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Salute to Volunteers – Special Edition

Spring 2026

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Volume 17, Issue 2

Meet Daniel Esquivel Country Fair White Elephant General Manager

Written by Guy Atchley

In the quiet, close-knit community of Green Valley, where neighbors know each other by name and generosity travels quickly, a new chapter is beginning at one of its most beloved institutions—the Country Fair White Elephant thrift store. At the center of it all stands Daniel Esquivel, a lifelong local whose journey has come full circle.

Daniel's story begins just down the road in Sahuarita, where he was born and raised. Though his birth certificate may carry the name of his hometown, he often jokes that his first breath was taken at Tucson Medical Center—a small detail that reflects how deeply rooted he is in Southern Arizona. A proud graduate of the University of Arizona, Daniel carries the spirit of a Wildcat into everything he does.

His career has been shaped by a strong foundation in business development, marketing, and relationship-building. For years, he worked with developers on projects like Rancho Sahuarita, helping bring communities to life. More recently, he served as a business development and marketing director for a Tucson-based construction company, honing his ability to connect with clients and grow organizations from the ground up. But long before he became general manager, Daniel was something else: a customer. For over 15 years, he wandered the aisles of the White Elephant, drawn in by the thrill of discovery—the chance to find a hidden treasure

among everyday items. That excitement never faded. So when the opportunity arose to lead the very place he loved, he didn't hesitate. "It's a dream job," he says simply.

What excites Daniel most isn't just the store itself—it's the people. The White Elephant runs on the dedication of volunteers, many in their 70s and 80s, who show up day after day not for a paycheck, but for purpose. To Daniel, they are the heart of everything. "They're like family," he explains. "They build relationships, they laugh together, they help customers—and without them, we wouldn't exist." That sense of community extends far beyond the store's walls. Each year, the White Elephant donates millions to local causes—supporting first responders, students, and nonprofits across our region. Last year alone, those contributions reached \$1.7 million. Daniel's vision? Push that number even higher. "I want to see \$2 million... \$3 million," he says. "Because there are so many organizations that need help."

His leadership style is simple but powerful: listen first. Whether it's volunteers, staff, or customers, Daniel believes every voice matters. By fostering communication and respect, he aims to strengthen what already works rather than overhaul it. In his first 90 days, his



Daniel Esquivel,
CFWE General Manager

to make shopping more accessible. Behind the scenes, he's focused on improving organization so that the countless donated items waiting in storage can finally make their way to the sales floor. Because that's the challenge: there's no shortage of generosity—only a shortage of hands to keep it moving.

Still, Daniel remains optimistic. Every morning, he walks through the store, greeting volunteers, learning names, and offering a simple but meaningful message: thank you. For him, appreciation is the strongest motivator. Everything about the White Elephant, he says, is part of a "full circle." Donations come in, items go out, and the proceeds return to the community—helping others thrive. And if he could leave the people of Green Valley with one message, it would be this: Give what you can. Not just the things tucked away in closets or garages—but your time, your energy, your willingness to help. Because in a place like Green Valley, where generosity defines the community, even the smallest contribution can become part of something much bigger.

priorities are clear—expand the volunteer base, reconnect with the community, and spread the word about what the White Elephant truly represents. He's already thinking about partnerships with local churches and even students from his alma mater, bringing in a new generation to learn the value of service.

At the same time, he's looking toward the future. The store, currently cash-only, may soon accept debit cards—small modernization steps



Sweet Sienna crossed the Rainbow Bridge just as this publication was going to print. She was our constant shadow, always by our side, keeping us on our toes with her boundless love. She will forever hold a special place in our hearts.

-Chet & DeAnna

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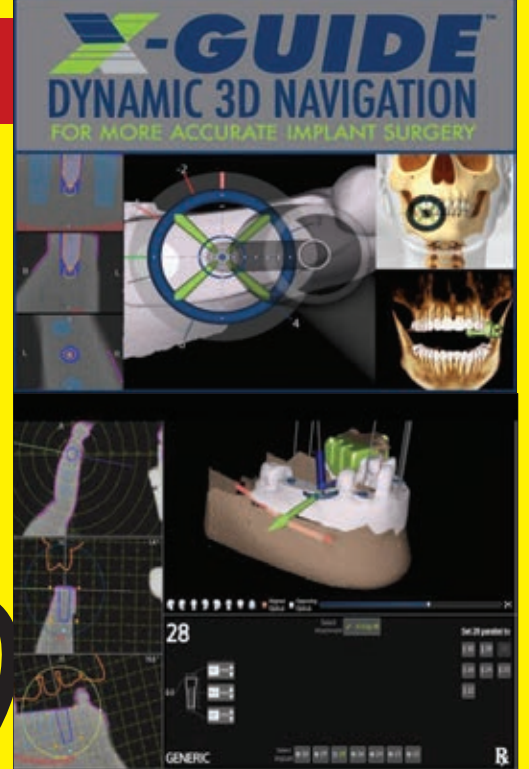
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Green Valley Summer: Art in Bloom

Article by Nan Clarke

With March temperatures soaring near 100 degrees or more, it seemed as if our valley community leapt from winter directly to summer. Desert flora typically reach the blooming peak in mid-April or even May, but mid-March was intimating that summer temperatures were quickly approaching and bloom peaks might be brief. Ah, the doldrums of summer—when snow birds have flown and businesses are slowing down. Arts & crafts shows are on the decline as the valley heats up. Hours in many venues are reduced, and restaurants are sometimes shuttered or operate only on weekends.

