

Volume 4 |
Issue 1
Spring 2025

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Silver Bell Historical Society

The Spirit of Silver Bell

Spring/Summer 2025 NEWSLETTER

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President's
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Jim C. Hunter

SILVER BELL MUSEUM EDITION

Silver Bell was a special place to grow up. That sentiment is echoed almost universally among the former resident and was most eloquently stated in the beautiful poem by Nancy Henson, which is included in this newsletter edition. The closure of our community and removal of the homes, where residents lived until 1984, represented a seminal moment. However, we moved on, raised our children, established careers, and many of us are navigating retirement and the joy of our grandchildren.

The Grand Reunion in 2019, with 354 in attendance, followed by a second Grand Reunion in 2022 with more than a hundred. reflect the continuing draw and spirit that exists and lives on in our hearts.

The easiest thing for the Silver Bell Historical Society board to do would be to facilitate a steady decline into a small club of former residents who gather on occasion to reminisce. While that may still occur, this is not in our DNA. A "Mission Statement" was designed with the purpose of not only gathering on occasion, but to also do our very best to preserve the rich history of the Silver Bell Mining District. This includes prior generations at Old Silver Bell and before. The revelation that more than 2,100 mining claims were filed between 1865 and 1935 reflects the robust activity, but also the extent of the history to be researched and consolidated, ideally into a museum.

The focus of this newsletter, "The Museum Edition," in no way reflects a change in our "Spirit of Silver Bell" philosophy. Rather, our sincere desire is that the new Silver Bell-Red Rock Regional Museum will enhance that spirit by expanding knowledge, accessibility, and presence, as the history is preserved and our legacy is cemented. The other theme of this newsletter is, "What's in?" This reflects the many directives, mandates, and events to apprise our members of all that is happening.

We are tentatively planning a third Grand Reunion for the spring of 2026. One day of the event will be held at the new museum site in the Old Red Rock School, 33656 W. Aguirre Lane, Red Rock, AZ 85145.

Recently, I watched a television show where several groups were given a video camera to create a thirty-minute film. This included developing a script, constructing props, costumes and acting. The winning team received a prize. Some of the films were very bad, despite the effort. The point was made that it takes a lot of work to create a bad movie, even by Hollywood standards. We are conscious of the qualitative aspects of what makes a good museum, and visited several museum sites to determine what worked, and more importantly, what didn't.

Continued ...

Our previous reunions were highly organized gatherings and included speakers. This one will be less structured and held more loosely, in that we would like to facilitate the locations, food and beverages, but then allow people to gather and just spend time together, as well as take it all in. The museum introduction will be the one exception, as we introduce several dignitaries who helped make the project happen.

Perhaps we should invite the residents of Red Rock to attend, since this will be a part of their growing community. Just remember, Red Rock now has 3,500 residents, and will be growing to more than 5,000 during the next three years. From now until 2026 you will have the opportunity to weigh in on all of this. In addition to the SBHS email, my personal contact information is provided below. I would enjoy hearing from you.

Jim Hunter, President-Silver Bell Historical Society
(520) 241-7750 catfis53@gmail.com

Unless I'm on the golf course (I think this is required for a retiree), I'll pick up right away. We look forward to seeing you all soon.

The Spirit of Silver Bell can be shared best by those who grew up there. Sometimes, we come across something truly compelling. The following poem was a simple Facebook post, which captures the spirit of our little desert community perfectly. At the time we decided to include the poem in our newsletter, some of us were unaware that the author, Nancy Henson, passed away in March, 2024. Her poem represents a fantastic tribute to a wonderful person.

**Ghosts of Yesteryear,
a Facebook post by Nancy Henson-Nov. 26, 2019:**

For my friends and loved ones from Silver Bell
The soft breeze sighs under desert skies,
And we seek the meager shade.
We've come a long way, to spend this day,
Together one more time.
We walk along and hum a song
From times remembered long ago,
Of happy days, when we went to play,
And never dreamed how life would change.
Back then we were bold, didn't think of old
That was for our elders.
We had desert to explore and never wanted more,
Content in where we were.
But time has a way, of creeping up each day,

And taking us all by surprise.
Each had a goal, to fill our soul,
And we all moved away.
But we never believed we'd ever,
Long for that life again.
Life then was sweet, and we couldn't repeat
The peace we enjoyed back then.
As much as we try, life seems to reply,
We'll never find that place again.
Now we've grown old, and not quite so bold
But we haven't lost that love.
We search once more, on that desert floor,
For memories of days gone by,
And a way to preserve, the life we served,
For our children and their heirs.
And we'll hold in our hearts, our early starts,
That helped us become what we are.
Because of a town, where love abound,
We've grown to be quite adept.
Now eyes grow dim, our days growing slim,
We find ourselves once again,
Reflecting on life, without any strife,
And back where our town began.
So, Silver Bell, I salute you now,
Live forever in our hearts and minds
Let us never forget what, in our lives you set,
Our Silver Bell., our home.

Nancy Henson, rest in peace March, 2024

SILVER BELL- RED ROCK REGIONAL MUSEUM

What's in an Artifact?

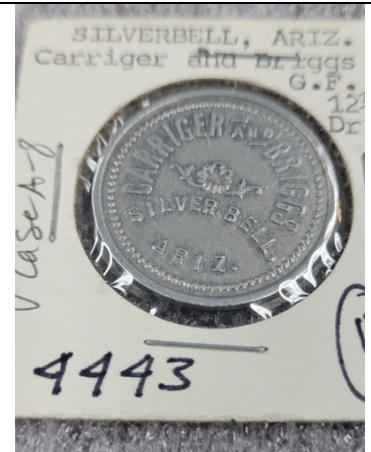
A significant concern at the beginning of our museum discussions was acquisition of historic artifacts for display. The board toured several museums to develop our process and learn about museum operations in general. Our initial concerns regarding the ability to locate items of historical interest were put to rest immediately. Every museum that we visited indicated that artifacts soon became the least of their worries. Instead, there wasn't enough space to adequately display all of the donated items.

The bigger challenge was inventory control, which can be resolved through dedicated museum software. We discovered exhibit ideas and things that we wanted, but more importantly, we also discovered things that simply didn't contribute much and just took up space. A beautiful historic building filled with old stuff and no real theme was not as appealing as those which flowed and portrayed the history of the area. This included its people, and sometimes covered ethnic diversity to be researched and understood. These were a pleasure to visit.

For the reasons mentioned above, we delayed soliciting for artifacts until themes and displays were further developed. An earlier meeting with Arizona Historical Society yielded a commitment to provide small artifacts on loan. We had hoped this would include a few original items from Old Silver Bell, and to our delight, this is now the case. A follow up meeting on June 26 with Jace Dostal, AHS Collections Manager solidified that commitment when we're ready for the following:

1. Two train tickets from Arizona Southern Railroad.
2. Drink tokens and billiard ball from Old Silver Bell Saloon.
3. Mining Lamps and candle sconces.
4. Assay office scales.
5. Flour sifter.
6. Antique chairs.
7. Blacksmith tools.
8. Cookware, spittoon, coffee grinder.
9. Weapons (guns) and knives.
10. Artwork, misc. Tent items.

This saves considerable cost and time over acquiring historic artifacts through purchasing or donation.



