

SSVEC

Currents

LOCAL STORIES ABOUT LOCAL COMMUNITIES

MAY | JUNE 2026

Arizonan Yeti

Photographer
brings calm to
a chaotic world

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Silicon Valley in Sierra Vista

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Giving a national voice to small town tennis

Buena High School boys tennis coach Daniella Reidmiller was recently named the U.S. Tennis Association Southwest Coach of the Year for 2025.

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ON THE COVER

Retired U.S. Army SGM Sean Yeterian, known as the Arizonan Yeti, turned to photography as military life receded. What began as a creative outlet became a way to slow time—to replace urgency with observation. That instinct now defines his work.



Jason Bowling, CEO
Sulphur Springs Valley
Electric Cooperative

Understanding power supply costs and your bill

One of our priorities at SSVEC is helping members understand what drives their electric bill. As we head into the summer months, I want to walk through an important piece of that picture: power supply costs.

Power supply is the largest component of your bill. It reflects the cost of generating and purchasing the electricity we deliver to your home or business. These costs are passed directly through to members without markup. On your bill, you see this as the Wholesale Power and Fuel Cost Adjuster.

Right now, those costs are increasing. Based on current forecasts, the adjuster is expected to be about 1 cent per kilowatt-hour starting in June, rising to around 1.5 cents in September, and potentially reaching 2 cents by January. That represents a worst-case outlook, and we are actively working to reduce that impact through excess capacity sales and other strategies.

There is also some immediate good news.

In March, the Arizona Corporation Commission approved the elimination of the Renewable Energy Standard Tariff, or REST. This charge was typically about \$1 per month for residential members, with higher amounts for commercial and industrial accounts. That charge has now been removed, resulting in permanent savings on your bill. It may seem small, but we know every dollar matters.

Even more important is what happens next.

Over time, REST collected funds to support renewable energy programs. After setting aside a portion to fund a new grant program for community-serving projects, we will return the majority of those funds to members through the same power supply adjustment mechanism.

This summer, that return will show up directly on your bill.

In June, members will see a 1 cent per kilowatt-hour credit. That fully offsets the power supply adjuster for the month. In July, August, and September, the credit increases to 2 cents per kilowatt-hour, which more than covers the projected adjuster during that period. In total, about \$7 million will be returned to members over the summer.

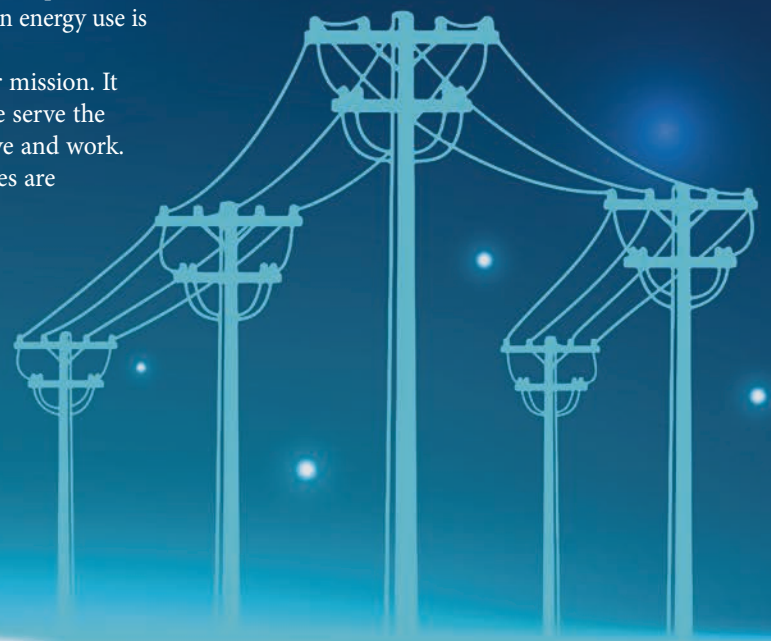
Power supply costs are still trending upward, and that remains a challenge we are managing closely. At the same time, this refund provides meaningful, near-term relief when energy use is typically at its highest.

Affordability is central to our mission. It guides our decisions because we serve the same communities where we live and work. Our employees and their families are members too.

We will continue to look for ways to manage costs, return value to our members, and keep your power reliable and your bills as low as possible.

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.*



New "tool" helps members see where their electricity is going

Interested in finding out more about your energy consumption? Looking for specific ways to lower your electric bill?

SSVEC is here to help identify factors that might be causing your energy bill to increase.

Introducing Member Analytics, powered by Bidgely, an energy intelligence tool that will provide a clear understanding of how you are using electricity in your home.

"The number one question we get every day is 'why is my bill so high?'" said Danna Judd, Member Service Manager at SSVEC. "Member Analytics identifies the devices that are using electricity and gives our members a clear insight on where that power is going."

The Member Analytics tool is available within the SmartHub app on your mobile phone.

Member Analytics features 12 profiles that are consistent energy patterns for appliances. For example, clothes washers consume less electricity during the water cycle and more power when the spin

cycle starts. Air conditioners use more electricity during hot days and much less when temperatures are cooler.

Utilizing these tell-tale "patterns" of consumption, Member Analytics can tell a SSVEC member which appliances are using the most electricity.

"To get the best results and the most useful information, members should complete the Home Profile Survey within Member Analytics so that the tool can provide the most accurate report," Judd said.

Beginning in March, all residential SSVEC SmartHub users were "opted-in" to the Member Analytics platform, Judd said. For those who do not want to participate in the program, Judd said members should call and speak to a Member Services Representative to "opt-out" of Member Analytics.

All information gathered through the Member Analytics app is completely confidential.

"We want our members to have as much information as they need to make the best possible decisions when it comes to their electric bill," Judd said.

In addition to profiling appliances for electricity consumption, Member Analytics will also provide useful tips on how members can reduce their energy bill, issues alerts and notifications on unusual usage spikes or opportunities to save and generates a monthly Home Energy Report with insights on seasonal electricity consumption.

For more information, contact your local SSVEC office, or check out our website at ssvec.org.

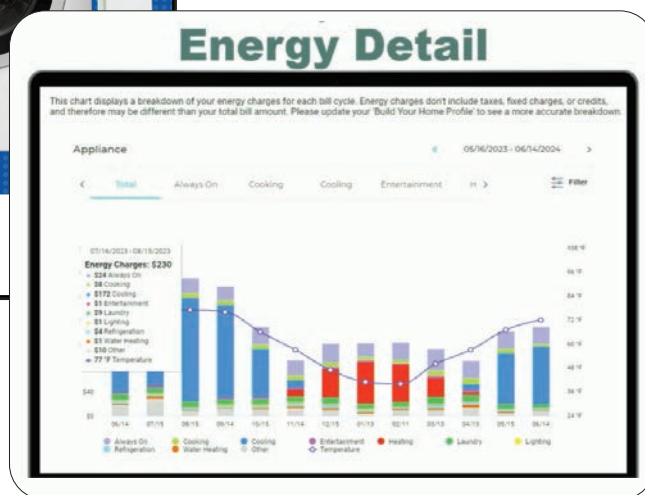
discover bidgely!

Member Analytics That Provide Insight Into Your Energy Use

A new tool available on SmartHub
for residential members
brought to you by SSVEC.

Sulphur Springs Valley Electric Cooperative, Inc.
OWNED BY THOSE WE SERVE

**Curious how it works?
Contact us and we'll walk you through it.**





Sulphur Springs Valley Electric Cooperative (SSVEC) has been recognized with the 2026 Electric Cooperative Purpose Award by the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA), honoring the cooperative's commitment to its members and communities during a period of unprecedented energy cost volatility. Receiving the award Monday, March 9, were, from left, Curtis Nolan, SSVEC Director, Daniel Wilson, Senior Vice President of Member and Corporate Services, Jason Bowling, Chief Executive Officer, and Jim Mattheson, the Chief Executive Officer at NRECA CEO.

SSVEC receives national Electric Cooperative Purpose Award

Sulphur Springs Valley Electric Cooperative (SSVEC) has been recognized with the 2026 Electric Cooperative Purpose Award by the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA), honoring the cooperative's commitment to its members and communities during a period of unprecedented energy cost volatility.

The Electric Cooperative Purpose Award recognizes cooperatives that work with their membership to make visible, lasting improvements to quality of life in the communities they serve. SSVEC earned the recognition for actions taken during the 2022 surge in global fuel prices that placed significant pressure on energy costs for rural families and businesses.

During that period, SSVEC's board and leadership team implemented a member-focused strategy designed to deliver immediate relief while maintaining long-term financial stability for the cooperative. The cooperative directed 100 percent of its annual operating margin to buy down more than \$8 million in member fuel bank debt, reducing the wholesale power and fuel cost adjuster and lowering the cost burden on the cooperative's member-owners.

"This recognition reflects what cooperatives are built to do," said Jason Bowling, Chief Executive Officer of

SSVEC. "When our members were facing rising energy costs, our board, employees, and cooperative partners worked together to find a solution that delivered immediate relief while protecting the long-term strength of the cooperative."

The effort required collaboration across the cooperative network. SSVEC worked closely with its power supply partner, the Arizona Electric Power Cooperative (AEPCCO), along with financial partners, regulators, and cooperative peers to implement a strategy that balanced affordability with long-term resilience.

Employees across the organization played a key role in evaluating options, coordinating with partners, communicating with members, and implementing the financial and operational changes needed to execute the plan.

Bowling noted that while the award recognizes past action, cost pressures in the electric industry continue to affect utilities and their members nationwide.

"Electric cooperatives across the country are facing rising costs for power supply, infrastructure, and reliability," Bowling said. "Our members have seen that pressure recently, and we understand the concern that comes with it. What this recognition represents is our commitment

to confront those challenges directly. In every creative way we can muster, we will work to shield our members from volatility while maintaining the safe and reliable service they depend on."