The artisan community, however, is in full bloom here. Artists of all types are entering a peak creative period. Painters, textile and gourd artists, and those who create an astounding array of stunning jewelry of all types are at work in their studios. Bead artists and weavers, photographers and potters, quill artists, woodworkers, and cardmakers— all are passionately creating amazing treasures that will eventually find their way into the hands of an

appreciative enthusiast.

Their garden of incredible riches is there for the taking year round at the GVR Artisans' Shop at GVR's West Center. The shop, established more than four decades ago, serves as an outlet for more than sixty local artists to display and market their creations, and the enlarged premises have offered a broad variety of exquisitely talented artists a venue to show their work. Handpainted rocks and slabs of slate, hand-knitted and crocheted baby items, handcrafted jewelry and tote bags, books marks, key fobs, and textile art adorn pristine glass shelves and a repurposed church pew. Glass display cases replete with hand-thrown pottery, paper mache, and handmade jewelry entice even the most reluctant shopper.

Since its expansion in October 2025 to nearly double its original size, the space has undergone an amazing transformation that includes a designated Artisans' Gallery featuring breathtaking works of art. Fused and stained glass items dance in sunlight and handwoven



textiles grace multiple displays. Silver, copper, and woven bead jewelry allure the discerning eye. Exquisite gourd art and pine needle sculptures command attention.

Through April, the shop is open Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. and 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. on Saturdays. Summer hours beginning in May are Wednesday through Saturday 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Planning ahead to visit on the first Saturday of the month yields added

delights. A featured Artisan of the Month is in the shop and available to chat with customers and discuss the creative process. Complimentary home baked goodies are offered as customers meander through this amazing garden of vibrant and often whimsical creations. The heat of summer may be here, but our local artisan community continues to bloom and grow.

Photos by Barbara Manis



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Volunteer Opportunities Available

Since 1964, store sales have generated over **\$38 Million** which has been granted to organizations in Green Valley, Sahuarita and surrounding communities



The 2020 Bighorn Fire burned for more than a month before it was put out.

The Importance of Preparing For – and Preventing – Wildfires

Written by Justyn Dillingham, Pima County Communications Coordinator

While many people associate wildfires with the hottest days of summer, wildfires are now a year-round concern in Pima County. As a result of extreme heat, long-term drought, and the prevalence of invasive vegetation such as buffelgrass, wildfires can happen in any season in Arizona. That's why it's so important to understand what you can do to help protect yourself and your community from the impact of wildfires.

Outdoor safety is equally important. Never leave a burn of any kind unattended. Avoid mowing your lawn when it's windy or excessively dry, and make sure any equipment you're using that might generate sparks has a spark arrestor. Never park or drive on dry grass, and never let your tow chains drag on the ground. If you're camping, make sure all campfires are completely extinguished, before leaving the site unattended.

It's also valuable to understand the concept of defensible space, which means creating a buffer zone around your building to slow the spread of

wildfires. Remove any clutter from your yard that could fuel a fire, keep flammable materials safely stored away from the house, and cover vents with metal mesh to prevent embers from entering your home. Keep your roof, gutters, and outdoor spaces free of dead vegetation and other debris that could catch fire. It's also smart to use fire-resistant building materials whenever possible.

Conditions can change very quickly during a wildfire. Thus, it's important to have access to the most accurate information that is currently available. Pima County's MyAlerts mass notification system allows residents to be notified about emergencies quickly, no matter where they are. You can sign up for emergency notifications at [MyAlerts.pima.gov](https://myalerts.pima.gov). The alerts are based on the geographic locations you provide, so you can sign up to receive alerts for your home, your workplace, or another location such as your child's school. All information provided to the County will remain strictly confidential.

Wildfire protection starts with you!

- Create defensible space
- Remove invasive species
- Sign up for MyAlerts

pima.gov/wildfire-ready

You should also be aware of any wildfire restrictions in your area, especially if you are going camping or hiking. If Pima County announces fire restrictions they will apply to any property owned by the County, including parks, campgrounds, washes, RV parks, leased properties such as Old Tucson, and the Chuck Huckelberry Loop.

Preparing an evacuation bag that you can quickly grab during a wildfire emergency keeps you and your loved ones ready. Your bag should include essentials such as water, non-perishable food, medications, important documents, a change of clothes, toiletries, phone chargers, a flashlight,

and a first aid kit. If you have pets, be sure to pack food, leashes, and any medications they may need. Keeping your evacuation bag in an easily accessible location ensures that you can leave quickly and safely if evacuation orders are issued.

Buffelgrass, stinknet, and other invasive plant species can increase the risk and severity of wildfires. Buffelgrass fires burn at extremely hot temperatures, and the weed also crowds out desert plants such as saguaros that are more fire-resilient. You can help protect the desert from fast-spreading fires by joining the Sonoran Desert Weedwackers or another local volunteer group to remove buffelgrass infestations in natural areas. If you find stinknet in your yard, remove it and report it on stinknet.org.

By working together, we can help to prepare for wildfires, prevent them from happening, and mitigate their severity and impact to the community. To learn more about how you can be prepared, visit pima.gov/wildfire-ready.