However, we have already obtained a number of notable artifacts for display including the following items:

1. Old McClelland saddle
2. Ore car with rails-courtesy of Bob Flood, with delivery included!
3. 1850's era musket, courtesy of Rick Collins
4. Poker chips and dice used by E. Glen Baker at his saloon in Old Silver Bell-courtesy of Richard Jameson
5. Old maps dated 1910 and 1951 of the Silver Bell Mine, train route, mill, and townsite-courtesy of ASARCO
6. Old West buckboard wagon
7. Old West supply wagon, possibly used by a dentist of medicine peddler-courtesy of Connie at Fred's Arena
8. Firehose nozzle from Old Silver Bell-courtesy of Richard Jameson.
9. Historic children's desks



The two old wagons are a unique story, since we grew up enjoying steaks at Lil' Abner's. Fred's Arena surpasses the Lil' Abner's experience. The owner is Connie and her father Fred was a renowned cowboy, roper, artist and collector of all things of the "Old West." In addition to the steakhouse at Three Points, Connie's property includes several barns containing old west wagons of various types and sizes, as well as old vehicles and equipment. We settled on a buckboard for the museum, which is representative of the Silver Bell Mining District, and Aguirre's Red Rock ranching back in the day.

Connie kindly donated a second wagon, to be displayed in her father's name. The wagons will be located at the front of the museum with sponsorship credit.





Larry Young graciously provided the trailer and coordinated the transport of both wagons. He was assisted by Scotty Hunter in the delivery to the museum. While in transport, I received a disturbing call from Scotty, that one of the wagons had fallen from the trailer and was splayed all over Sandario Road. After a pause with a lump in my throat, I

swallowed hard. Then laughter ensued. The wagon was fine and there was no accident. My brother can be a jokester, but rest assured, payback will be coming. One of our bucket list items is a stagecoach, since Old Silver Bell had a Wells Fargo stage stop for passenger and mail delivery. We discovered that even a good quality exact replica or tribute stage coach can reach six figures. Yep, Connie has one of those for sale. Maybe we can secure grant funding for a stage coach, once our other displays are fully operational.

What's in a Name? Museum Title

When the decision was made to establish a museum to preserve the history of the Silver Bell Mining District (SBMD), selection of a name was deferred for a variety of reasons:

Where would the museum be located?

What eras would be depicted?

Which unique personalities would be showcased, among the many historical characters?

Which themes would prevail?

Old Silver Bell was nicknamed, “The Hellhole of Arizona.” This was based on its notorious reputation. We had to admit, “The Hellhole of Arizona Museum,” has a certain ring to it, and would stand out in promotional materials and a freeway billboard. We all remember “The Thing” billboards along Interstate 10. But since none of us who grew up in Silver Bell thought of it as a Hell Hole, that idea was vetoed as well as torpedoed.

The decision to house the museum in Red Rock became a paramount consideration. As the starting point and terminus of The Arizona Southern Railroad (1902-1930), it made sense to include Red Rock in the name. The growth of the Red Rock community, and location along I-10 to promote a

historical corridor, to include Marana, was also considered. Fostering day trips from both Tucson and Phoenix for visitors, students, and historians would truly make the museum a regional concept. After careful consideration, discussion, and a vote of the board, the museum name will be **Silver Bell-Red Rock Regional Museum**.

What's in Museum Fund Raising?

Imagine holding one day of our Grand Reunion III at our newly dedicated, Silver Bell-Red Rock Regional Museum. While a significant segment of the museum will be dedicated to the rich history of the Silver Bell Mining District, it would not be complete without a display to include what we will call, New Silver Bell. This is our era, and yes, like it or not, we are now a part of history. This reinforced our mandate as a board, "if we don't preserve the history of Silver Bell, who will?"

The Old School's red brick building that we will occupy was constructed in 1958 and the 2,000 s.f. space was their former cafeteria/auditorium. There is an additional 1,500 s.f. of covered vestibule space (shared with the Community Food Bank), providing aggregate of 3,500 s.f. for displays. And there's room to expand as needed. The total property comprises seven acres, offering space for large equipment displays.

Based on funds contributed by SBHS members and board members, we acquired the old west wagon, installed digital security cameras, new blinds and have a committed to construct a diorama, which is now more than 50% complete. We've come a long way without much in the way of resources, but we have a good distance ahead of us.

Silver Bell Historical Society is transparent and our museum budget is provided with this segment of the newsletter. The task of raising \$62,714 to open the museum is difficult, but it is not insurmountable.

I like sausage of all kinds; breakfast, summer, Italian (with pasta), etc. While I don't want to see it made, the understanding exists that there is a process. Fund raising for a museum invokes a similar response. The learning curve has been steep, especially as it relates to Grant Funding. ASARCO, Arizona Public Service, Trico Electric, Arizona Humanities, Wells Fargo Bank, Pima Federal Credit Union, Crest Insurance, Jim Click Automotive Group, and most recently Pinal County Board of Supervisor's represent some of the grant and corporate funding requests submitted to date.

Some of the denials in 2024 had nothing to do with our effort, but resulted from our lack of focus on Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) or funds directed towards Affordable Housing. Yep, that really happened. Rather than giving up, we're redoubling our efforts and expanding our search. Our highly qualified Grant Writer, Lori Malagoni, has been an integral part of this effort, through the state agency AZERC.

Through experience, we are now more focused, refined, and organized and are directing our grant and private entity requests to fund specific displays or components e.g. diorama, continuous loop video, security system, artifact/inventory software, etc. This also enables us to honor private contributors/donors as exhibit sponsors with corresponding naming rights. The focus can be on funding one exhibit at a time.

We are also in the design phase for commemorative bricks or wooden blocks, which carry the donor's name to be placed at the museum. Your name or someone that you would like to honor can be a part of this project. You can make a museum donation and simultaneously honor a loved one at the museum in perpetuity.

Regarding ongoing operations, the building rent, utilities, and security system are projected to cost approximately \$500 per month, all together. It's difficult to fathom how SBHS could have arranged a space this far below prevailing market rents. Nothing even compares with the freeway location with excellent visibility along a main thoroughfare into Red Rock at anything approaching this cost. Visitor fees and even minor contributions will cover the low overhead. Our express thank you goes out to Peter Dwyer, Superintendent of Red Rock School District and Cathy Schull, Business Manager for all of their efforts in making this happen.

That's how the sausage is made!

Let's visit some of the exhibit themes:

- Old miner's tent-Early claim period-1865-1873
- Mining Camp Period (Pelton...)-1873-1902
- Old Silver Bell-1902-1930 to include Arizona Southern Railroad
- Diorama to include operating train (ASRR), Silver Bell (old and new), Sasco, Red Rock Depot, Rockland Hotel
- New Silver Bell Display (1952-1984) including maps
- Continuous loop video (entire history) with narration/historic photos.
- Aguirre Ranching and Freighting-1880-Present
- Outside Displays-Ore car, old west wagons, tractor, fuel truck. Large Haul Truck, etc.