Because of the steps taken in recent years, SSVEC has strengthened its financial position and improved its ability to manage future energy market volatility while continuing to serve more than 50,000 members across Cochise, Graham, Pima, and Santa Cruz counties.

"The cooperative model works because decisions stay close to the people they affect," Bowling said. "This award recognizes the trust our members place in us and the dedication of employees who work every day to protect affordability and reliability for the communities we serve."

SSVEC was recognized for the award during NRECA's PowerXchange national meeting, where electric cooperative leaders from across the country gather to share best practices and celebrate achievements within the cooperative network.

Sulphur Springs Valley Electric Cooperative is a member-owned, not-for-profit electric cooperative headquartered in Willcox, Arizona, providing safe, reliable, and affordable electricity to communities across southeastern Arizona.



Bowling warns of wildfire hazards at congressional hearing

Jason Bowling, Chief Executive Officer at the Sulphur Springs Valley Electric Cooperative, testified February 24 at a Congressional subcommittee hearing on federal legislation to streamline the process of reducing wildfire threats on federal property.

As catastrophic wildfire threats intensify across the West, Jason Bowling, Chief Executive Officer of Sulphur Springs Valley Electric Cooperative, delivered a direct message to Congress: streamline federal permitting before more rural communities pay the price.

Testifying before the House Natural Resources Subcommittee on Water last week, Wildlife and Fisheries, Bowling described how worsening drought, higher temperatures, heavy fuel accumulation and continued development near wildlands have combined to create dangerous conditions across Arizona and the broader West.

For electric cooperatives like SSVEC, the responsibility is straightforward — keep the lights on and reduce wildfire risk. The path to doing so on federal land, however, is anything but simple. As a not-for profit, member-owned utility, every dollar spent on delay or duplicative review is born directly by rural families, farmers, and small businesses.

Bowling recounted SSVEC's effort to replace aging power poles and remove hazardous vegetation near Fairbank, a historic site along the San Pedro River west of Tombstone. What should have been routine maintenance became a bureaucratic maze. The cooperative navigated overlapping reviews from multiple federal and state agencies, often receiving conflicting guidance and enduring lengthy delays.

"The process ultimately took roughly 15 years,"

Bowling told lawmakers. "During that time, poles continued to age. Vegetation continued to expand. Drought conditions intensified. The risk increased while we worked through a fragmented process."

Once approvals were finally secured, the actual construction and vegetation clearing was completed quickly.

"In this case," Bowling said plainly, "prevention took weeks. Permitting took years."

His testimony underscored a practical point: electric cooperatives stand ready to invest in prevention. What they need is regulatory certainty and a coordinated federal partnership that allows critical mitigation work to move at the speed of risk—not at the pace of paperwork.



SSVEC
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Rep. Ciscomani recognizes SSVEC national award

Hailing the commitment of the Sulphur Springs Valley Electric Cooperative (SSVEC) for prioritizing affordability, Congressman Juan Ciscomani celebrated the national award received by the local utility in a speech to Congress last week.

“Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Sulphur Springs Valley Electric Cooperative in southern Arizona for receiving the 2023 Electric Cooperative Purpose Award from the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association,” Ciscomani stated in his remarks from the floor of the House of Representatives.

Last month SSVEC received the Electric Cooperative Purpose Award from the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA). The award recognizes cooperatives that work with their membership to make visible, lasting improvements to the quality of life in the communities they serve. SSVEC earned the recognition for actions taken during the 2022 surge in global fuel prices that placed significant pressure on energy costs for rural families and businesses.

“I congratulate the Board of Directors, the employees, and the member-owners of Sulphur Springs Valley Electric Cooperative,” Rep. Ciscomani said. “Thank you for your commitment to protecting affordability and serving rural Arizona.”

SSVEC’s board and leadership team implemented a

member-focused strategy during the surge in global fuel prices designed to deliver immediate relief while maintaining long-term financial stability. The cooperative directed 100 percent of its annual operating margin to buy down more than \$8 million in member fuel bank debt, reducing the wholesale power and fuel cost adjuster and lowering the cost burden on the cooperative’s member-owners.

“SSVEC’s board and leadership team knew they needed to protect the very members who own the cooperative while maintaining long-term stability — and that’s exactly what they did,” Ciscomani said. “They responded with ingenuity and resolve, launching direct communication with members, working with its cooperative partner, AEPCO, to establish a fuel hedging program, and directing 100 percent of its annual operating margin to buy down more than \$8 million in member fuel bank debt.”

SSVEC was recognized for the award during NRECA’s PowerXchange national meeting, held March 6 to March 11 in Nashville, Tenn., where electric cooperative leaders from across the country gather to share best practices and celebrate achievements within the cooperative network.

A video of Rep. Ciscomani’s remarks from the floor of the House of Representatives is available online at tinyurl.com/yrtbhj23.

Military Appreciation Game

Join the Warrior Healing Center at Chase Field on Sunday, 24 May at 1:10 PM for a great afternoon of the Diamondbacks battling the Colorado Rockies at the Military Appreciation Game!

WHC is hosting a volunteer appreciation afternoon at the game! Purchase tickets through the link below at a discounted price, sit with your WHC friends, veterans and volunteers and receive a limited Military Appreciation DBacks ballcap! There’s a good chance we’ll have some attendees be invited to take the field for the National Anthem!

 Memorial Day weekend – Sunday, May 24

 1:10 PM first pitch

 Chase Field – D-backs vs. Rockies

 Tickets: warriorhealing.vet/dbacks

Join us for an afternoon of baseball, remembrance, fun and appreciation. If you can’t attend, please share the invite to help us fill the section and recognize our awesome volunteers!



ADOBE STOCK ILLUSTRATION BY CHRISTIAN HORZ



Daniel Dilone (second from left) was a grand prize winner at the 42nd Annual Youth Engineering and Science Fair, hosted Friday, February 27, by Sulphur Springs Valley Electric Cooperative Foundation. Jason Bowling (left) Chief Executive Officer at SSVEC, and Daniel Wilson (right), Senior Vice President of Member and Corporate Services, presented the award to Dilone and his Buena High School advisor Beverly Adams.



The team of (second left, to right) Alejandro Romero, Quintin Lawrence, and Jack Campbell, were grand prize winners at the 42nd Annual Youth Engineering and Science Fair, hosted Friday, February 27, by Sulphur Springs Valley Electric Cooperative Foundation. Presenting the awards were Jason Bowling (left) Chief Executive Officer at SSVEC, and Daniel Wilson (right), Senior Vice President of Member and Corporate Services. The students were joined by Amy Martinez, advisor at Buena High School engineering teacher.

Annual SSVEC YES Fair celebrates students

Highlighted by a \$5,000 scholarship, grand prize winners earning an all-expense-paid trip, and \$30,000 in awards to some of the 227 students who participated, the 42nd annual Youth Engineering and Science (YES) Fair was a resounding success when it concluded Friday night, February 27, 2026.

Sponsored by the Sulphur Springs Valley Electric Cooperative (SSVEC) Foundation, the weeklong fair honored students and their teachers in grades fifth through twelfth for their innovative and informative science projects.

Buena High School student Landon Martinez captured the top cash award for the evening with a \$5,000 scholarship. Martinez compiled the most overall points for projects he has entered in the fair since he started the competition in the fifth grade.

A total of seven students, all attending Buena High School, captured grand prize honors in the high school division, earning trips to the Regeneron International Science and Engineering Fair (ISEF) May 9 to May 15 at the convention center in Phoenix.

Daniel Dilone, a sophomore at Buena, was awarded a grand

prize for his project, entitled “Two-Phase Electrochemical Detection of L-Tryptophan as a Kynurenic Acid Analog.” Together with Buena High School advisor, Beverly Adams, Dilone will join more than 1,800 students in ninth through twelfth grades at the international fair.

Buena High School Juniors, Quintin Lawrence, Jack Campbell, and Alejandro Romero will also be attending the Regeneron fair, earning a grand prize for their project, entitled “Solar Soaring,” advised by Amy Martinez of Buena High School Engineering.

The final grand prize was awarded to Buena seniors Jessalyn Lopez, Braden Alexander, and Ethan Juarez for their project, entitled “All Terrain Trash Robot,” also advised by Amy Martinez.

More than 350 parents, teachers and avid supporters attended the awards ceremony Friday night at the Community Innovation Center in Sierra Vista.

“It’s always impressive when the community, parents, and educators come out to celebrate the academic achievements of our local students,” said Kristin Gray, Community Relations Manager at SSVEC. “We truly appreciate the judges who volunteered their time to review each project, and our teachers



did a great job encouraging their students to participate.”

Displays were set up beginning on Monday, February 23, at the innovation center. On Wednesday, multiple judges interviewed high school students about their work and their interest in the topic of their presentation.

Thursday, the Fair was open to the public and offered the opportunity for people to look at each student project. In addition to the projects, several organizations brought science-related displays for public review, including Gray Hawk Animal Exhibits, Bisbee Science Lab, and Kartchner Caverns.

Fifteen community award sponsors were represented at the fair, including the Shelly Ethell Team at Long Realty, Arizona G&T, Canyon Vista Medical Center, the Gridiron Desert Elite Flag Football, Saguaro Air Solutions, TWN Communications, Lighthouse Electric and Solar, Lloyd Construction Company, Herald Review Media, Greater Sierra Vista Kennel, the Legacy Foundation of Southeast Arizona, The Huachucans, and ACE Hardware.

Financial awards presented by the SSVEC Foundation are not generated from member electric bills. The SSVEC Foundation generates most of its funding from uncollected Member Equity payments. When former members leave the SSVEC service area and fail to provide a forwarding address, or in circumstances when repeated efforts to contact a former member fails, these Member Equity funds are turned over to the Foundation and used to fulfill its mission supporting local youth programs.