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money matters

SPRING INTO FINANCIAL WELLNESS: 5 ESSENTIAL STEPS FOR YOUR MONEY CHECK-UP

By Elisa Ross

Just as you schedule annual physicals, your finances deserve regular check-ups. Spring is the perfect time to ensure your financial house is in order.

1. Review and Update Your Beneficiaries

When did you last review beneficiaries on your retirement accounts, life insurance policies and bank accounts? Life changes, but beneficiary designations often don't. You might discover an ex-spouse is still listed, or that an account name is associated with an individual who is no longer living.

Pull together your statements and verify designations reflect your current wishes. Pay particular attention to retirement accounts, such as IRAs and 401(k)s, where beneficiary designations override your will.

2. Strengthen Your Security Protections

Financial fraud targeting seniors has reached epidemic proportions. Your spring wellness check isn't complete without shoring up defenses against fraud and identity theft.

Review account statements monthly for unauthorized transactions, no matter how small. Scammers often test accounts with tiny charges before attempting larger theft. Enroll in account alerts that notify you immediately of unusual activity.

Review your credit reports from all three bureaus—you're entitled to free reports annually at AnnualCreditReport.com. If you're not actively seeking credit, consider a credit freeze to prevent new accounts from being opened in your name.

Be skeptical of unsolicited calls, emails or texts requesting personal information. Your financial institution will never ask for your full Social Security number, PIN or online password. When in doubt, hang up and call the number on your statement.



3. Reassess Your Investment Strategy and Income Plan

Your investment allocation that made sense at 55 may not serve you well at 75. Review your portfolio to ensure it aligns with your current age, risk tolerance and income needs.

If retired, examine how you're generating income. Are you withdrawing at a sustainable rate? If still working, are you maximizing contributions and the employer match?

Professional guidance can be invaluable here. Many financial institutions, particularly credit unions, offer personalized planning services as a member benefit. Credit unions operate as not-for-profit cooperatives, focusing on serving members rather than maximizing shareholder profits. This often translates to objective advice and access to certified planners who can help navigate retirement income, investment allocation and tax strategies.

4. Consolidate and Simplify

Over a lifetime, it's easy to accumulate multiple bank accounts, old 401(k)s and scattered investment accounts. This fragmentation makes it harder to see your complete financial picture and creates more accounts to manage.

Consider consolidating where it makes sense. Rolling over old 401(k) plans into an IRA can simplify your life and potentially provide more investment options. Closing unused accounts reduces the number of statements to track and potential fraud entry points.

Choose an institution you trust that offers comprehensive services under one roof. Having checking, savings, investments and planning available through a single relationship significantly reduces stress and paperwork.

5. Update Your Estate Planning Documents

Your will, power of attorney and healthcare directives are only effective if they're current and accessible.

Review your will to ensure it reflects your current wishes. Verify that your designated power of attorney and healthcare proxy are still appropriate choices and willing to serve. Make sure trusted family members know where these documents are located.

Consider whether your estate plan accounts for digital assets, such as online accounts or photos stored in the cloud. Modern estate planning increasingly needs to address these digital considerations.