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Silver Bell Historical Society

The Spirit of Silver Bell

SILVER BELL HISTORICAL SOCIETY

EXPENSE BUDGET FOR 2025

Recurring Expenses:	Description
\$1,200.00	Museum Rent (Old Red Rock School)
\$1,500.00	Port-O-Pot Rental
\$3,000.00	Scholarship Awards
\$1,200.00	Marketing & Promotion
\$950.00	Liability Insurance
\$600.00	Museum Cleaning
\$480.00	Supplies
\$400.00	Website Go-Daddy
\$9,330.00	Total Projected Recurring Expenses
One Time Costs:	
\$15,000.00	Museum Buildout/Materials/Ramp/Murals
\$12,000.00	Artifacts & Displays
\$11,900.00	Exterior Awning (20x30)
\$8,314.00	Diorama Materials & Labor
\$8,000.00	Display Cases
\$2,500.00	Tables and Seating
\$2,500.00	LCD TV and Continuous Loop Video Production
\$2,500.00	Security System
\$62,714.00	Total One Time Costs
\$72,044.00	TOTAL SBHS 2025 EXPENSE BUDGET

What's in a Diorama?

Gadsden Pacific Toy Train Museum, located near West Prince Road and I-10 in Tucson is an impressive diorama, and prompted our decision to include this type of display at the Silver Bell-Red Rock Regional Museum. Each display at Gadsden, both indoors and outside, have operating trains of varying historic eras. Scaling was meticulously documented. Jim Hunter, Janette Hunter, and David Cleaver were privileged to make a presentation about the history of Silver Bell to the Gadsden board at their monthly meeting.

A diorama will be a focal point of the new museum. A series of meetings with diorama experts revealed that scaling would be very difficult. Depicting the 21-mile Arizona Southern Railroad route between Red Rock and Old Silver Bell (through Sasco) would be nearly impossible without the buildings and figures being nearly microscopic. While preliminary cost estimates from diorama experts were solicited, none were forthcoming, without significant additional detail. We surmised that costs for a diorama could spiral into the tens of thousands of dollars (er' no), resources that would not be available to SBHS without an Angel Investor.

Entering stage left were Quintin and Lucy. While they are still in their late teens, this creative pair have years of experience in set design, fabrication, acting, and are avid hobbyists. We put our heads together and collaborated on some ideas. The decision was made to create a representative depiction of SBMD to include major landmarks including, Old Silver Bell, Silver Bell, Sasco, Red Rock, Ragged Top Peak, Oxide and El Tiro Pits, etc. By focusing on typical desert terrain covering the 21 miles of the Arizona Southern Railroad route, rather than depicting the entire detail, we can create a representative diorama, but showcase the landmarks and retain sizing. A disclaimer will cover the lack of exact scaling. Quintin and Lucy used topographical maps along with old photos. They are working diligently on the 6X18 foot diorama, which is now more than 50% complete. Sean Hunter will construct the diorama platform. Quintin and Lucy located an exact replica of the Arizona Southern Railroad train, which has been purchased, indicating that we will have a fully operational train running through the diorama, to the delight of museum patrons of all ages. The best part is that the total cost will be at or below \$8,000, net of the base/platform and plexiglass fabrication and installation.

Thank very much you, Quintin and Lucy, for your creativity, knowledge, attention to detail, and hard work for making a focal point of the museum, a working diorama, possible!

What's in a Map?

During our formative years, growing up in Silver Bell, there was no shortage of roads and trails to explore. Finding an old tobacco can with a claim inside near a landmark boulder, was not unusual, and spurred our interest, along with mine shafts, and the black slag dump from the Pelton Smelter. Occasionally, artifacts including old bottles, an occasional arrowhead, or metate would appear. Something bigger and more historic existed all around us. We just didn't have access to the information to connect the dots. More accurately, our interests at the time were centered in hanging out at the pool and rec hall, playing baseball, or BB gun fights with friends in the desert.



One Christmas, the Hunter brothers received a racing Go-Cart. They immediately constructed a dirt track behind their home to race their new car. Notice that football helmets served as safety crash helmets.

In the picture, Jim Hunter, the driver, was supported by his pit crew consisting of Bob Hunter, Tom Hunter, Tim Hunter with Mom (in doorway) serving as crew supervisor. The next transition was to a motorcycle!!!

Fast forward sixty years and there's a renewed interest in the mining activity that occurred before 1930, as well as the travel means and roadways used to transport people and supplies.

Our research has led to maps and resulted in more questions than answers:

Did Avra Valley Road exist before 1952 (new Silver Bell)?

Or did Sasco Road from Red Rock to Silver Bell serve as the main route?

Was the road called Silver Bell or Avra Valley at the time?

Which route was used by the Wells Fargo stage?

With more than 2,100 mining claims recorded between 1865 and 1935, it is apparent that activity was brisk and would have required extensive travel routes to provide access to SBMD.

Bob Rice, who grew up in Silver Bell, is now a Phoenix attorney with a specialty in real estate, including development projects in several states. Bob's mother maintained a keen interest in history, especially mining.

Bob's research, using topo maps and other resources confirmed the existence of a road to Silver Bell from the Northeast. Since there was documented mining activity throughout SBMD as well as the Tortolita Mountains at the time, multiple access roads were necessary. The only Civil War battle in Arizona occurred near the base of Picacho Peak, probably where the Dairy Queen is today, along a recognized supply route from Tucson to Yuma, commonly called the Yuma Road at the time.

The Southern Pacific Railroad opened service through Tucson to the west coast in 1880. It's entirely possible that Silver Bell Road, Avra Valley Road, and Sasco Road served as well traveled thoroughfares and constituted a sort of loop through the district. With all of the mining activity at the time, this must have been a highly traveled loop, certainly much more than today.

If topo maps, historical research, and technology skills are your area of expertise, we welcome your participation to locate and put into place the many puzzle pieces. This would include old maps, photos, or artifacts that would be integral to our research.

ASARCO recently donated two original maps dating to 1951. These depict our townsite and the mine, including both open pits and the mill. Bob Rice located another map dating to 1910, which provides excellent detail of the mining claims, railroad and other routes, etc. Sometimes, it seems the more information we obtain, the more we need, but it's a fun process. The large maps are being framed and will be conspicuously displayed inside the museum.

What's in a Promotional Exhibit?

Silver Bell Historical Society has been an active exhibitor at several events during the past six months. Our primary focus has been on getting the word out about SBHS and promotion of the new museum.

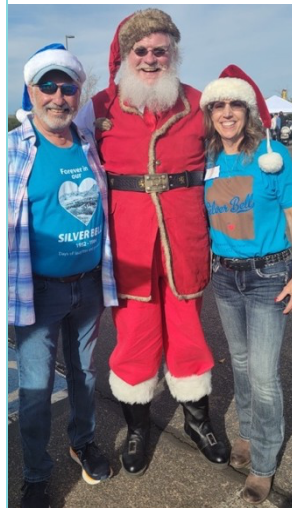
It is noteworthy that in every instance, Silver Bell Historical Society was invited (we did not solicit exhibitor opportunities), indicating that our outreach is creating visibility. SBHS is on the radar and our profile is

improving. In business, our important data base of sources is called COI's or Centers of Influence. We hope to emulate the business world in that regard, by creating a vast network. This way we will be more connected with funding sources, design, construction/fabrication, promotion, software and even Artificial Intelligence. Connections with other museums will also be beneficial.

Some of the recent exhibitor or speaking events include:

Village of Red Rock-Holiday Event-December 2024

The holiday event in Red Rock had nearly 250 in attendance.