The team of (second left, to right) Ethan Juarez, Brody Alexander, and Jessalyn Lopez, were grand prize winners at the 42nd Annual Youth Engineering and Science Fair, hosted Friday, February 27, by Sulphur Springs Valley Electric Cooperative Foundation. Presenting the awards were Jason Bowling (left) Chief Executive Officer at SSVEC, and Daniel Wilson (right), Senior Vice President of Member and Corporate Services. The students were joined by Amy Martinez, advisor at Buena High School engineering teacher.



RIGHT: Buena High School student Landon Martinez (right) captured the top cash award of \$5,000 at the 42nd Annual Youth Engineering and Science Fair, hosted Friday, February 27, by Sulphur Springs Valley Electric Cooperative Foundation. Presenting the award was Cory East (left), Vice President of Member Engagement.

SSVEC HAPPENINGS



Leah Marquez-Peterson (center), a veteran member of the Arizona Corporation Commission, shared a special moment with Sulphur Springs Valley Electric Cooperative (SSVEC) representatives at the 2026 Arizona Lineman's Rodeo, held in Marana, AZ, March 23 to March 25.

SSVEC captures top honors in Arizona Lineman's Rodeo

Three first place finishes and recognition for outstanding team communication highlighted a statewide competition for linemen representing Sulphur Springs Vally Electric Cooperative (SSVEC) last week.

The 2026 Arizona Lineman's Rodeo and Technical School was held in Marana, AZ and hosted by TRICO Electric Cooperative March 23 to March 25.

SSVEC apprentice linemen Gabe Ornelas and Sawyer McDonald both won top individual honors. Ornelas earned first place in the "Mystery Event," which challenged linemen to remove a conductor from a dolly and tie onto an insulator. To add to the challenge, competitors only learn the requirements of the event moments before they participate. McDonald finished first on the written test, which tests the competitor's knowledge on all aspects of line work. And for the second consecutive year, Sawyer was awarded the grand prize of "Overall Top Hand".

Gabe Ornelas not only excelled in individual events, but also in the team events. The competitors are paired with an apprentice from a different cooperative, which requires the team to focus on communication and team work to accomplish their task. Gabe's team not only took first place in

the insulator change out event but also won overall top team.

"The rodeo continues to be a valuable opportunity for our apprentices to strengthen their skills, compete with peers from across the state, and reinforce the safety practices that are critical to our daily work," said Nathan Hodges, Senior Vice President of Operations at SSVEC.

SSVEC apprentice lineman Shelby Kogan also excelled in the team events. Her team was honored for outstanding communication and teamwork, which Hodges noted is "...an achievement that reflects the professionalism and collaborative mindset we see in the field."

The statewide rodeo event provides apprentice linemen an opportunity to strengthen their skills, compete with peers from across the state, and reinforce the safety practices that are critical to daily work. The event included both classroom and hands-on training, covering topics such as rigging, fault finding, primary cable preparation, and battery and solar safety, followed by individual and team rodeo events including the knowledge test, obstacle course, hurt-man rescue, and equipment change-outs.

Line workers representing 13 electric utilities from throughout Arizona and New Mexico participated in Marana event.

SSVEC supports nationwide EV charging expansion through IONNA collaboration



Sulphur Springs Valley Electric Cooperative (SSVEC) is proud to highlight its role in supporting the continued expansion of electric vehicle (EV) charging infrastructure across the United States through its involvement with the IONNA network.

IONNA, a joint venture backed by eight major automakers, is rapidly building a high-powered EV charging network designed to support reliable, convenient travel for EV drivers nationwide. As the network celebrates its second anniversary, it has surpassed 100 operational locations and nearly 1,000 active charging bays, with thousands more in development.

Utilities like SSVEC have played a vital role in making this progress possible. Across the country, more than 40 electric utilities have helped energize IONNA charging sites — demonstrating the importance of strong partnerships in building the infrastructure needed for the future of transportation.

“Reliable electric service is the foundation of any successful charging network,” said Jason Bowling, Chief Executive Officer

at SSVEC. “Our involvement with projects like IONNA reflects our commitment to supporting innovation, strengthening our grid, and ensuring our members are ready for the future of energy and transportation.”

IONNA’s growth represents a significant step forward in EV adoption, helping address one of the biggest barriers to electric vehicle ownership: access to dependable, fast charging. The network’s focus on high-speed charging, strategic locations, and customer-friendly pricing is designed to make EV travel more accessible and convenient for drivers across the country.

For SSVEC members, participation in projects like IONNA underscores the cooperative’s commitment to delivering safe, reliable, and forward-looking energy solutions. As EV adoption continues to grow, SSVEC remains focused on supporting infrastructure that benefits members, strengthens local communities, and contributes to a more sustainable energy future.



A steady hand through four decades of change

When Char Bennett arrived in Arizona from the Chicago area, she was looking for a fresh start for her family. What she found at Sulphur Springs Valley Electric Cooperative was more than a job — it became a 40-year career marked by loyalty, adaptability, and quiet leadership.

Bennett joined SSVEC as a part-time typist and customer service representative, encouraged by a neighbor, who worked at the Cooperative.

“She told me to apply,” Bennett recalled with a laugh. “Since then, nobody’s told me to go home, so here I am.”

That modest beginning led to a pivotal role within the Cooperative. After moving to full-time status in November 1985, Bennett was appointed Executive Assistant in 1990 by then-General Manager Howard Bethel. She would continue in that role through two additional leadership transitions — serving under CEO Creden Huber beginning in 1995 and again when Jason Bowling assumed the position in 2022.

Over four decades, Bennett has been a front-row witness to the Cooperative’s evolution. She saw SSVEC expand service to

meet rapid growth in Sierra Vista, Benson, and Willcox, and she remained in the Willcox office even after most administrative staff relocated to Sierra Vista.

Just as dramatic were the changes in workplace technology.

“My first computer was the Radio Shack TRS-80,” she said.

“After that, I shared a small personal computer with WordPerfect software, that could process meter readings.”

As the Executive Assistant, Bennett worked closely with SSVEC’s Board of Directors and senior leadership, helping guide the Cooperative through years of growth and change. Her longest board relationship has been with Director Curtis Nolan, who has served 33 years and is a former president of the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association Board of Directors.

Outside the office, Bennett treasures time with her two daughters, six grandchildren, and her dogs — Daisy, a nine-year-old boxer, and Bella, a Belgian Malinois, also age 9.

“SSVEC is a wonderful place to work,” Bennett said. “We’re like family.”

Forty years of dedication

After 40 years of steady service, Bobby Martinez is preparing to close a remarkable chapter at Sulphur Springs Valley Electric Cooperative, with plans to retire sometime in 2026. It's a career that began modestly and grew into a lifetime of commitment to keeping SSVEC members powered and safe.

Born and raised in Bisbee, Martinez came to SSVEC as a temporary worker, hired as a groundman on a project expected to last just six weeks.

"Basically, after the six weeks, they never told me to go home and I just kept working," Martinez said.

Eighteen months later, he was formally hired and assigned to a pole crew, replacing and installing utility poles across the service territory.

Over four decades, Martinez has witnessed sweeping changes at the Cooperative. He points to the growing

influence and professionalism of linemen, noting that a core group of experienced journeyman linemen are "keeping the lights on." At the same time, he's seen a new generation step up, with apprentices and young linemen working side by side with veterans to master the skills needed to maintain a reliable electric grid.

Safety, Martinez says, has seen some of the most significant progress.

"There's a lot more emphasis on doing the job safely," he said.

Regular safety seminars and ongoing training underscore the dangers of line work, and the responsibility crews share to look out for one another.

"Everyone understands the importance of doing the job safely and making sure everyone comes home at night," Martinez said.

Before becoming Warehouse Supervisor, Martinez spent 20 years in

Operations, working in the field with linemen and maintaining the grid. He also served as a meterman, gaining a broad understanding of the Cooperative's day-to-day work.

Now, Martinez is ready for another transition. He recently got engaged to his high school sweetheart, Sydney.

"We dated in high school, and reconnected on Facebook," he said.

He's also looking forward to spending more time with his adult children. His son, Seth Martinez, is a Major League Baseball relief pitcher beginning this season with the Boston Red Sox. His daughter, an OB-GYN, who recently graduated medical school and is completing her residency in Seattle.

"I'm ready," Martinez said regarding his retirement. "I'm looking forward to getting up in the morning and not having to go to work!"



FROM LEFT: Warehouse Supervisor Bobby Martinez (left) recently received a 40 year service appreciation plaque, presented by Operations Manager Mark Roll (right). Martinez and SSVEC Work Order Coordinator and Inspector Emile Brunelle enjoy a relaxing round of golf.

Nolan steps down, leaving a lasting legacy

Curtis Nolan, former president of the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA) Board of Directors, has announced his retirement, concluding more than three decades of service for the Sulphur Springs Valley Electric Cooperative (SSVEC).

“Considering the changes that our industry has accomplished under the leadership of Curtis Nolan, his national and local impact is difficult to measure,” said Jason Bowling, CEO at SSVEC. “Thanks to his vision and foresight, electric cooperatives today, all across the country, provide unparalleled reliability, safe working conditions, and affordability.”

Nolan was first elected to the SSVEC Board of Directors in 1992 and has subsequently held every office, including multiple terms as president. In 2002, Nolan was elected to the national board of the NRECA, the organization representing electric cooperatives that serve more than 42 million Americans.

His leadership culminated in 2013 when he was elected president of the national board. During his two-year tenure in that position, Nolan traveled extensively across the United States and internationally, promoting the cooperative model and emphasizing the seven cooperative principles that guide member-owned utilities.

As NRECA president, he represented America’s electric cooperatives carrying out an initiative to extend power to rural residents in Guatemala. The project changed the lives by providing electricity to some 450 residents in three remote villages.