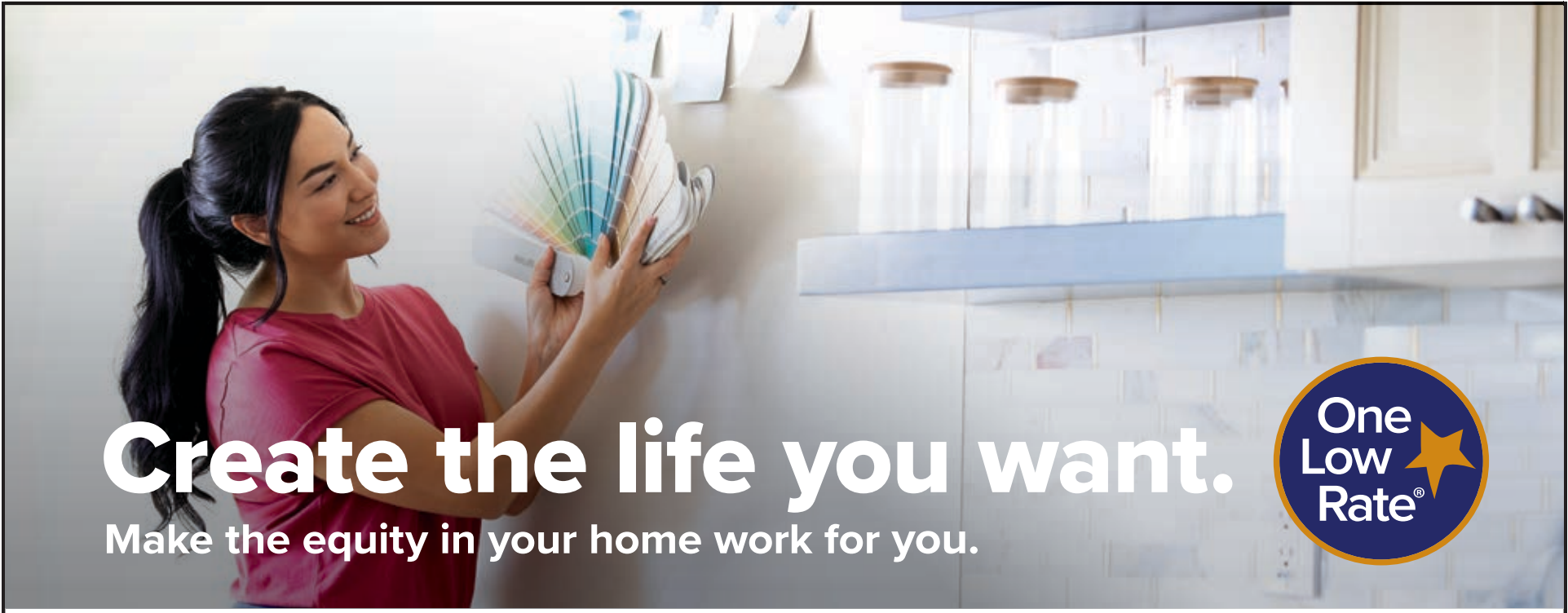
Take Action This Spring

A financial wellness check-up doesn't have to be overwhelming. Schedule time over the next month to work through these five areas. If you discover issues that need professional attention, whether investment questions, estate planning updates or fraud concerns, reach out to your financial institution for guidance.

Your local credit union can be an excellent partner in this process. As member-owned institutions, credit unions like Hughes Federal Credit Union provide financial education, one-on-one consultations and planning services designed to help you make informed decisions.

Financial wellness isn't a destination—it's an ongoing journey. By committing to an annual spring check-up, you're taking an important step toward ensuring your financial security and peace of mind for years to come.

Elisa Ross is the Chief Experience Officer at Hughes Federal Credit Union.



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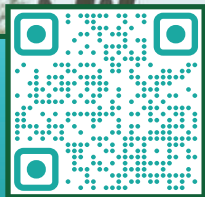
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Town of Sahuarita Thanks You For Your Forward Looking RTA Vote

Written by Mayor Tom Murphy, Town of Sahuarita

I would like to express a sincere thank you to those who voted in the recent RTA election and particularly for your vote of confidence in the Regional Transportation Authority. Your approval of the \$2.67 billion RTA Next plan and corresponding funding supports the region's efforts to improve all aspects of our quality of life for many years to come.



Regional board members signing the RTANext Accountability Pledge!

For the next 20 years, you will see a significant number of transportation infrastructure or service improvements made to roadways, transit and more across all of Pima County.

In the Green Valley/Sahuarita area, in particular, Sun Shuttle fixed-route and public dial-a-ride service will continue in our area, connecting to the main Sun Tran system. The RTA will continue to fund the Pima Council on Aging (PCOA) volunteer driver program as well. RTA funds will be used for safety, bicycle and pedestrian improvements in both

Sahuarita and Green Valley, along with pavement rehabilitation activities on eligible roadways. Roadway improvements include reconstruction of the Sahuarita Road, I-19 interchange, as well as improvements to La Villita Road, from Sahuarita Road to Nogales Highway, and to Pima Mine Road, from I-19 to Nogales Highway.

As the 2026 Chair of the RTA Board, I share how much we appreciate voter support of the plan and have publicly committed to the plan's implementation. We will ensure our

policies and plans set the pace for a vibrant region, which means our communities continue to be great places to live for years to come. In turn, vibrant communities lead to business development and attraction.

This commitment from the Board to implement the plan per the voter's approval also includes clear and open accountability throughout the 20-year life of the plan. This accountability will take the form of quarterly analysis of plan performance including project schedules and financial reviews. These analyses will be presented in public settings using our citizen oversight committee, the Citizens Accountability for Regional Transportation (CART) Committee, and Technical Management Committee. These two committees will make recommendations to the RTA Board, again in a public setting, on any issues that need to be brought to the Board's attention with regard to overall plan or project implementation.

The RTA Next plan is truly a regional plan that will have a positive impact on all aspects of the lives of our residents, businesses and visitors. It will not only provide for enhancements to the overall transportation system but will also support new employment and businesses throughout the region. Some benefits will be seen soon while others will be more obvious down the road with economic gains that follow project delivery.

We have much work ahead with project construction and program implementation ready to start or continue. We invite you to tune in to public CART Committee, Technical Management Committee, and RTA Board meetings so you can hear the progress we are making toward RTA Next implementation and holding ourselves accountable as we strive to make our region a better place for all.

Sahuarita Mayor Tom Murphy serves as the 2026 Chair of the nine-member independent RTA Board, which includes local, county, tribal and state government representatives. Visit RTAmobility.com for more information.

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The Evolution of Volunteering

Article and Photos by Regina Ford

The landscape of volunteering is evolving. While formal participation continues to recover from pandemic-era lows, there is a significant shift toward “episodic volunteering”—one-time engagements driven by a desire for immediate impact rather than long-term commitments.

Modern volunteers, including younger generations and busy professionals, often prefer defined tasks with clear completion points due to inconsistent schedules. Organizations that offer short-term opportunities, such as family service days, fundraisers, or seasonal help, are seeing a significant increase in participation.

Integrating episodic volunteer roles offers several benefits:

- Increased awareness: broader engagement with your organization’s mission
- Greater accessibility: participation from individuals who cannot commit to fixed schedules
- New perspectives: an influx of fresh ideas and diversity
- Peak support: critical assistance during busy periods like the holidays

Even for organizations that rely on consistency, such as those in healthcare or tutoring, episodic roles can serve as a gateway. Positive initial experiences often lead one-time volunteers to become dedicated, long-term contributors.