Santa Clause made a special appearance. When he was asked, "do you reside in Red Rock," Santa wryly said, "No, I live at the North Pole." This was no garden variety department store Santa, in deference to Mr. Eckrote's excellence as Santa in our day. We all remember him riding in the Fire Truck to hand out stockings at the Rec Hall. The Red Rock Santa stood about 6 foot 5 inches tall and had a long (real) white beard.

At this event, we were able to introduce the upcoming museum to the community of Red Rock. There was keen interest in the community.

Red Rock is growing but lacks amenities including:

- Grocery Store
- Gas Station
- Hardware Store
- Restaurant
- Hair/Nail Salon
- (X) Museum

The message was clear that residents in Red Rock lack many things, but will have a museum they can take pride in. This list was provided in our handout to the patrons who visited our exhibit. Most of them had no idea of the vast history which existed in their back yard. SBHS board members who managed the exhibit were Carol Hunter, Mary Aguirre, Larry Young, David Cleaver, Suzette Cleaver, Scotty Hunter, Janette Hunter, and Jim Hunter.

Friends of Ironwood Forest-March 2025

FIF was established in 2000 in tandem with the creation of Iron Forest National Monument. Friends was celebrating their 25th anniversary as a non-profit. Located adjacent to Silver Bell Mine, Ironwood Forest represents one of the most beautiful desert riparian areas in the U.S. This includes the landmark Ragged Top. A recent discussion with Steve Barney confirmed that we all called the mountain Sawtooth when we were growing up.

Can a mine and a national monument coexist? The importance of mining was acknowledged by one of the FIF board members over coffee one morning. The expansion of our electrical grid to accommodate the AI boom, and the growth of EVs support the need for more rare earth minerals as well as copper. At the same time, the largest herd of big horn sheep in Arizona is located at Silver Bell Mine. A collaboration between Arizona Game and Fish and Silver Bell Mine is working to sustain and further expand the large herd. At the same time, Friends of Ironwood Forest has worked closely with Bureau of Land Management on several initiatives, including the removal of old, unused barbed wire fencing to assist in wildlife migration. SBHS has also been working with BLM to preserve the Old Silver Bell Cemetery, which is located within Ironwood Forest.

When FIF approached SBHS to exhibit at their 25th anniversary event, we of course answered in the affirmative. The Marana Glideport served as the host location and included numerous exhibitors and interesting speakers. Estimates ran as high as 300 in attendance. Interest in history is a common denominator withing many circles, including FiF members and guests. We had a steady stream of visitors throughout the day. Larry Young and Scotty Hunter set up the exhibit, which was managed during the event by Mary Aguirre and Jim Hunter.

Chevy Car Club-March 2025

When we visited the Southern Arizona Transportation Museum to expand our COI network, we met Debbie Rosenberg, who serves as Collection Manager-Registrar. Debbie shared a book, "Railroads of Arizona, Vol. 1," by David Merrick. The book is no longer in print, but I was able to purchase

one of the few that Debbie had on hand. The book maintains a comprehensive chapter on Old Silver Bell and the Arizona Southern Railroad.

It also turns out that Debbie and her husband share my common interest in classic cars. She serves as president of the Chevy Car Club in Tucson. The Club holds a monthly rally to a place of interest, driving their Malibu's, Impalas, Vettes, and Pontiacs (the club expanded to include all GM products). They chose Silver Bell as the March, 2025 destination and asked SBHS if we could facilitate their visit as well as conduct a presentation on the history of the Silver Bell Mining District (SBMD).

Starting with photo ops at our town monument in front of the mine office, then a poker board game, we went to the old ball field, where our fourteen historic 14x23 inch posters were lined along the old tennis court wall. Scotty Hunter attended and Jim Hunter gave the presentation. We would especially like to thank Brad Stonehouse, mine manager, and Sarah Lopez, HR manager, from ASARCO for assistance with the event.



Red Rock Village Annual Meeting-March 2025

March was a busy month, with the final event as the Red Rock Community Annual Meeting Event, held inside the Red Rock school gym. There was delicious Mexican food, music, talks by officials, and games. Janette Hunter, Carol Hunter, and Mary Aguirre managed the exhibit. There were approximately 200 in attendance. Our table was located adjacent to Pinal County Supervisor, Jeff McClure, who we had met with recently in Florence to discuss our new museum. Silver Bell-Red Rock Regional Museum will be in Jeff's district, (Red Rock). The other exhibitor in our row was Global Water Resources, the water company serving Red Rock. This was timely, since we lack water at the old school and planned to rely on bottled water and port-o-pots temporarily. Larry Young graciously delivered a water holding tank and pump to the old school for use by the museum. This will save the \$1,500 annual cost for port-o-pots and will provide for indoor use of the toilet for museum staff and patrons.

Larry also fabricated a concrete bench, with a ceramic placard imbedded on the seating area, which states "Silver Bell Historical Society, Founded in 2018." These additions add a lot. In the aggregate, these touches combine to provide a comfortable and aesthetically pleasing place to visit. Thank you, Larry, for always being there.



We are somewhat new at exhibiting, and some of the recent efforts were trial and error, to determine which methods and exhibits worked and the ones we would like to repeat in the future, as well as which events we would wish to attend. Our exhibit made a distinct impression, with fourteen large historic posters of SBMD and our large banner. The presence was inviting and informative. If only the museum was open. Assuming SBHS will continue to exhibit in the future, we will further refine our exhibit to include:

- A professional booth.
- Uniform button-down shirts (possibly denim) or polo shirts with the SBHS logo prominently displayed.
- Better giveaways and props, possibly including our old west wagon or an antique vehicle or mining item.

- A professional brochure. Most visitors to the exhibit asked about the history of SBMD as well as a map detailing the locations of Silver Bell, Pelton, Sasco, etc. A brochure with a map and historical information is being developed. The first draft is provided in the next section of this newsletter and will need to be consolidated based on available space. Suggestions are welcome.

It is said that the most important things in real estate are location, location, location. For the growth of Silver Bell Historical Society and establishment of the Silver Bell-Red Rock Regional Museum, the three most important things are Centers of Influences - COI's, COI's, COI's.

What's in a Brochure?

The brochure will be utilized as a museum handout and can also be distributed to exhibit visitors and for general use. It will need to be concise, yet comprehensive, and include a map. Our first attempt is highlighted in yellow below, and will be condensed/refined with historic photos included, to provide a highly professional presentation. Again, comments are welcome.

Silver Bell-Red Rock Regional Museum

Sponsored by: Silver Bell Historical Society

Silver Bell Historical Society was established and incorporated in 2018 as a 501 (c) (3) non-profit organization, formed to preserve the rich history of the Silver Bell Mining District.

Mining activity began at SBMD hundreds of years ago by the Hohokam Native Americans. Turquoise, silver, and copper were extracted and used extensively for decoration, ceremonial purposes and extensive trade along established routes. The first documented mining claims occurred in 1865. Between 1865 and 1930, more than 2,100 claims were filed in the Silver Bell Mining District. Beginning with the "Old Boot" mine, activity ranged from individual claims to larger investment interests, resulting in the establishment of mining camps. The largest of these was Pelton (circa 1880) which had a population of 276 and included a smelter. Well known Tucson business entrepreneurs Albert Steinfeld and his uncle Louis Zeckendorf acquired mining interests through their Silver Bell Company also known as Mammoth Copper Company. Litigation among the two ensued over monetary rights and operations, which lasted more than ten years. By 1904 SBMD was mined in earnest by the Imperial Copper Co., whose interest included 61 claims.