During the trip, Nolan said he was struck by the pleadings of a little girl who wanted the crews to connect her village to electricity.

“That village wasn’t in the plans to get hooked up, but after that little girl put my face in her hands, I made sure that we got it done!” Nolan said.



Nolan has also been a tireless representative of SSVEC interests on several influential state and regional boards. He has served on the Southwest Transmission Cooperative board, which was one part of the Arizona Electric Power Cooperative (AEPSCO) that dealt with generation and transmission lines and issues. He has also served on the Grand Canyon State Electric Cooperative

“Thanks to his vision and foresight, electric cooperatives today, all across the country, provide unparalleled reliability, safe working conditions, and affordability.”

— Jason Bowling, SSVEC CEO

Association (GCSECA) board, which includes representatives of the six electric cooperatives serving the rural areas of the state.

Nolan’s 34 years as a director and officer on the SSVEC board, and his national leadership for 22 years on the NRECA board, including his term as president, have created a lasting legacy that exemplifies the highest qualities of character and public service.

AEPCO celebrates completion of Apache Solar II

New generation delivers clean, reliable power to rural communities

On March 31, Arizona Electric Power Cooperative, Inc. (AEPCO), a not-for-profit member-owned generation and transmission cooperative, celebrated the successful achievement of commercial operations for its Apache Solar II project at a ribbon-cutting ceremony in Cochise County, Arizona.

As part of its commitment to the local community, AEPCO, alongside its member Sulphur Springs Valley Electric Cooperative and development partners Clēnera and Signal Energy, contributed \$20,000 to support the Willcox Community Food Pantry.

This marks a major milestone in expanding reliable, locally generated energy across Arizona. Apache Solar II represents the cooperative's largest renewable energy project to date, developed to deliver clean, reliable power to 28 individual rural electric distribution cooperatives and public power members.

Located at AEPCO's Apache Generating Station, the project combines 235 megawatts of solar photovoltaics with 940 megawatt-hours of energy storage, enabling the facility to deliver renewable energy and dependable capacity to the grid.

In addition to the historic opportunity that the project provides for AEPCO members, Apache Solar II is part of AEPCO's \$485 million New Empowering Rural America grant awarded by the United States Department of Agriculture. Projects supported by New ERA will allow AEPCO's cooperative and public power members to diversify their power portfolios through collective participation in large, competitively priced renewable energy projects.



ABOVE: Representatives from Arizona Electric Power Cooperative, Inc., Sulphur Springs Valley Electric Cooperative and partners present Willcox Community Food Pantry's team with a \$20,000 donation. **BELOW:** Apache Solar II project staff members, contributors and community supporters gather to commemorate the milestone achievement at the Apache Generating Station in Cochise County. PHOTOS BY STEPHANIE SPENCER, TOPAZ PHOTOGRAPHY

"Apache Solar II reflects our continued commitment to delivering reliable, cost-effective power to the communities we serve," says Patrick Ledger, executive vice president and CEO of AEPCO. "By integrating large-scale solar generation with advanced battery storage, we are enhancing system flexibility while making long-term investments in Arizona's energy future."

With about \$621 million in capital expenditures, this project is a strategic energy asset and a meaningful contributor to the local economy. Apache Solar II is expected to generate enough electricity to power more than 54,000 Arizona homes annually, while also strengthening grid reliability and providing low-cost energy through its battery storage system.

Development and construction of Apache Solar II was made possible through collaboration with a broad network of industry partners, including project developer Clēnera and EPC Signal Energy. ■





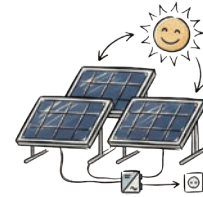
ABOVE: Arizona Electric Power Cooperative, Inc. Executive Vice President and CEO Patrick Ledger addresses the audience at the ribbon cutting ceremony March 31. TOP: Executive Director of Power Production Mike Nelson acknowledges the hard work and dedication of the crews that brought the project to life.

ABOUT ARIZONA ELECTRIC POWER COOPERATIVE INC.

AEPCO is the not-for-profit generation, transmission and energy services provider for electric distribution cooperatives and public power utilities in Arizona, California, Nevada and New Mexico. Headquartered in Benson, AEPCO operates with its sister organization, Sierra Southwest Cooperative Services Inc. (Sierra), under the umbrella of Arizona G&T Cooperatives.



Apache Solar II By the Numbers



Produces **235 MEGAWATTS** of solar photovoltaics and has **940 MEGAWATT-HOURS** of energy storage.



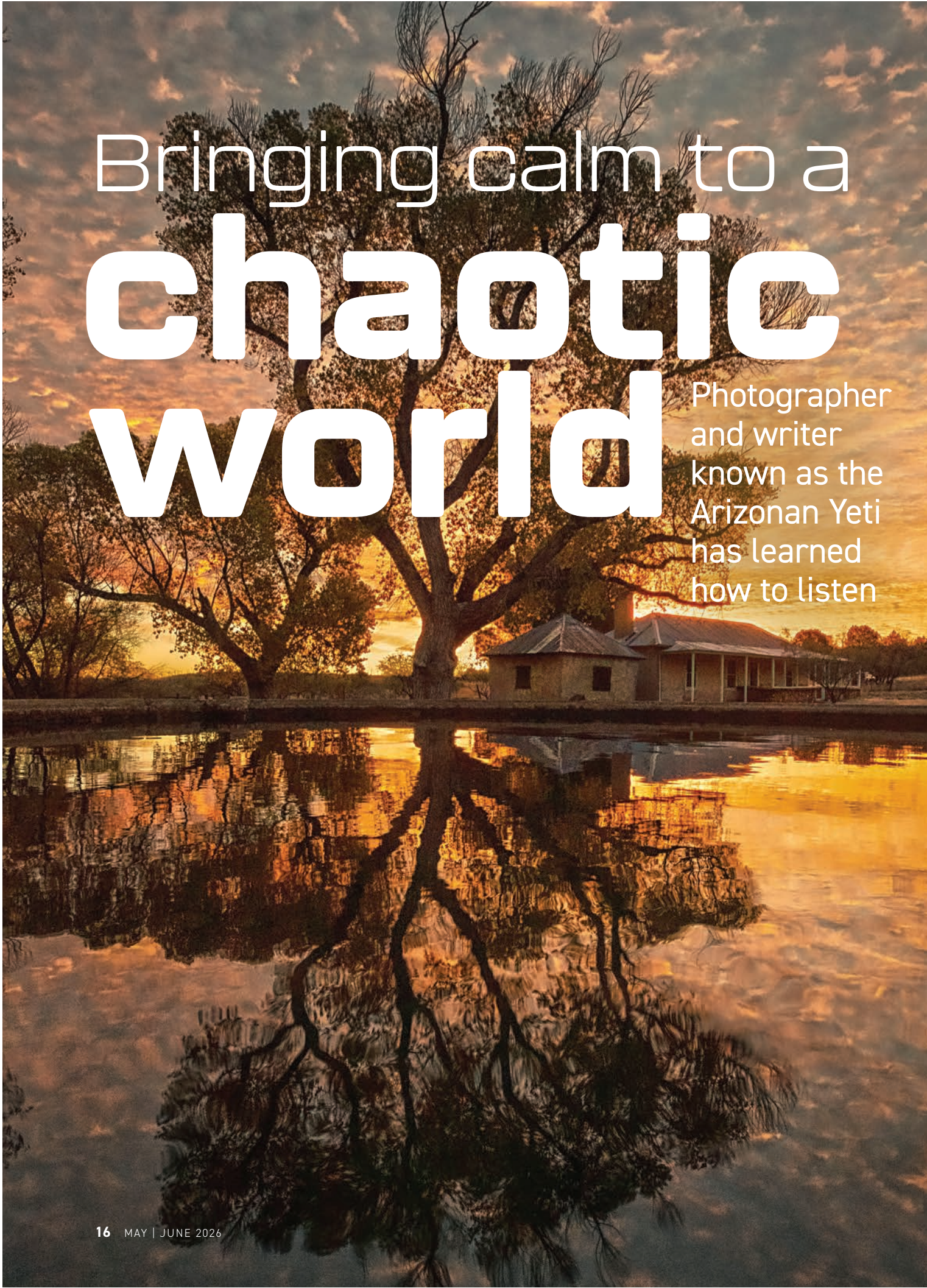
Can power more than **54,000** Arizona homes annually.



28 rural electric co-ops and public power members receive clean, reliable power.

AI-GENERATED IMAGE BY BRANDON POMRENKE/GOOGLE GEMINI





Bringing calm to a **chaotic** **world**

Photographer
and writer
known as the
Arizonan Yeti
has learned
how to listen



In Southeast Arizona, where wide skies and long roads still have something to say, Sean Yeterian has learned how to listen. Based in Sierra Vista and known publicly as the Arizonan Yeti, Yeterian is a photographer and writer whose work favors patience over spectacle and presence over performance.

A retired U.S. Army Sergeant Major with 28 years of service, Yeterian turned seriously to photography as military life receded. What began as a creative outlet became a way to slow time—to replace urgency with observation. That instinct now defines his work. Landscapes, storm skies, empty highways, weathered structures, and the quiet spaces between destinations form the backbone of his imagery. He is especially drawn to moments of transition: dawn breaking, fog lifting, storms rolling through Cochise County.

Roads appear often in his photographs, not as destinations but as symbols—of choice, movement, and reflection. Most of his work is rooted in the American Southwest, though his visual storytelling has traveled far beyond it. His images have been exhibited internationally, from Amsterdam and Barcelona to Melbourne, Seoul, and Athens, and are regularly sought for workshops and creative conferences centered on place and narrative.