By incorporating episodic opportunities into our broader strategy, we can more effectively recruit and retain a sustainable volunteer base.

Studies show that volunteers aged 65 and older often seek roles that provide purpose, social connection, and intellectual stimulation, utilizing their lifetime skills. Popular choices include mentoring/tutoring, healthcare companionship (hospice/nursing homes), local community services (food banks/library), animal care, and remote skills-based volunteering like accounting or marketing.

Volunteering is not only a social good but a significant economic force. As labor costs rise and service organizations face staffing shortages, the financial weight of volunteer contributions has become increasingly vital.

According to the 2025 report by Independent Sector and the Do Good



White Elephant Volunteer
Kate Wade in toys

Institute at the University of Maryland, the average value of volunteer time is now estimated at \$34.79 per hour, representing a 3.9 percent increase from the previous year.

Volunteers continue to engage through various high-impact channels:

- Hands-on roles: Community cleanups, food banks, and animal shelters remain popular.
- Virtual opportunities: Online roles in digital marketing, transcription, and IT support offer growing flexibility.
- Skills-based volunteering: Professionals are increasingly contributing specialized talents in fields such as accounting, law, and design.
- Event-based activities: Stand-alone events like community festivals and holiday-themed charities continue to drive significant engagement.

The evolving landscape of volunteerism remains a cornerstone of support for the nonprofit sector.

“Volunteers are needed throughout our community to perform many important jobs,” says Joyce Finkelstein, executive director of the Green Valley/Sahuarita Volunteer Clearinghouse. “Drivers are always needed, as well as individuals to provide direct service to seniors by providing companionship, perform simple tasks and to youth through mentoring, tutoring, and advocacy.”

The Green Valley/Sahuarita Volunteer Clearinghouse has a wealth of volunteer information. Staff will help you identify your skills and interests and with more than 100 organizations in the Green Valley-Sahuarita area needing volunteers, they will help you find the right volunteer

experience to enrich your life.

Volunteering offers a powerful range of benefits that go far beyond the immediate help provided to a community.

Research from institutions like the Mayo Clinic and Harvard Health shows that engaging in volunteer work has been shown to improve physical health, mental health and longevity in several key ways:

- Heart health: Adults over 50 who volunteer at least 200 hours annually can reduce their risk of high blood pressure by up to 40%.
- Reduced disease risk: Volunteers consistently show lower rates of heart disease, stroke, and overall mortality.
- Increased Activity: Many roles involve physical tasks that improve muscle strength and cardiovascular fitness.
- Cognitive protection: The mental stimulation and social engagement found in volunteering may lower the risk of cognitive



White Elephant volunteer
Karin Heskett

decline and dementia in older adults.

Visit the website of the Green Valley/Sahuarita Volunteer Clearinghouse, www.gvsvc.org. There you will find volunteer opportunities that are available, along with information about more than 100 volunteer organizations, what they do and the kind of volunteer opportunities that they can offer.



Food donations now help sustain our hungry neighbors over the summer!



Please donate non-perishable food.
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(17750 S. La Cañada Drive)

To our volunteers: Thank you for bringing our mission to life.

AWESOME!

Discover Meaningful Ways to Give Back with the Green Valley/Sahuarita Volunteer Clearinghouse

In the heart of Southern Arizona, the **Green Valley/Sahuarita Volunteer Clearinghouse** is strengthening communities by connecting caring individuals with rewarding volunteer opportunities throughout the region. As a project of **Pima Council on Aging (PCOA)**, this vibrant clearinghouse empowers volunteers to make a lasting impact while helping local organizations thrive.



Volunteerism isn't just an option in Green Valley and Sahuarita — it's a way of life. Whether you're newly retired, seeking purpose, or simply eager to give back, the Volunteer Clearinghouse is your premier resource for finding meaningful ways to serve. With deep roots in community engagement and collaboration, the Clearinghouse has evolved into a trusted hub where volunteers and nonprofits meet, connect, and flourish together.

At the core of the Clearinghouse's mission is personalized support. Volunteers take the time to understand your skills, interests, and availability to match you with opportunities that truly fit your goals. From short-term projects and seasonal roles to more regular commitments, they help you navigate over 100 community organizations actively seeking volunteer support.

To learn more about how the Clearinghouse recruits volunteers and promotes volunteerism, visit our web site (gvsvc.org) and our Facebook page (Volunteer Clearinghouse - Green Valley and Sahuarita, AZ). You can follow us on Instagram ([gsvsc2021](https://www.instagram.com/gsvsc2021)). Join our database and receive emails of the latest Volunteer Opportunities. Read about volunteer positions and the Volunteer Corner in the Green Valley News.

One of the most anticipated events of the year is the **Volunteer Showcase**, where dozens of nonprofits and service groups come together to connect with potential volunteers face-to-face. This community celebration is an ideal way to explore a wide variety of roles — from mentoring youth and supporting senior services to assisting with special events, environmental projects, and more. The showcase provides an upbeat, interactive environment where you can learn about local needs, chat directly with agency representatives, and discover where your talents can make the biggest difference.