The town of Old Silver Bell grew to 1,200. The establishment of a large smelter at nearby Sasco, also operated by Imperial, added an additional 625 in population. Prior to that, mining was challenging due to lack of water and high transportation costs involving ore shipments hauled by mule-drawn wagons to

the main line of the Southern Pacific Railroad at Red Rock. From there it was transported to El Paso or the Copper Queen smelter at Douglas.

Freighting was provided by the Aguirre family, which also maintained ranching interests near Red Rock (all the way to Cortaro Road) with a herd estimated between 8,000 and 10,000. The high alkaline water at Silver Bell meant that potable water was brought in by wagon from Red Rock and sold in five-gallon containers.

Construction of the Arizona Southern Railroad (ASRR) began in 1902 with hundreds of workers completing the rail bed, trestles, and rail construction in less than a year. Eleven million pounds of copper were shipped to the Sasco Smelter in 1909. Supplies were returned to Silver Bell via ASRR for the mercantile store, restaurant, dairy, hotel, barber, laundry, post office, school with 75 students and of course saloons. Lemp Beer and other distributors shipped their products via refrigerated rail car to Silver Bell and other destinations from as far away as St. Louis. ASRR also provided passenger service, which was augmented by specially equipped buses to ride the rails. In addition, Silver Bell maintained a Wells Fargo stage stop for both passenger and mail service. ASRR closed in 1930 with the advent of the Great Depression.

After WWII, economic expansion resulted in renewed interest in copper mining in Silver Bell. ASARCO reopened mining with the construction of two large open pits and in 1952 constructed a new town of Silver Bell, approximately six miles east of Old Silver Bell. New Silver Bell maintained a grocery store, post office, barber, community pool, ball field, rec center, tennis court, etc. The town remained vibrant until 1984, when the homes were moved out. The mine continues to operate.

During its heyday, Old Silver Bell was nicknamed, "The Hellhole of Arizona," with no shortage of notable characters, rivaling the Earps and Clantons of Tombstone. Silver Bell was considered the toughest town in Pima County and was rife with murders and lawlessness in the early years, a time when shacks, lean-tos and tents permeated the area. The town doctor, Mead Clyne, reportedly had a glass jar over half-full of lead bullets he had removed from patients. Deputy Sam McEven is credited with taming the town. He even went so far as using an ore car as a shield to catch a fugitive, Ramon Castro, in an abandoned mine tunnel.

There are many stories regarding the origins of the name Silver Bell. It may have derived from a desert flower, or originated from Belle Carruthers, who rode through the area on a silver horse, or a dancehall girl named Belle whose hair was prematurely gray. Silver Bell Mining and Smelting, Co., LTD, an English mining company that operated in the district in the 1890's may have contributed to the name.

In 1911, a bankrupt Development Company of America and Imperial Copper Co. leased its assets to ASARCO. By 1917 ASARCO had acquired most of the claims at Silver Bell, along with the Sasco Smelter and town. By 1936 SBMD had produced nearly 86.8 million pounds of copper, along with marginal quantities of lead, silver and gold, for a value of more than \$15.5 million.

E. Glen Baker, a citizen of Silver Bell, owned one of the more prominent saloons, with a billiard parlor and general merchandise store. Mr. Baker grew up in New York and later joined his uncle in Colorado to manage mercantile and hotel interests. He was known for his skills in organization and entertainment, coordinating a visit to Silver Bell by a traveling circus and holding a New Years Eve party in an underground room of a mine shaft, complete with orchestra and champagne, which were lowered via elevator. Mr. Baker was allowed to reside in the mine bunkhouse during his later years and passed in 1963.

Charles O. Brown, a leading citizen of Tucson, with business interests as far as Yuma, made frequent prospecting tours in 1873 and discovered many of the abandoned mines from nearly a decade earlier. Subsequently, Mr. Brown, together with Tully Ochoa & Company and E.M. Pearce, put together a force of men to work on the "Old Boot" mine and in 1874 opened the "Young America Mine." Ore was shipped from these mines by mule to Yuma, where it was then transported to San Francisco. A smelter was later constructed to save costs. William O. Staunton, organized the Imperial Copper Co., together with E. B. Gage, along with the Development Co. of America (DCA). DCA also managed the Tombstone operation, with Mr. Staunton traveling between both mines. He converted a Cadillac automobile to a rail car to traverse the 21-mile distance between Red Rock and Silver Bell to oversee operations.

The history of the Silver Bell Mining District is worth preserving. Please enjoy the Museum!

Museum Themes and Displays

1. Miner's Tent-Typical old west miner's tent with amenities that would be used during the early claim period 1865-1873)
2. Pelton and Early Mining Camp Period-Buckboard and small supply wagon 1873-1902
3. Diorama-Depicting Old Silver Bell, Sasco, and Red Rock (depot) with an operating replica of the Arizona Southern Railroad 1902-1930.
4. New Silver Bell-Establishments of two open pits (Oxide and El Tiro) and a vibrant community of 800. Award of a national commemorative postage stamp in 1965. Haul truck and other equipment are outdoor displays 1952-1984.
5. Continuous loop video-Depicting the entire history of the Silver Bell Mining District from the Hohokam period through present, including historic photos.
6. Aguirre Ranching and Freighting-A history of this prominent family depicting more than 150 years of cattle ranching and freighting in or near Red Rock.

SILVER BELL FAMILY TRIBUTE - BUSTAMANTE

Each Silver Bell Historical Society newsletter profiles a family who we grew up with and shared the unique experiences of living in a close-knit homogenous community. The post baby-boom era of the 50's and 60's came with the requisite large family. In that era, you could say that family trees had many branches. Abe and Socorro Bustamante did their part with seven children (Mary "Peggy", John, Mark, Martha, Chris, Lalo, Julie).



While growing up in Silver Bell was unique, it represented an excellent environment to raise children and prepare them to be accomplished in their career and in society. Youth were also prepared to complete at a high level, evidenced by state championships in all four major sports in 1969 by Marana High School, where Silver Bell students contributed mightily, including the Bustamante family. The rare achievement resulted in the school

administrators being solicited for an interview with Sports Illustrated magazine. Unfortunately, the article never went to print. Regardless, success was in the Silver Bell DNA and the Bustamantes are a great example of a close-knit family, who achieved a lot.



Abe and Socorro traveled from Bayard, New Mexico, just outside of Silver City, to Silver Bell, Arizona in 1956. Abe's experience in vanadium mining prepared him for ASARCO, where he was an oiler, taking care of the heavy equipment and machinery, primarily in the mill area. Abe was outgoing and gregarious and was well liked by everyone who knew him. While many men need to be coerced to get on the dance floor, Abe typically had a line of ladies waiting, and he loved it. Abe and Socorro were heavily involved in their children's activities, especially sports. Schedules were juggled, which meant that attending athletic events,

especially away games, often resulted in little sleep, due to shift work.