Yeterian's approach is deliberately unforced. He shoots intuitively, pulling over when something feels right rather than chasing a checklist. Post-processing is minimal; the aim is to honor what was present, not invent what wasn't. Photography, for him, is an act of attention, not conquest.

That philosophy extends to his writing. Images are often paired with short reflections—open-ended, emotionally grounded, and free of instruction. Meaning is suggested, not assigned. As an active member and docent at both the Huachuca Art Gallery in Sierra Vista and the Tombstone Art Gallery, he remains closely tied to the region's creative community.

In an age of endless noise and instant consumption, Sean Yeterian's work offers something quietly radical: permission to slow down. His photographs don't escape the present moment—they steady it. And in doing so, they remind us that the most beautiful place in the world may be exactly where we are. ■

Sean Yeterian's artwork is available on his Facebook page at Arizonan Yeti.

Tournament is back in all it's glory

Jack Isler revives a Sierra Vista tradition: The Open and the Huachucans are back.



Huachucans President Jack Isler (left) and Sierra Vista Golf Center Advisor Josh Sutton.

When Jack Isler joined The Huachucans in 2003, he could not have imagined he would one day lead its most important revival.

This year, as president of the longtime service organization, Isler has brought the Sierra Vista Open golf tournament back to its former glory — satisfying three very different partners at once: the City of Sierra Vista, which owns the course; Paradigm Golf Group, which leases and operates it; and The Huachucans themselves.

“We have three organizations, each with their own definition for success for the Sierra Vista Open,” Isler explained. He is delivering on every one of those definitions.

In 2004, Jeff Lane, a Life Member of The Huachucans, initiated a collaboration with the Tucson Conquistadores to secure a professional exemption for the former PGA Tour Tucson Chrysler Classic. Presently, members such as the late John Campagne, Isler, Will Cain, Erik Petersen, Josh Sutton, and others are working to renew this important partnership. Their objective is to potentially obtain an exemption for the annual Cologuard Classic PGA Tour Champions event hosted by the organization.



Sutton brings new energy to the Sol of golf

The results speak for themselves. The city now has a financially viable public golf course. Paradigm sees more players on the links. And The Huachucans — which has raised more than \$1.8 million for local youth organizations throughout Cochise County since 1985 — can continue its mission of giving back.

To make the tournament even stronger, Isler, The Huachucans and Paradigm asked for and received a professional evaluation of the Sierra Vista Golf Course which confirmed the layout, golf course rating, and yardage meeting the high standards required for the winner to potentially earn an automatic berth in future Cologuard Classic tournaments.

That means, if approved by the Conquistadors and others, serious competitors from around the country will soon be teeing it up in Sierra Vista, all chasing a spot in a nationally recognized PGA Tour Champions event.

A familiar face at the Sierra Vista Golf Center Isler is known throughout Cochise County for his leadership and dedication to youth programs is making the Sierra Vista Open a premier fundraiser and a point of pride for the entire community. ■

For more information and tickets to the Sierra Vista Open and Charity Dinner May 15-17, please visit www.thehuachucans.com.

He has the gift of salesmanship and the enthusiasm of a sports team mascot. He can sell screen doors to submarine companies and once he's convinced the cause is consistent with his values, he's all-in.

Meet Josh Sutton, the new advisor at Sierra Vista Golf Center.

In less than six months he has become a familiar face at the former Pueblo del Sol Country Club, weaving himself into the daily operations of the golf course and its dining and conference facilities.

"I'm working to change the face of the community to a golf-centered attraction that draws top players and professionals from around the country," Sutton said during a recent interview.

His current focus is the annual Sierra Vista Open, scheduled May 15 to May 17. The tournament, now in its 41st year, will again be hosted by The Huachucans and serves as the organization's largest annual fundraiser, generating \$1.8 million for local youth organizations since 1985.

Sutton, who is a member of The Huachucans, is working to restore the tournament's prominence as a qualifying event for the Cologuard Classic, an official PGA event that brings professional golfers to Tucson every spring.

"We're going to bring the best players to the best golf course. I'm confident that once players are aware of the quality of this course, they will get excited to play here."

Sutton praised the work and cooperation of Laura Wilson, the Director of Parks, Recreation and Library.

"She's been really great to work with, and enthusiastic about where we're going," Sutton said. "We've got a lot of momentum to make things happen."

Sutton, who plays the golf course at least twice a week, also offers golf lessons and as a former Marine, shares a special relationship with local veterans. His enthusiasm for those who served and are serving in the military has already generated interest and a loyal following among members of the local veterans' community.

"I very much want vets here," Sutton said.

Sutton's journey from star athlete at a high school in Oregon, to managing the Sierra Vista Golf Center is easily a best-selling novel. Throughout that journey, Josh has always returned to golf as an important focus of his identity.

"It took me time to learn how to play without frustration," Sutton said. "Once you learn that golf is a game of life, first, and commit yourself to working on those foundational skills, then it becomes fun, regardless of how you play." ■

A second chance, close to home

By Natoyah Swift, Canyon Vista Medical Center Marketing & Communications Manager

Eugene Grinde had just gotten home from running errands when everything changed.

“My chest is killing me,” he told his wife, Wendee, as he doubled over in the hallway.

A week earlier, he had felt something similar — but ignored it. This time was different. The pain hit like “an 80-pound sledgehammer” to his chest.

Wendee didn’t take any chances. She handed him aspirin and called 911.

Within minutes, paramedics arrived. They quickly recognized the signs of a heart attack and alerted the team at Canyon Vista Medical Center while enroute. By the time Eugene arrived,

Eugene Grinde (left) with Cardiologist, Dr. Fadi Fahad.



Every minute matters during a heart attack,” he said. “The longer you wait, the more damage it does to your heart.”

— Eugene Grinde, patient

the cardiac team was ready.

“They took me straight to the Cath Lab,” Eugene said. “There was no waiting.”

Within 20 to 30 minutes, he was on the table. Doctors discovered a 100 percent blockage in one artery and an 80 percent blockage in another — often referred to as the “widowmaker.”

Working quickly, they used a minimally invasive procedure through his arm to open the artery and place a stent, restoring blood flow to his heart.

“They were talking me through everything,” Eugene said. “Everyone knew exactly what they were doing. I felt like I was in the right place at the right time.”

That timing made all the difference.

“Every minute matters during a heart attack,” he said. “The longer you wait, the more damage it does to your heart.”

Just two days later, Eugene was back home; grateful and already feeling better than he expected.

“I honestly thought I’d be down for a

while,” he said. “But I felt good almost right away.”

Looking back, Eugene knows his story could have ended very differently — especially if care hadn’t been so close.

“It used to be you’d have to go to Tucson,” he said. “That extra time... I don’t know if I’d be doing this well today.”

He shares his story for one reason — to encourage others not to make the same mistake he almost did.

“If you feel chest pain, don’t wait it out like I did the first time,” he said. “Call 911. Go to the ER. It could save your life.”

For more information about the cardiac services at Canyon Vista Medical Center in Sierra Vista, AZ, please visit CanyonVistaMedicalCenter.Com/Cardiology. ■



ABOVE: Governor Katie Hobbs stands with students and Octavian Lipscomb, Digital Navigator, at The Hive, located inside the Community Innovation Center in Sierra Vista.
LEFT: Celebrating the opening and operation of “The Hive,” and its mobile technology unit were (from left) Mignonne Hollis, Executive Director of the Arizona Regional Economic Development Foundation (AREDF), Arizona Governor Katie Hobbs, Erin Carr Jordan, the founder of “The Hive,” Ethan Bradley, Digital Navigator, Octavian Lipscomb, Digital Navigator, and Francisco Esteves, “The Hive” Manager.

Silicon Valley in Sierra Vista

By Shar Porier

Tucked inside the Community Innovation Center at 4251 Enterprise Way, The Hive is quietly rewriting what’s possible in a small Arizona town. Open Mondays and Wednesdays from noon to 6 p.m. and Fridays from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., the free tech space feels more like a comfortable living room than a computer lab.

Soft lighting, cozy seating, and a welcoming vibe invite everyone — regardless of age or background — to walk in and explore.

Visitors find high-speed internet, professional-grade tools, and patient, one-on-one guidance from trained staff who listen first and tailor help to each person’s goals. Tablets, laptops, virtual-reality headsets, 3D printers, robotics

kits, artificial-intelligence software, a green screen for podcasts or job interviews, and equipment for photography, videography, and stop-motion animation are all available at no cost.

“It’s not just a tech center,” says Digital Navigator Ethan Bradley. “We created more of a living room atmosphere than a computer lab, so people feel comfortable asking questions about what they don’t know.”

Regulars include a local artist who curls up with an iPad for hours, students working on school projects, retirees learning new skills, and job seekers polishing résumés or practicing interviews.

The Hive is the latest outpost of the Institute for Digital Inclusion Acceleration (IDIA), a 501(c)(3) nonprofit that has opened similar sites across Arizona. Its mission is straightforward: make sure

every resident — urban or rural — has the tools to go online, learn, work, and manage their health.

Head of Community Activation Stephanie LaBorde Dreux is already forging partnerships with local schools, the Sierra Vista Airport (to spark student interest in avionics), and organizations like the Bisbee Science Lab. IDIA even sends Apple-supported mobile units to area towns for pop-up classes and STEAM events.

In a place where “digital inclusion” can sound abstract, The Hive makes it real — one curious visitor, one 3D print, and one confident new skill at a time.

For more information, visit <https://theidia.org> or call 520-508-0915. ■

Cochise College leads the

AI revolution



Dr. Wendy Ashby

By Robert J. Cohn

Love it or hate it, artificial intelligence (AI) has swept into American workplaces and daily life with breathtaking speed. In response, Cochise College began offering noncredit AI courses through its Center for Lifelong Learning in late 2025.

The program gives students, educators, and community members a practical entry into the technology shaping tomorrow.