This year's **Volunteer Showcase** is scheduled for **Tuesday, November 10**, offering a unique opportunity to jumpstart your volunteer journey.

Volunteering through the Clearinghouse not only benefits the community — it enriches your life. Research shows that volunteering can enhance well-being, foster new friendships, and even improve physical and mental health. Join others who are finding joy, purpose, and connection through service.

The **Green Valley/Sahuarita Volunteer Clearinghouse** is supported by Friends In Deed (where our office is located), the Country Fair White Elephant, the Greater Green Valley Community Foundation, Green Valley Recreation, La Posada, Freeport-McMorrans-Sierrita and the Green Valley Library.

For those who already volunteer, Thank You! Thank you to all who share their time and talent and making a difference in the lives of so many. Your hard work has allowed people to carry on and organizations to meet the needs of our community.

As listeners of KGVY know, community involvement is what makes this region special. The Green Valley/Sahuarita Volunteer Clearinghouse invites you to take the next step — share your time, share your talents, and help build an even stronger community for us all.

The Clearinghouse is always seeking people to help achieve its mission of promoting volunteerism in our community. To find out how you can get involved and make a difference, check out our web site at gvsvc.org, email us at gvsvc@pcoa.org, or call us at 520-625-1150, Ext. 108.



The Salvation Army sends a sincere **THANK YOU** to our volunteers that serve throughout the year.



To Our Incredible Fire Corps Volunteers,

Thank YOU!



From our lockbox program to smoke alarm installations, public education, and every moment of community outreach — you are the heart behind the work we do. The nearly 12,000 volunteer hours that you, our Fire Corps team, have generously contributed to our community is truly extraordinary.

Your dedication, compassion, and willingness to serve make a profound difference every single day. Santa Rita Fire District could not do what we do without you. Your time, your energy, and your commitment help keep our community safer, stronger, and better prepared.

Thank you for standing with us, supporting our mission, and giving so generously of yourselves. You make our programs possible — and our community proud.

With gratitude, Santa Rita Fire District



VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

1600 W Duval Mine Road
Green Valley, AZ



TALGV relies almost entirely on volunteers to take care of the animals, run the office, maintain the facility, and operate The Attic Thrift Shop.

A few hours a week volunteering means a lot to these pets as they wait for their forever homes.

www.talgv.org

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Facebook/talgv

This column is provided by Dr. Tait with ORIGEN Orthopedics + Optimal Health in Tucson

medicalnews

THE U.S. HEALTHCARE SHIFT NEEDED TO SOLVE ARTHRITIS BEFORE IT'S TOO LATE

Studies have shown the current U.S. burden of knee arthritis to be about 30% of the population, globally 7-8%.

But what is being projected by researchers is staggering.

According to the Journal of International Medical Research, **the burden is projected to rise by 60-100% by 2050.**

Read that again.

Researchers are suggesting, based on the growing prevalence of knee arthritis, that the global burden of knee arthritis will affect 60-100% of the world's adult population by 2050.

Which means if you are planning to be around 25 years from now, more than half of adults will be limited by the pain and dysfunction that comes with knee arthritis.

Unless...

We change the way we approach the treatment of this disease.

From palliative approaches for pain: oral non-steroidal medications or injectable steroids (both known to have negative consequences on the healthy biology of the body).

To a "non-conventional" but sensible approach focused on reconstructive/regenerative medicine procedures combined with functional movement restoration.

The latter being the focus of my practice for the past 12+ years.

Because if we look at the published research, the benefits of the latter "non-conventional" approach is staggeringly good.

Safe.

Effective.

Less invasive.

At a fraction of the cost of surgical interventions.

In fact, go to PubMed (<https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov>) after reading this.

Type in "stem cell and knee osteoarthritis."

You will see more than **1,600 peer-reviewed and published ar-**

ticles talking about various aspects of how these treatments can help people.

In a way that is far healthier and safer than conventional pain management using NSAIDs, opioids, and corticosteroid injections.

And with less risk and complications than Orthopedic surgery such as total joint replacement.

All for a fraction of the cost of what years of conventional pain management consumes managing this disease process. Or what a single surgical replacement of a knee or a hip costs the patient and healthcare system.

Back in 2012, after an injury put me in quite the hole, I read a lot of this literature.

Conventional treatments had failed to get me the results I needed.

I had read enough.

Waited long enough.

Eventually, I had to see and feel it for myself, and believe that another, different treatment could work.

Fortunately I had great success with PRP and stem cell treatments for my issue. That became the launching point for ORIGEN Orthopedics and Optimal Health, the practice I founded.

Where we focus all of our attention on Regenerative Medicine procedures. In fact, we are the only Orthopedic clinic in Tucson exclusively focused on non-surgical treatments.

This is what we've specialized in now for more than a decade.

To continue to be a part of the evolution of medicine, rather than continue the version that has failed too many.

Weekly, patients ask me..

"Will our healthcare system ever change to cover these treatments more broadly like they do in other countries?"

Yes, I believe it will, in time. The ship is very slowly turning in that direction.

Until then, you have to change the system of care - *for you.*

From palliative, to progressive.

From reactive, to preventive.

I'll keep pushing as hard as I can to make Regenerative Orthopedics the standard.

Because it absolutely should be with the scientific evidence and patient proof we have accumulated to this point.