Mary Margaret, who we know as Peggy, was the oldest and was involved in numerous school activities. She married Tony Figueroa from Marana, where they settled to raise their children. Peggy worked in the Marana High School nursery, providing care for young children of teachers and unwed students, making a significant impact in their lives.



John starred in both football and baseball, playing on both state championship teams. As a pitcher, John still holds the state record for strikeouts in a championship games, fifty-six years later. Warming up John before a game usually resulted in a black and blue (bruised)

hand, despite using a padded catcher's mitt. His curve ball was directed at the batter's head, and then made a dive into the strike zone. The confused hitter would usually duck. The brave ones who hung in for the breaking ball would either swing late or wildly at the diving ball. *Picture of John, Abe and Mark.*

John obtained his associates degree in welding and joined ASARCO in Silver Bell, where he started in the truck shop and was then a boilermaker for thirteen years. After the historic layoffs, John worked for five years at a machine ship in Marana, hoping to rejoin ASARCO in Silver Bell. John got back into mining, working for 28 years at Cypress, which merged into Phelps Dodge and then became Freeport-McMoran.



Mark excelled in football and baseball, coming in to save a game as an underclassman for John. He worked as a lead engineer for decades to maintain the renowned Canyon Ranch Resort property.

Picture of Mark looking cool with a classic GTO.

Martha was a popular and beautiful girl, who was active at Marana High school, and was on the cheer squad. She was only twenty years of age and working in banking to further her career. Martha was a passenger in a

vehicle accident, which resulted in her untimely passing. Martha had so much ahead of her and was mourned by everyone in Silver Bell and Marana.

Chris attended Harvard University and later completed his masters and PhD in Arizona. He was president of Rio Salado College in Tempe, AZ, and was one of a few select educators to attend a special White House dinner during the Obama Administration. He was also one of twenty accomplished people to meet with Bill Gates at a function in Phoenix.

Lalo graduated with a BS in Landscape Design and later joined Toby Bourguet, a Marana High School Hall of Fame recipient, in his landscape business. He currently manages landscaping and maintenance for all Quik Trip stores in the Tucson area.

Julie was the youngest and became a sought-after legal secretary for one of Tucson's largest law firms, often traveling to Colorado with husband Roger.

John was quick to brag about his five grandchildren, a common malady we all suffer as grandparents. Shad is with Raytheon, Shane is a construction manager with Borderline, Kresha resides in Temecula, Ca., and works as a service manager, Kiley is a pharmacy tech with Sam's Club and Kariana was a manager with Aeropostale, and is now enjoying her time as a homemaker.



What is the formula for stellar families, who go on to contribute to society and make our nation strong? Was it the parenting, teaching, or small-town environment in Silver Bell, which fostered values? Maybe it was a combination of all these things. One thing is certain, ASARCO did something right when they conceived a small town, forty-five miles in the middle of the Sonoran-desert, who learned to work together and build something special. The Bustamante family represents an integral part of the fabric that made it all work. Picture of the corner lot where the Bustamante Family lived.

*Pima County
Adopt-a-
Roadway
Program*

**Spring 2025
Cleanup on
Avra Valley Road**

Thursday, May 1, 2025

Project
Leader: Larry
Young



Larry's Assistant #1- Scotty Hunter



Larry's Assistant #2- Jim Hunter



The Silver Bell Historical Society joined the Pima County Adopt A Highway program more than six years ago with the ongoing commitment that we complete a minimum of two road cleanups each year. This means that we have completed at least twelve and that the newly paved road which we traveled during our formative years is better than ever.

The latest road cleanup was held on May 1, 2025 and comprised a three-man crew of Larry Young, Scotty Hunter and Jim Hunter. We will be scheduling the next cleanup for the fall and welcome additional participation and perhaps a luncheon afterwards. The little held secret is that we are always looking for an excuse to go to Silver Bell, and perhaps take some photos with our town monument or gain access to the old ballfield.

Feel free to contact Larry Young on Facebook to sign up or Jim Hunter at Catfis53@gmail.com, 520.241.7750.

**Total 10
Scholarships
Total \$10,000**

**Scholarship
Recipient – 2020**

ELLIE JACKSON
(Arizona State University)

**Scholarship
Recipients – 2021**

PRESTON ANWAY
(Cochise College/
University of Arizona)

MAYA GARCIA
(Pima Community
College, AZ)

**JOSHUA C.
HENDRICKSON**
(Hastings College, NE)

**Scholarship
Recipients – 2022**

MASON E. ANWAY
(Cochise College/
University of Arizona)

**JOSHUA C.
HENDRICKSON**
(Hastings College, NE)

**Scholarship
Recipients – 2023**

**DANIEL A.
HENDRICKSON**
(Central Arizona
College, AZ)

**TAMMY A.
HENDRICKSON**
(William Woods, Fulton
MO on line)

**Scholarship
Recipients – 2024**

AURORA MADERO
(Arizona State University)

AURORA TRUHAN
(Pima Community College, AZ)

SBHS SCHOLARSHIP NEWS

Bob Hunter managed the SBHS scholarship fund from inception. This was truly a labor of love on his part and included solicitation of funds, creating the application form, screening prospects, and recommending scholarship recipients to the board. The main criteria is recipients have to be directly related to Silver Bell miners. Bob's saying, *"Don't just plan for your career, plan for life,"* was adopted as our scholarship motto.

Bob overcame numerous challenges to obtain Masters degrees in biology and psychology on his way to earn his medical degree, and practice in Tucson for decades. He was a true believer in the value of education. While Bob's passing on January 1, 2025 was perceived to be a blow to our scholarship endeavors, a nice donation for \$2,500 arrived from Carol Hunter's brother and sister-in-law, Mark Conley and Rohini DeSilva, to complete our annual fundraising goal to grant at least two \$1,000 scholarships for 2025.

We have received a number of scholarship applications and donations for 2025 with an application deadline of July 31st. Our scholarship objective recently changed to include a focus on trade schools as trade skills are now in high demand in the U.S.

One of the primary goals of the Silver Bell Historical Society is to raise money amongst our community to provide annual scholarships of \$1000 each. Since our inception of 2019, we have proudly awarded a total of \$10,000 for individual \$1000 scholarships to the scholars listed in the sidebar.

Donations to the SBHS Scholarship fund are tax deductible. Proceeds From our online sales also go toward our scholarship fund. Please consider sharing this opportunity with your grandchildren and your own children. The scholarship can be used for trade schools and /or an adult returning to school. Thanks to the generosity of scholarship donors, we now have \$5,000 in the scholarship fund. We are proud to report that the SBHS has raised \$15,000 from our inception in 2019.

The Dr. Robert Madison Hunter, Jr. scholarship continues to be an integral part of the Silver Bell Historical Society mission. We are also proud to support a recent trend in adults returning to further their education. Information and applications can be downloaded from our website:

www.silverbellaz.com

SBHS SCHOLARSHIP APPLICANT UPDATES

Aurora Truhan – Scholarship 2024 - 2025



Aurora Truhan is our scholarship winner for 2024-25. She is the granddaughter of Diane Stephens (Cleaver). Aurora is striving to be self-sufficient but also wanting to further her talents in music along with a goal in the study of Radiology. She has a very close relationship with her grandmother and also has some influences from other family that have worked in Radiology. Diane, her grandmother, was in Mammography. After completing her prerequisites from Pima Community College, she is leaning toward MRI. She has been given insight into this field from family members and realizes there is a lot of growth. Helping her grandmother through some health challenges, she has become interested in assisting others to navigate challenges also.