"It's beyond curiosity now," says instructor George Self, who teaches Introduction to AI and AI for Small Business Success. "It's here, and it's moving incredibly fast — especially in medicine. When I demonstrate basic functions, students are stunned by how simple and powerful it is. I'm blown away every day."

Community demand drove the program. A college survey revealed that AI training topped local residents' wish list.

"Everything has a little bit of AI in it now," explains Public Information Officer Sharinna Cook-General. "We want people to understand this tool because it's opened an entirely new world."

Many start the program viewing AI as mysterious or threatening. Self quickly changes that perception. He shows how ChatGPT can brainstorm ideas or

generate a detailed mini-feasibility business plan in 30 seconds — a task that once took weeks.

"They're excited to discover its exponential potential," he says.

Faculty development leader Dr. Wendy Ashby reinforces responsible use. Backed by a \$20,000 grant from Sulphur Springs Valley Electric Cooperative, she runs workshops that equip educators to teach AI literacy, ethics, and critical thinking.

"AI won't replace educators," Ashby notes. "It makes critical thinking more important than ever."

Self, who has taught computer information science since 1999, puts the rapid evolution in perspective: "What we learn next week may already be outdated. AI is going to keep delivering breakthroughs — and we need to be ready to work with it." ■



TOP LEFT: Dr. Wendy Ashby conducts online artificial intelligence workshops for educators at Cochise College.

LEFT: George Self (right), teaches Introduction to artificial intelligence (AI) and AI for Small Business Success at Cochise College. PHOTOS BY MONIQUE VARGAS

ADOBE STOCK IMAGE BY KRAS99

Giving a national voice to small town tennis

By Robert J. Cohn

The dream of building a thriving tennis culture in Sierra Vista is gaining momentum, thanks to Buena High School boys tennis coach Daniella Reidmiller, recently named the U.S. Tennis Association Southwest Coach of the Year for 2025.

For Reidmiller, a former top-ranked tennis player from Lima, Peru, the

honor carries special meaning. “The nomination alone took me by surprise,” she said. “To be recognized by USTA is truly humbling.”

Reidmiller’s path to Buena High began with a tennis scholarship to an NCAA Division II college in Pennsylvania, where she transitioned

introduced a team contract focused on commitment and unity—an approach that paid immediate dividends. “They wanted to win for each other,” she said. “That’s every coach’s dream.”

Beyond coaching, Reidmiller owns Tennis Unbound, offering lessons and camps, and secured a USTA

“She is truly the face of tennis in Sierra Vista.”
— Jeff Sikes, USTA’s marketing and communications director

from clay to hard courts. Since arriving in Sierra Vista, she has transformed a once-struggling program into a competitive force, leading the team to sectional and state appearances within her first few seasons.

USTA officials cited her impact both on and off the court. “She helped her team make significant improvements and gave a voice to small-town tennis,” said Jeff Sikes, USTA’s marketing and communications director. “She is truly the face of tennis in Sierra Vista.”

A certified Racket Sports Professional Association coach, Reidmiller emphasizes discipline, teamwork, and personal growth. She

grant for new equipment at Buena High. Her vision extends well beyond championships.

“I want tennis to grow here and be known across Arizona,” she said. “This community deserves it.”

In honoring Reidmiller, USTA recognized not just wins, but leadership, resourcefulness, and a coach determined to build something lasting. ■

PHOTO BY MONIQUE VARGAS

ADOBE STOCK IMAGE BY DIRTY PURE

INK THUGS

Local screenprinter breaks into the custom shirt business

By Michelle Hunter



If you enjoy supporting local shops, with reasonable prices, really cool people, guaranteed work, clear communication, quality products,

and smooth process every time — then you have got to check out Ink Thugs.

Owner and operator of Ink Thugs, Amy Moss, has quite the operation inside the store front located at 1939 Frontage Road, Suite G, in Sierra Vista near Docs Watering Hole. When you step through the door, you will be greeted with smiles,

upbeat music, and an impressive display of the various machines and apparent stages that go into the process of creating custom, one of a kind, screen print shirts.

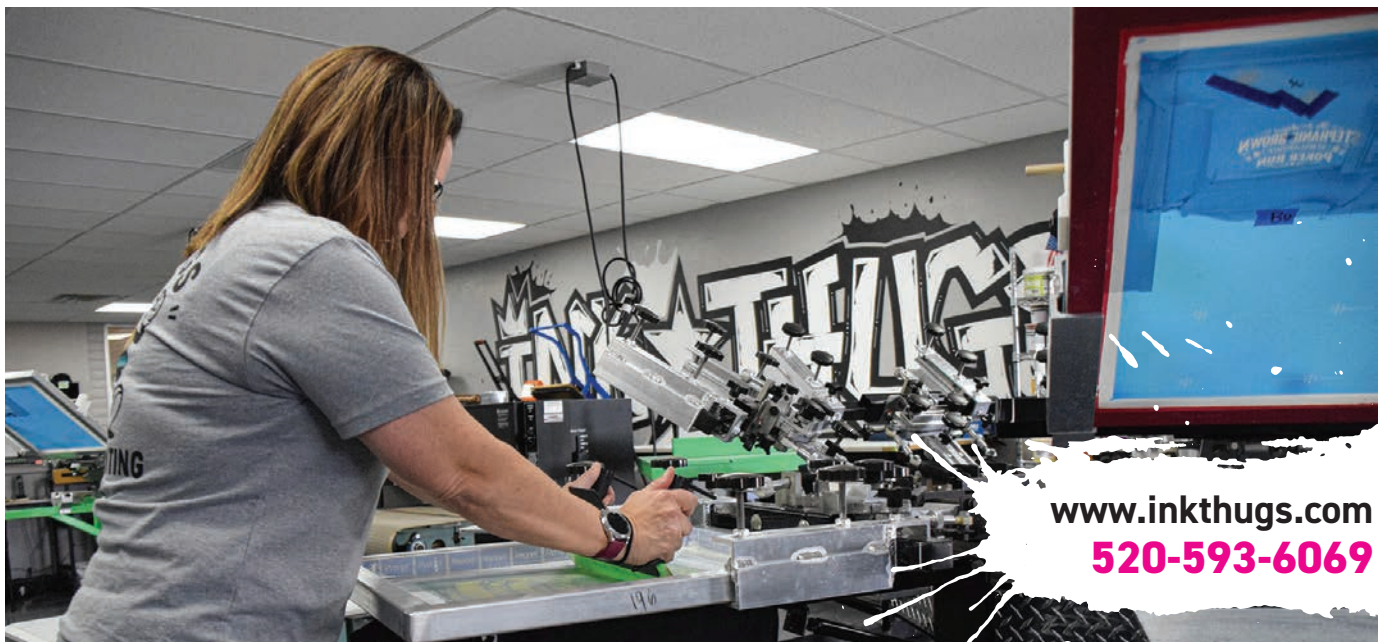
After experiencing the struggle of shopping for quality shirt designs, not to mention t-shirt quality and fit, Amy took it upon herself to find a solution. After the investment time, money, technique, and heaps of learning, Amy and her team have now mastered the challenge and are ready to share their talent with you. July will mark two years the business has been thriving in the current store location, and three years since launching.

In that time, the business, skills, services and range of customers have grown well above initial expectations. Earning the “Best of Sierra Vista” in 5 categories in 2025 is testament to that! While taking

a tour through the shop to understand what goes into the process, the materials involved, and the complexity of the phases, it easy to grasp why this trade is truly a skilled art. Patience and “trust the process” definitely have a part here.

Ink Thugs offers a variety of screen-printing processes and techniques, surely to accommodate your design needs. Ink Thugs is equipped to take on small orders or in bulk, with a fast turnaround time and guaranteed work- with a business model like that it is sure to keep thriving in the heart of Sierra Vista.

Walk in and check it out for yourself Monday- Friday from 9 am - 4 pm, or head on over to their Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/inkthugs> to see all the creative fun they are having at Ink Thugs. ■



www.inkthugs.com
520-593-6069

THE FUN NEVER ENDS

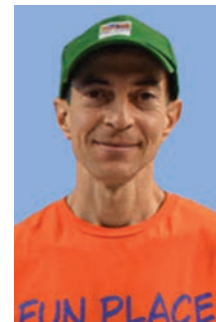
By Michelle Hunter

Inspired by his own children, Marvin Kouza experienced and sympathized with the need for an indoor play space and party venue in the Sierra Vista area. After relocating from Phoenix, Kouza kickstarted his inspiration with the now coveted ice cream store, Julie and Sammy's. Named after his two older children, the store was already off to a sweet start. Although Kouza sold the ice cream store to other locals, he continued his entrepreneurship vision when he and his wife Rosa opened The Fun Place last September.

Upon walking in, The Fun Place immediately meets you with inflated excitement and color. A welcoming space for kids of all ages (and parents, too!), featuring multiple inflatables that offer versatile climbing experiences, jousting, tunnels, slides, mazes, and ball pits. Not to mention the go kart track, bumper cars, snack shop, arcade games, indoor mini soccer/basketball field, and 7 guinea pigs to greet you, oh my!

With reclined seating for parents and unlimited annual memberships available, this is precisely the place families have been waiting for. Daily play time passes are available with ½ hour wristbands starting at \$6.50, up to 3 hours of play for only \$28! Hungry? Grab a quick bite at the snack shop now offering Thrifty's ice cream or bring your own feast for the whole family as Kouza allows outside food and drinks in the back seating area. Birthday packages are available for parties with 10 play passes or more, sure to give your kids an energetic party to remember.

The Fun Place is open Tuesday-Sunday, however, it also accommodates Mondays when local schools are closed. For more information or to book your child's next birthday party, visit The Fun Place website at: www.funplacesv.com or in person at 493 N Hwy 90 Bypass, suite 140, behind Michael's and Planet Fitness. ■



funplacesv@gmail.com
520-224-8642

www.ssvcc.org 25

NASA's new vision for exploration

By Ted Forte

NASA has announced sweeping changes in its approach to solar system exploration. Described as a “realignment”, and named Ignition, this new series of NASA initiatives represents a revised “mission-based” culture at the agency.