Someday, the larger system may catch up, but based on the statistics I shared above, for many it will be too late.

In the meantime...

If you are tired of living on pain medications.

If you hate that you can't be active like your friends are.

If you feel that you have a lot of life yet to live, but can't see how it will be enjoyable with how your joints currently feel.

If you are looking for a way out, after other treatments have failed.

And, if you don't want to go through a major surgery unless it is 100% necessary.

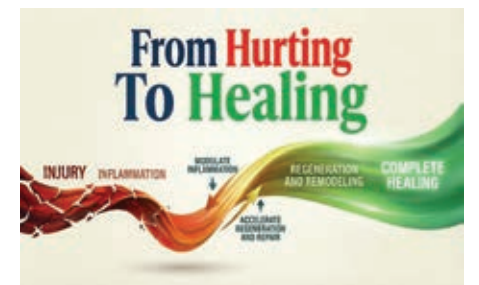
Then you owe it to yourself to do a bit more research and see a qualified provider to determine if you may be a candidate for these treatments.

Because the question for the patients I help in my practice is rarely whether they need to fix this problem sooner than later. Before the only way out is surgery. They already know they do.

The question is how. That's exactly where we come in.

We've helped thousands of patients in our practice over the past 13 years. Who failed to see the results they needed with "conventional" treatments. To come out the other side happier, healthier, and able to return to the things they love.

From hurting. To healing.

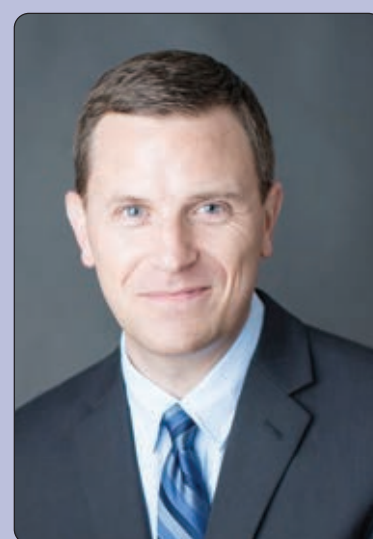


If you're like them, and you want to keep doing what you love to do. Using a healthcare approach and treatments that may align better with how you prefer to take care of your body - *without surgery.*

My team and I will be here to help plot a course to better, when you're ready.

THANK YOU VOLUNTEERS
KG VY
1080 AM Green Valley
101.5 FM Sahuarita
Familiar Favorites

Educating the Community



Dr. John Tait, D.O.

Dr. Tait is the founder and Chief Health Strategist at ORIGEN Orthopedics + Optimal Health in Tucson, Arizona. The only dedicated Orthopedic clinic in the region exclusively focused on non-surgical treatments.

To learn more about Dr. Tait and non-surgical Orthobiologic treatments, please visit www.origenortho.com.

To learn more visit www.origenortho.com, and @DrJohnTait on YouTube



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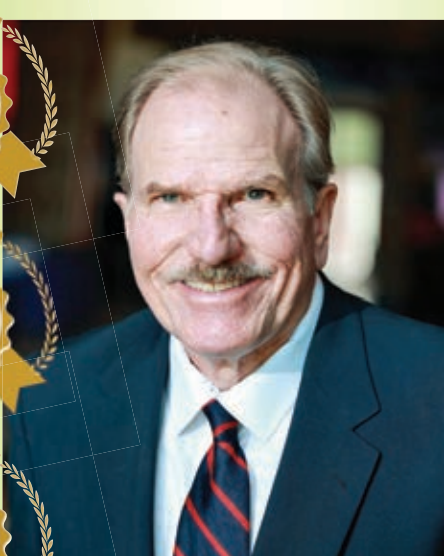
- Colonics
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- SRT, Meridian Stress Analysis

Dr. Bryan McConnell is a member of AMMG, Age Management Medical Group, AOA, Arizona Osteopathic Association, ACOFP, American College of Family Physicians, AANP, American Association of Naturopathic Physicians and AzNMA, Arizona Naturopathic Medical Physicians.

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We do not offer every plan available in your area. Currently we represent 14 organizations which offer 74 plan products in your area. Please contact Medicare.gov, 1-800-Medicare, or your local State Health Insurance Program (SHIP) to get information on all of your options.

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AMAZING!

Green Valley Gardeners: Volunteers Putting the Green in Green Valley



Debbie Gilliam working at Historic Canoa Ranch.

The volunteers of Green Valley Gardeners are truly remarkable. Since 1980, dedicated members have been giving back to the community through hands-on projects, outreach, service, and education. Whether getting their hands dirty in community gardens or helping organize educational events, these volunteers continue to make a lasting impact on Green Valley.

Over the decades, Green Valley Gardeners have played an important role in beautifying and enhancing our community. Volunteers have established two thriving community gardens and created several notable public spaces, including The Arid Garden, the historic gardens at Historic Canoa Ranch, and gardens at Desert Meadows Park. Members have also contributed countless hours improving

landscaping on Pima County properties and roadway medians, helping make Green Valley a more welcoming and beautiful place to live.

In addition to beautification projects, Green Valley Gardeners are committed to sharing knowledge and inspiring residents to garden successfully in our unique desert climate. The club sponsors a variety of events each year designed to educate and engage the community. These include informative seminars, two annual plant sales, the popular Spring Garden Tour, and the creative Art-in-the-Park event held each fall.