In high school she was a member of the National Honor Society for two years. She also received high scores in testing for Technical skills in Sports Medicine. From fifth grade thru high school she participated in an orchestra program. She also was selected for some musical festivals and was ranked in the top 25% of her class. She has been working at musical store, meanwhile learning violin and guitar. She also studied American SignLanguage. In the fall 2025, she will transfer her studies to the University of Arizona. She will focus on her classes for Radiology and will continue to work at the music store. She will be looking for internships that will build on her knowledge. She was grateful for the SBHS 2024 scholarship. It helped her to keep her debt to a minimum. Good luck Aurora!

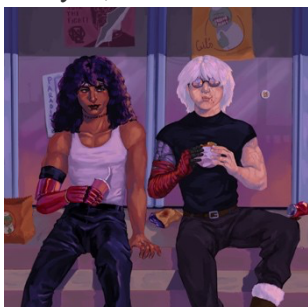
Aurora Madero – Scholarship 2024 - 2025



Aurora Madero was one of the scholarship recipients for 2024-2025. Aurora's grandmother is Kerry Eckrote, from the infamous Eckrote family). We were impressed with her application and she had a pretty good vision on her goals and interests. She was entering her sophomore year at Arizona State University when she applied. Her program of study is Animation. Her love, art is her passion. She stated that her goal was to chase that imagination wherever it would take her. She has been leaning into the Video game industry and to make something in that field that will leave an impact. She shared that it is a very competitive

field. As a recent gamer, her desire has grown and she will continue to strive for that goal. In her application, she shared with us some of the struggles she overcame in high school with undiagnosed ADHD. She was determined to go to college and she had a 4.0 in her first year of college, impressive!

Her family instilled in her a strong work ethic and she has been very appreciative of the scholarship. She said she used the money for her Spring semester and she just finished a four-month internship with a company called READEEZY. It piqued my interest and she shared about her experience. Readeezy is a nationwide non-profit digital library for adolescent teen, and young adult struggling readers. The books are unique with illustrations on every page. They are interactive, age respectful stories that help to motivate, increase comprehension and are fun to read. This opportunity was a good fit for Aurora as it relates to her passion for art and she could relate to challenges that readers might have from her personal experience. She is ready to search out a new internship – thank you, Aurora.



Her art piece is called "Lazy Days"

NOTE: Aurora Madero has submitted an application for a SBHS 2025-2026 Scholarship.

Silver Bell Memorial Tributes

In Memorandum

Juanita Ann Shelton

Maria Teresa Pargas

Alva Yarter Pflieger

Thomas J. Sutton

**Nicholas John Thomas
Sutton**

Tina Galnares Foster

**Carlos "Carlitos" Castro
III**

Nancy Henson (Williams)

Rebecca Gay Schrank

Juanita Ann Shelton, December 25, 1955 - January 21, 2025



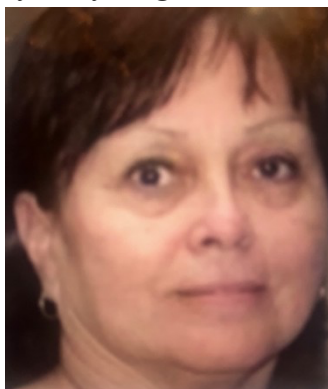
Juanita Ann Shelton, 69 passed peacefully at her home surrounded by family. She is survived by her daughter, Michelle Allen (Shelton), son in law David Allen, son John Shelton, Jr., her grandchildren, Shelbi and Dustin.

Juanita was a devoted Mom, grandmother. She had a passion for caring for her children and did everything she could to give them the best possible life. She enjoyed country music, reading, sewing, cooking, and playing boardgames. Most importantly she enjoyed spending time with her grandchildren. Juanita will be remembered for her kind heart, humor, stubbornness, determination Faith in God and the love she had for her family and

friends. Jim Hunter added: *"I remember her as Juanita Osborn. She attended our 2019 reunion. I understand family pooled their money to cover her travel cost. It was that important for her. Juanita was also kind and she attended Valley Baptist with us in high school."*

Maria Teresa Pargas -October 15, 1954 - April 5, 2025

Maria (Terry) passed away on April 5, 2025, surrounded by family. She was 70 years young. She is survived by son, Rick, daughter Lisa and six grandchildren. She also has two sisters, Dalia and Delia. Maria was preceded in death by the love of her life, Ricardo. Terry grew up in Silver Bell and attended Marana High School. Married in 1971, she worked for thirty years with the USDA Forest Service and supported Wildland Firefighters. Terry was a devoted wife and Mother/grandmother to her children and grandchildren. She and her husband loved the White Mountains. Terry is the heart of her family. She is leaving a legacy of love, kindness and strength that will strengthen her loved ones and future generations.



Alva Yarter Pflieger -February 25, 1961 - January 14, 2025

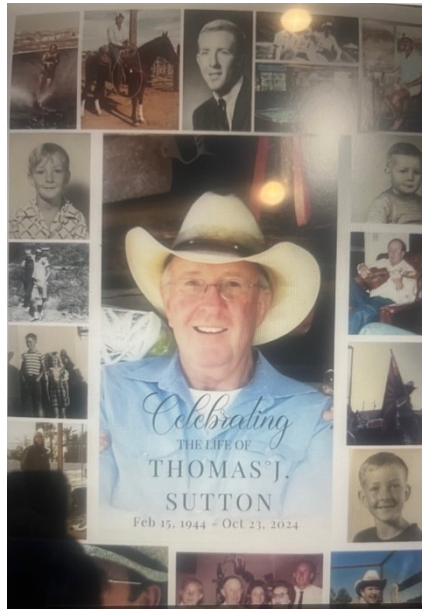


Alva was born February 25, 1961 and grew up in Silver Bell. She graduated from Marana High School. Alva displayed a kind demeanor and was liked by everyone. Her contagious smile and laughter permeated her surroundings.

Alva's interests included being an artist with her well-known paintings of horses enjoyed by family and friends. Her artistry extended into crafting pottery. Alva enjoyed writing and often put her thoughts on paper in a witty and poignant manner. She loved music, played guitar, enjoyed dancing and singing karaoke too. Alva was known by her love of animals, especially horses, which she often rode bareback. Nothing stood in her way of rescuing animals in distress. This carried into her love of nature. Alva's full life translated into her love of family. Her sister, Alexandria fondly remembered that Alva had a memory like an elephant, with an acute knowledge of details. Alva moved to Palmdale, CA where she raised her daughter, Alba, and son, Joseph. She was also a generous grandmother to her 3 grandchildren. Her brother passed away several years ago but is survived by her two sisters. She lived life to the fullest and exemplifies the Spirit of Silver Bell.

Silver Bell Memorial Tributes, continued

Thomas "Tom" J. Sutton- February 15, 1944 - October 2024



Tom or Tall Boy and brother to Mike lived in Silver Bell. He loved sports and did well on his high school basketball team. Instead of getting a job at the Silver Bell Mine, he was recruited and played for the University of Arizona from 1963-67. He graduated with a Bachelor Degree in Business Administration and then embarked on a thirty-year career in insurance with the Arizona Trust Company and Mueller Associates.