Foremost in the new philosophy is an accelerated timeline for a lunar base and some ambitious plans to explore Mars. The proposed lunar-orbiting space station known as Gateway has been indefinitely postponed so that resources and international partnerships can be leveraged toward building a permanent base on the moon’s south pole.

The time-line for the Artemis missions to the moon have been significantly realigned and moves our lunar exploration efforts from orbit to the surface. NASA announced earlier that the Artemis III mission, originally intended for a human landing on the moon, has been redesigned as a low-Earth orbit mission that will test the potential lunar landers being built by SpaceX and Blue Origin and perfect various rendezvous maneuvers. That mission is set to launch in 2027. Artemis IV will land the first Americans to step foot on the moon

since 1972 and it’s NASA’s intention to accomplish that landing before the end of President Trump’s term.

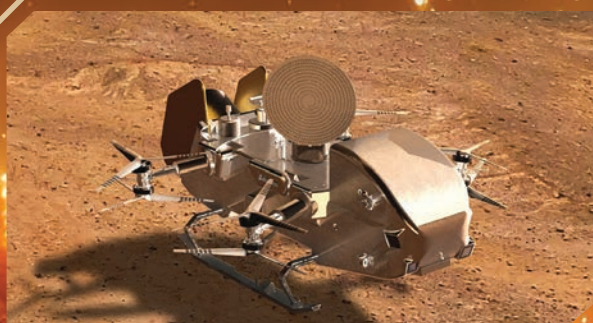
Lunar exploration will depend heavily on NASA’s commercial partners. Commercially procured and reusable hardware will enable frequent and affordable crewed missions to the lunar surface. Initially, landings are planned about every six months, but that cadence should increase as our capabilities mature. Concurrent with NASA’s human landings, CLPS (Commercial Lunar Payload Services) will be sending rovers, instruments, and technology demonstrations that advance mobility and power generation. We can expect up to 30 CLPS missions, in a rapid-fire cadence, starting in 2027. These will deliver rovers, hoppers and drones as well as numerous science instruments produced by industry, academia, and our international partners. Near-term payloads include the VIPER rover and the LuSEE-Night mission. VIPER will prospect for lunar resources and map the distribution and concentration of water ice in the permanently shadowed areas of the lunar south pole. LuSEE-Night is a robotic radio telescope

observatory that will be deployed on the far side of the moon.

Initiatives meant to continue America’s continued presence in Low Earth Orbit (LEO) include plans to extend the life of the International Space Station (ISS) into the 2030s and to add both a government core module and numerous commercial modules that can later be detached. This plan ensures our continuous presence in LEO once the ISS is de-orbited.

NASA also announced the Space Reactor-1 Freedom mission. SR-1 Freedom will be the first nuclear powered interplanetary spacecraft, and it will launch to Mars before the end of 2028. At Mars, it will deploy the Skyfall fleet of Ingenuity-Class helicopters to further explore the Red Planet. SR-1 Freedom will demonstrate the feasibility of nuclear propulsion, establish flight heritage nuclear hardware, and set regulatory and launch precedent for future fission power systems.

NASA administrators also affirmed the agency’s commitment to several science missions. The Nancy Grace Roman Space Telescope, scheduled to

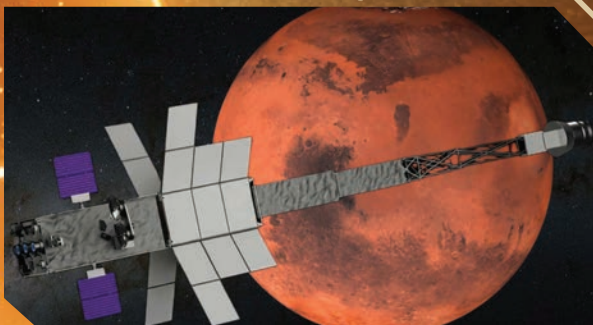


THE ASTRONOMER'S CORNER

launch this fall, will study dark energy among other science objectives. Roman is ahead of schedule and under budget and has defined a new standard for the management of large science missions. The Dragonfly mission to Saturn's moon Titan, will deploy a nuclear-powered octocopter to explore Titan's organic-rich environment. NASA will launch and deliver ESA's (European Space Agency) Rosalind Franklin Rover to Mars in 2028. The rover contains an instrument contributed by NASA that will perform the most advanced detection and analysis of organic matter ever conducted on Mars. A new Earth science mission set to

deploy soon will measure the dynamics of convective storms to improve the prediction of extreme weather events. NEO Surveyor, scheduled to launch as early as September 2027, is the first space telescope specifically designed to hunt asteroids and comets that may be potential hazards to Earth. NASA's DAVINCI mission scheduled to launch in 2029, will enter the Venusian atmosphere and study the planet's atmosphere and surface composition to determine if Venus was once habitable.

All of these ambitious plans are intended to enable breakthrough scientific discoveries, revitalize the space workforce, and train future science and engineering leaders. Space exploration enthusiasts can be encouraged by the fact that Congress has repeatedly signaled its strong support for space science and is committed to pursuing this new golden age of exploration. The coming decades could see a vibrant off-world economy flourish that will spark innovation, invention and discovery, secure our future on the moon, and open the door to the cosmos beyond. ■



ADOBE STOCK IMAGE BY MISTOGRAPHY

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.



MAY 16

We Care Pregnancy Center Walk | 7:30 a.m.

For nine years we have been helping families all over Cochise County and even from Pima County, who are facing unplanned pregnancy. The success of this event is vital in helping us to provide essential services to women and families in our community who need resources like pregnancy tests, diapers and wipes, baby formula, baby clothes, car seats, parenting and pregnancy classes and much more.

We Care Pregnancy Center's Walk for Life will take place at the Benson High School Stadium track. Participants are encouraged to walk, run or jog and help to raise money for We Care Pregnancy Center's mission. We have a wonderful artist providing free face painting, a bubble machine, free games for the children, and waters and breakfast snacks for our participants. The top three (3) fundraisers will each win a great prize. Any participant who raises a minimum of \$300 will receive one free event tee shirt and be entered into a special drawing for an additional prize. All prizes will be awarded at 9:30 a.m. Please contact me, Pamela Martens, directly if you have any questions. My personal cell phone is (480) 283-1101 and my email is wecareboard.pamela@gmail.com.

BENSON

MAY 23

Ninth Annual Wine, Beer and Spirits Festival | 12 p.m.

Enjoy Arizona's best wines, micro-distilled spirits, and craft brews among the trees and sun in Veterans Memorial Park. Sip your favorite wines and shop our local art and craft vendors while enjoying live music throughout the day. Food and nonalcoholic beverages will be available for purchase throughout the event. Festival tasting tickets are available in advance for \$25 on [Eventbrite.com](https://www.eventbrite.com) (search "Sierra Vista"). Advance festival tasting ticket includes a souvenir wine glass and 12 wine/distilled spirit sampling tickets. Festival tasting ticket purchased the day of is \$30 and includes a souvenir wine glass and 10 sampling tickets.

SIERRA VISTA

MAY 30

The Sleeping Beauty Ballet | 6 p.m.

Come enjoy this free production of The Sleeping Beauty Ballet, featuring Tchaikovsky's magnificent music and brought to life by dancers from Beautiful Balance Ballet Studio. Klein Center for the Performing Arts, 5225 E. Buena Boulevard, will come to life at 6 p.m. on May 30 featuring an amazing performance! The showcase will feature excerpts from the Nutcracker, along with music and dance that celebrates the joy of the season! Guests are invited to bring non-perishable food items for Peach's Pantry — a local non-profit dedicated to ending child hunger in Cochise County.

SIERRA VISTA

JUNE 7

Snake Avoidance Training | 8 a.m.

Protect your dog and give them the skills to avoid dangerous snake encounters. During this training, dogs will be safely exposed to the sight, sound, and scent of rattlesnakes so they learn to avoid them in the future. A trained animal expert will provide live venomous rattlesnakes that are safely muzzled, and Jill Cruz will personally handle your dog during the training process. Dogs must be at least 6 months old. Dogs are trained one at a time. Electric collars will be used as part of the training process. If your dog has medical concerns (heart issues, seizures, etc.), please consult your veterinarian before registering. Cost: \$125 per dog. To Register: Call Jill Cruz (832) 216-5875. Training at The Mall At Sierra Vista, 2200 El Mercado Loop.

SIERRA VISTA



JUNE 20

Lavendar Harvest Festival | 8 a.m.

We are thrilled to welcome back Juilliard-trained and award-winning harpist, Dr. Christine Vivona! Christine has delighted us with her masterful elegance since our first harvest event and is the perfect complement to

the backdrop of dreamy flowers and serene vibes. She will perform from 8 a.m. to 11 a.m. We are also excited to again collaborate with Tucson Village Farm! TVF is a seed to table program designed to connect young people to a healthy food system, teach them how to grow and prepare food and empower them to make healthy life choices. Tickets go on sale May 1 and will be available at [wildoakfarmaz.com](https://www.wildoakfarmaz.com). Included with admission: parking, entertainment, self-guided property tours, petting zoo, kids craft table, and unlimited time in the field for photos. U-cut lavender available for \$8.

SONOITA

UPCOMING EVENTS

JULY 10

Patriotic Pipes Concert | 7 p.m.

