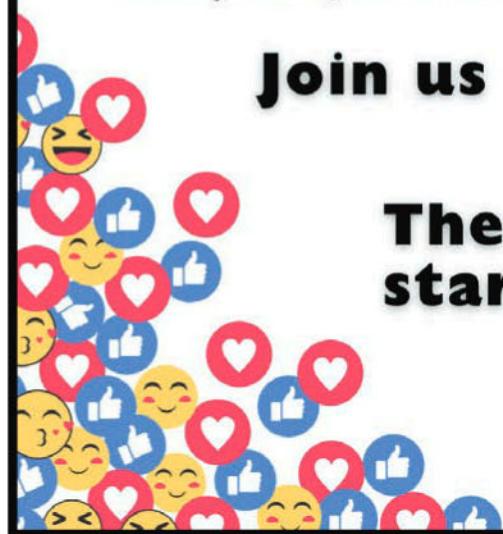
From energy tips and community events to youth programs and local stories, this is where we'll keep you plugged in to what matters most. Help us spread the word by sharing this ad with your friends, family, and neighbors.

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