He then enjoyed his dream job of managing his Father-in-laws cattle ranch in Luna, New Mexico. Tom was a cowboy at heart who loved sports, team roped at small rodeos, played tennis, handball and fast pitched softball. He loved watching horse racing, played a mean game of pool and even played golf.

Tom thrived around his friends. His friendships were vast and enduring as he was loyal and devoted. When he retired, he loved to hang out with his grandchildren, play pool at Shooters, watch old western movies and listen to classic country and bluegrass gospel.

He is survived by his brother, Mike, daughter, Christy and son, Paul and three grandchildren. A memorial was held for Tom at Shooters. Some remembrances:

Lynette Avery: Great photos! Love the bottom one of your family! Tom sold me my first new car insurance policy!!

Cathy Harris: Tommy was a very nice guy. And also a very good dancer!

Nicholas John Thomas Sutton, February 8, 1990 - April 6, 2025



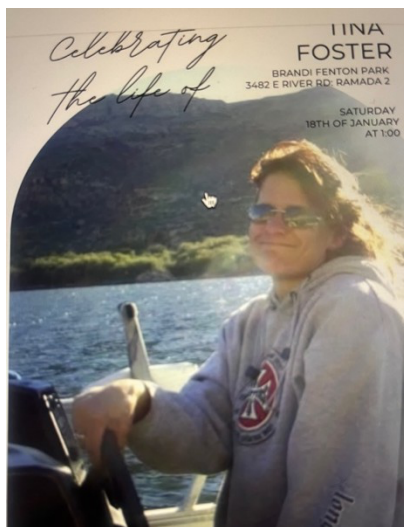
Mike Sutton's grandson, Nicholas, passed away suddenly on the morning of April 6, 2025. Survived by his mother, Heather Sutton, father, William Manning, brothers, Eric Sutton, John V Pena and Joseph Pena, Grandfather, Jack M. Sutton and many Aunts and Uncles.

Nicholas loved adventure and meeting new people. He enjoyed music, festivals, nature, and the ocean. He had a strong faith in God. He loved his brothers and his work in the construction industry.

Too young to have left this earth. He loved his family dearly. May he rest in God's loving arms.

Tina Galnares Foster, June 6, 1970 – January 5, 2025

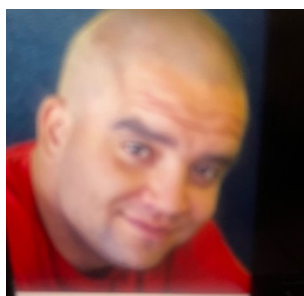
Tina was young teenager when she lived in Silver Bell. She had three siblings. The family moved away when the mine closed the town in 1984. She lived in Arkansas but eventually moved back to Marana/Tucson.



Tina has three daughters, Tasha Marine, Tiffany Montano and Tawny McNeese, a son, Brennan and ten grandkids. she is also survived by her younger sister, Kristina Morris.

Tina took care of two of her grandchildren. Despite some health concerns, she loved spending time with them. All holidays were cherished with Christmas and Halloween her particular favorites. She baked treats and always brought desserts to the family get togethers. Family was very important. Tina passed too young. Her family treasures all their memories of her.

Carlos “Carlitos” Castro III, July 25, 1982 – January 1, 2025

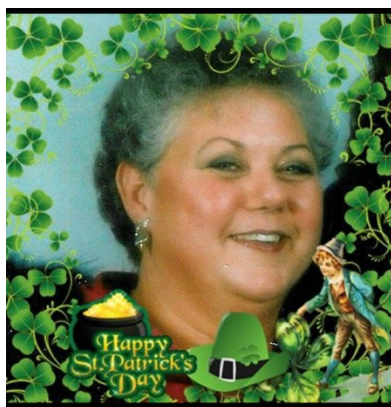


Carlitos passed away on January 1, 2025. He was a kind and loving man. Born in Tucson in 1982, he lived a troubled life. Although he struggled with his demons but he never lost his gentle soul. In spite of these struggles, he helped to create three beautiful children, Nadia (Landon), Izayah, and Christian Castro, all who dearly loved their father.

In the last few years, he had cleaned up his life, conquered the demons and was on his way to a happier life. He is missed dearly by his children, his Mother, Belinda, several Aunts, Uncles, Nephews and Nieces. Carlitos is at peace. He was loved dearly by his family.

Nancy Hensen (Williams) - May 23, 1944 - March 24, 2025

Nancy grew up in Silver Bell and graduated from Marana in 1962. She had several brothers and sisters. She married her first husband, Bobby Richardson, in 1962 and had two sons, Benny and Keith. Bobby was in the service. She and Bobby separated but raised the children together. Keith recently passed away in December 2021. Nancy married Larry Hensen in 1968. They were married for almost fifty years when Larry passed in 2017.



Nancy had a very strong faith and shared many prayers to Jesus on her facebook page. She was very humble and expressed her feelings in beautiful writings. She wrote a couple of poems about her memories of Silver Bell. She was respected by all who came to know her. Nancy loved her grandchildren and great grandchildren. She took care of them. She had a heart of gold and

was a friend to all who crossed her path. Unfortunately, her body weakened from illness but she was ready with open arms to join Jesus.

Rebecca Gay Schrank – April 23, 1944 – June 3, 2025



In Loving Memory, Rebecca Gay Schrank, April 23, 1944 – June 3, 2025. Rebecca Gay Schrank, age 81, passed away on June 3, 2025. It was her desire to die in peace at her home. She was preceded in death by her husband of nearly 40 years, Myrl Dan Schrank, with whom she built a life with.

Born on April 23, 1944, Rebecca was the oldest of four children and the only girl. She was a loving sister to her brothers John, Keith, and Mel—survived today by Keith and John. Rebecca carried a strong sense of responsibility and care for others from an early age, qualities that remained constant throughout her life.

She was the proud mother of five children: Brian (Barbara), Barry, Dan (Tyla), Bob (Kristi), and Tricia. Her influence extends through 15 grandchildren and a growing number of great-grandchildren.

Rebecca had an infectious laugh and a natural ability to connect with people. She always looked for the good in others and found joy in the simple things—family gatherings, playing games around the kitchen table, and catching up with loved ones. A long-time member of Sun and Shield Baptist Church, Rebecca's faith was quiet but unwavering. She believed in treating others with kindness and the way you would want to be treated. Her home was a place of comfort, conversation, and welcome. A space where anyone was welcomed. Whether through her warm smile or thoughtful words, Rebecca made people feel at ease.

“For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.”— John 3:16

Though her life on earth has ended, Rebecca's legacy lives on in the lives she touched, her unwavering love for her family and her love for Jesus as she lives with Him in eternity. She will be deeply missed and forever remembered.

A visitation will be held on Saturday, June 14, 2025 at Sun and Shield Baptist Church, 8811 W Avra Valley Rd, Marana, AZ 85653 from 8:30 am until 9:00 am, followed by a funeral service at 9:00 am. Rebecca will be laid to rest at Marana Mortuary & Cemetery, 12146 W Barnett Rd, Marana