Join us at St. Andrew the Apostle Church, 800 Taylor Drive, for a rousing concert to celebrate our nation's independence and our community's love of music! Admission to this event is free. The Seipp/Fickley Trumpet and Organ Duo is unlike any ensemble performing today. Custom musical arrangements of virtuoso, beautiful, entertaining, humorous, and patriotic selections enhance the exquisite blend of their instruments. Trumpeter Chuck Seipp and organist Todd Fickley are two performers at the top of their craft. Both are high-profile musicians in their own right. Mr. Fickley is the Organist at National Presbyterian Church in Washington, D.C., as well as a conductor and international concert solo and recording artist. Dr. Seipp is Sergeant Major retired from The United States Army Band, "Pershing's Own" in Washington, D.C. The Seipp/Fickley Duo are actively concertizing enjoying every opportunity to perform concerts to enthusiastic audiences across America. For additional information, call 520-456-5555.

SIERRA VISTA



**We welcome
your upcoming
calendar events
for the next issue!**

For the **July / August 2026** edition, we have to receive the information by not later than **June 1, 2026**. The publication is due in mailboxes around **July 15, 2026**. Events should be dated to occur no earlier than **July 25, 2026**.

If you are looking to promote your event

SUBMIT
TO **events**
epetermann@ssvec.com

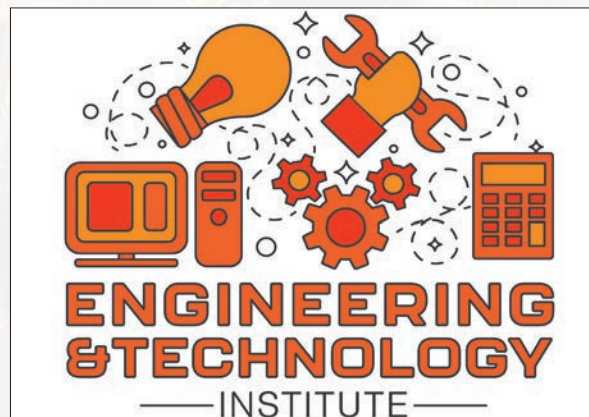
There is no charge for contributions to the calendar.



MAY 16

WAMM Fest + SAIFF | Noon to Night

The Willcox Art, Music, and Movies Festival is pairing up with the Southern Arizona Independent Film Festival for 2026! Coming to downtown Willcox May 16th, celebrate the arts with us in this free, family friendly festival. Expect community booths, food and artisan vendors, live music, and of course great independent movies plus a free movie shown at the Ant Hill Drive-In at the end of the night!



JUNE 1 - 12

Engineering and Technology Institute | Ages 12+

The Engineering and Technology Institute (ETI) is Willcox Theater and Arts' premiere STEM program. Bringing students to see, learn, and experience real world engineering jobs right in their own backyard of Cochise County. In house projects get hands busy and minds working together to build radios, structures, and much more. Do you know what an engineer is? The answer may be more complicated than you think! Don't miss out!



JUNE 1 - JULY 8

WTA Summer Camps

Schools out and creativity is in! From elementary to high school, WTA has camps, classes, and workshops to foster the budding creative in you! Visual arts, digital arts, photography, and drama all under one roof! We even have activities the whole family can take part in! Don't let summer pass you by - get your hands covered in paint, play your part on stage, or create a beautiful summer photo portfolio. Visit willcoxtheater.com to register.

Keep an eye on our website as summer approaches for more information and registry!

(520) 766-3335 | willcoxtheater@gmail.com | willcoxtheater.com

What can I

By Chef Chris

ClownChef@Yahoo.com

When accepting invitations, we often ask if we can bring anything. A kind hearted hostess will tend to say, just bring yourself. If you're like me, that's almost impossible to do. Showing up empty handed just feels wrong.

Depending on the situation, I have a few favorite hostess gifts that always seem welcomed. A nice bottle of olive oil for a serious cook, or a pack of good dish towels as a housewarming. Personally, I don't think there is such a thing as "too many" dish towels.

Lately I've been bringing good salt in a refillable grinder. My favorite is a desert salt from South Africa (please don't accidentally read that as "dessert") and it genuinely tastes better. Salt is controversial, but I do believe that there is good salt and bad salt.

When somebody is in the throes of one of life's storms, asking if we can bring something won't always yield an affirmative response. Better to announce, I'll drop off a meal, a cake, or a "covered dish" as we used to say. We aren't always so good at accepting offers of help or kindness, so don't ask, just deliver.

My neighbors certainly love when I'm working on a recipe and they are suddenly gifted with a snack or a whole meal. This method also works when you have a hankerin' to bake, but can't be trusted to keep a whole batch in the house — it's a win-win!

Then there is the ol' potluck. Some believe this means signing up for a specific dish. I say where's the luck in that? Plus, it's meant to be a carefree and casual gathering. The worst that can happen is there are 8 pies and a tub of hummus. I am so OK with that.

When cooking for a group these days, I'm finding there are a lot more dietary restrictions. So, I have started to make frittatas, which are crustless, rather than quiches. They can also be made without cheese and still have plenty of flavor. And under the heading of good things to make, freeze, and drop off, they work for breakfast, lunch, or dinner, giving your recipient options.

My current favorite cake is the olive oil cake. This Italian home cooking favorite is having a moment as people discover this simple, yet still decadent cake. It's perfect with a cup of tea or as a lighter option at the end of a big meal.

I think we need to revive "coffee and cake" as a social activity. Call a friend this week and tell them to put a pot on, your bringing a cake over.



BLACK BEAN AND SWEET POTATO STEW

It's hard to find fault with this one. It's gorgeous, tasty, and comes together quickly. If making this ahead to be reheated, follow the directions up to adding the sweet potato, then turn off the heat and let cool slightly before adding the beans. This will keep them from turning to mush when reheated.

4-6 Servings.

- 1 onion, chopped
- 3 cloves garlic, chopped
- 1-2 Tbsp. cumin
- 1 can (14 oz.) fire roasted diced tomatoes
- 2 cups broth, or as needed
- 1 tsp. oregano
- 1 sweet potato, peeled and chopped
- 1 can (14 oz.) black beans, rinsed

- $\frac{1}{2}$ bunch cilantro, chopped
- $\frac{1}{2}$ bunch scallions, chopped

Heat a soup pot over medium heat. Sauté the onion in a little oil until golden, then add garlic and cumin, and cook another 30 seconds. Add tomatoes, broth, oregano, and salt, then stir. Bring to a boil, reduce heat, and add sweet potato. Cook until just tender, about 6 minutes.

Taste and adjust seasoning. When yummy, add black beans and let heat about 2 minutes.

Serve in bowls as beautiful as the chili, garnished with cilantro and scallions.



bring?

I SAY FRITATTA | POTATO AND SPRING GREENS FRITATTA

Warm from the oven or room temperature, this is a crowd pleaser. I used a spring greens mix, but feel free to use any leafy green, or even asparagus if it's on sale. Add feta, parmesan, or goat cheese for extra wow. 8-10 servings.

- 3 medium gold potatoes
- 8 large eggs
- 3-4 Tbsp. pesto
- 1 bunch scallions, chopped
- Sprinkle smoked paprika, optional
- 4 oz. spring greens

Preheat the oven to 425 degrees.
Brush a pie plate with oil.

Cut the potatoes into ½ inch pieces and toss with a little oil in a bowl. Place on a baking sheet and season with salt and a little smoked paprika, if using. Roast until just golden, then remove from the oven and lower the temperature to 350 degrees.

Whisk the eggs with a little salt, 1 tablespoon water, and the pesto. Arrange half the potatoes in the pie plate, then top with most of the greens and the scallions. Top the greens with the remaining potatoes, then the remaining greens. Pour the eggs over evenly, tucking the greens down into the eggs as needed.

Bake for about 25 minutes or until just set in the middle.



ITALIAN LEMON BLUEBERRY OLIVE OIL CAKE

Warning, this might become your new favorite cake. The addition of the blueberries made for an extra moist cake. You can leave them out or add them when serving if you prefer.

- 1 cup sugar
- ½ tsp. baking powder
- ½ tsp. baking soda
- Fat pinch salt
- 2 large eggs
- ½ cup extra-virgin olive oil*
- ¾ cup milk
- 1 tsp. vanilla
- Juice and zest of 2 lemons

Preheat the oven to 350 degrees and oil an 8 inch cake pan.

Mix the dry ingredients together in a mixing bowl.

In another mixing bowl, whisk the eggs and olive oil until creamy. Whisk in the milk, zest and juice. Whisk the dry ingredients into the wet, just until all the lumps are gone, then put into the prepared pan.

Bake for 35 to 40 minutes or until the edges are golden and the center bounces back when tapped gently. Allow to cool completely before serving.

* You don't need the very best olive oil, but don't buy the cheapest. Choose an oil that isn't too peppery or herbaceous.





BUILDING A STRONGER TOMORROW, TOGETHER

OFFICIAL NOTICE OF THE
88TH ANNUAL MEETING

May 28, 2026 | Start 7:00 p.m.
Registration Begins 6:00 p.m. | Door Prizes Available
Benson USD | 360 S. Patagonia Street | Benson, AZ

The 88th ANNUAL MEETING of Sulphur Springs Valley Electric Cooperative, Inc., will be held at Benson Unified School District, 360 S. Patagonia Street, Benson, AZ, on Thursday, May 28, 2026, starting at 7:00 p.m. for the general business meeting. Registration will begin at 6:00 p.m.

The purpose of the annual meeting is to consider and act on reports of business that may come before the membership. To accomplish this, the following agenda is announced:

- Call to Order
- Report on quorum
- Reading of the annual meeting notice and proof of its mailing
- Reading of unapproved meeting minutes from 2025 and action thereon
- Report of director election results
- Report of Board President
- Report of Chief Executive Officer
- Adjourn

**Join us
& register
to win a truck!***

Find us @YourSSVEC on social media.

**One entry per account.*

 **Sulphur Springs Valley
Electric Cooperative, Inc.**
A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative
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