One of the club's most innovative efforts is the Plant Rescue Program. This program helps recycle unwanted plants that might otherwise be discarded. Rescued plants are made available to the public through the Self-Serve Nursery, allowing residents to give plants a second life in their own landscapes. It's a true win-win—reducing waste while helping local gardeners grow and experiment with new plants.

The impact of Green Valley Gardeners' volunteer efforts is significant. Last year alone, members contributed an impressive **18,640 volunteer hours**, representing more than **\$600,000 in community service value**. These hours reflect the dedication, passion, and generosity of individuals who care deeply about their community and the environment.

From the very beginning in 1980, the founders envisioned an organization focused on action. Green Valley Gardeners was never intended to be a traditional "tea and cookies" garden club. Instead, the focus was on **projects, participation, and service**. The key word was—and still is—*projects*. Projects require work, and that work is made possible by the incredible volunteers who generously give their time and energy.



Volunteers are still "Putting the Green in Green Valley," helping the community grow more beautiful and sustainable each year.

If you enjoy gardening, learning, and giving back to the community, we invite you to join us. To learn more about our projects, programs, and volunteer opportunities, visit www.greenvalleygardeners.com.



Community Performance and Art Center

APRIL 21
7PM

TUCSON GIRLS
CHORUS



APRIL 22
7PM

PIANIST ROMAN
RUDNYTSKI



APRIL 23
7PM

ACOUSTIC
EIDOLON



APRIL 24
7PM

HARPFUSION



APRIL 28
3PM

MARK MULLIGAN



MAY 2
3PM

SANTA CRUZ
WINDS:
SOUNDTRACKS
OF CINEMA



MAY 15
7PM

THE MCCALLION
BAND: FROM
CELTIC TO
COUNTRY



MAY 16
3PM

CLASSIC POPS
WITH SONORA
WINDS



MAY 20
7PM

SONORA'S SPIRIT:
BACANORA WITH
ALEX LA PIERRE OF
BORDERLANDIA



MAY 29
7PM

ROBIN VOGEL:
THE MUSIC OF MY
LIFE



JUNE 5
7PM

THE MAGIC OF
ERIC BUSS



JUNE 10
3PM & 7PM

TRIBUTE TO JOSH
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Sahuarita Photography Contest Returns in 2026 with “Desert in Bloom” Theme

Submitted by the Town of Sahuarita Parks & Recreation

For the past four years, the Town of Sahuarita has partnered with Art State Arizona to celebrate the community through photography. What began in 2023 as the *Capturing Community* photo competition has grown into an annual tradition that invites residents to see their town in new ways.

Each year introduces a new theme, including *Reflections* in 2024 and *Everyday Wonders* in 2025, encouraging photographers to explore the people, landscapes, and moments that define life in Sahuarita. The 2026 competition continues the tradition with a new theme: **Desert in Bloom**.

Open to photographers of all skill levels, the competition welcomes both amateur and experienced participants, including a category for youth photographers. Participants are invited to capture the spirit of Sahuarita, from desert landscapes and dramatic light to neighborhood gatherings, community service, and everyday life.

Over the years, the competition has become more than a contest. It offers residents an opportunity to slow down, look closely at their surroundings, and share the moments that make Sahuarita special.

Photographers can submit images in several themed categories, including Nature’s Inspiration, Heart of Service, Shadows, Light, and Night, and a Youth Showcase for younger photographers. The categories encourage participation from all ages, from long-time residents to families exploring the area together.



Michael Corbin: Kid Welder, 2025 Winner

Winning photographs will receive cash prizes and will be displayed at Sahuarita Town Hall, where the community can enjoy the images throughout the year. The exhibit allows residents and visitors to see Sahuarita through the eyes of local photographers.

About the 2026 Theme: Desert in Bloom

The 2026 competition explores **Desert in Bloom**, focusing on how life flourishes in the desert environment. Photographers are encouraged to capture the many ways Sahuarita grows and thrives, from desert ecosystems to community events and everyday moments of connection.

Whether it is a cactus flower after a spring rain, children playing in a neighborhood park, or a quiet sunrise over the mountains, organizers encourage residents to share their perspective on life in Sahuarita.

Community members interested in participating can learn more and submit photographs online at: <https://artstateaz.org/sahuarita-photography-competition/>

EXHIBITION AND RECOGNITION

Winning photos will be featured in a yearlong printed exhibit at Town Hall beginning in June and recognized before the Town Council in the fall. After the exhibit concludes, photographers may pick up their printed photos.

All submitted and winning images will also be showcased on the competition website, and category-winning photos may be featured in local media.

In addition to recognition, winners in each category will receive:

1st Place: \$200 award check

2nd Place: \$100 award check

3rd Place: \$50 award check

IMPORTANT DATES

Submission period: March 1 – May 22, 2026

Deadline: May 22, 2026 at 11:59 PM

Winners announced: Early June via email and social media



Bobby Joe Smith: Red in an Ocean of Yellow, 2025 Winner



Tyler Rushing: Showcase, 2025 Winner

CATEGORIES

Land, Water & Adaptation

Capture the desert environment that shapes life in Sahuarita, including landscapes, monsoon washes, native plants, wildlife, agriculture, and signs of adaptation in the desert.

Work of Light

Explore how desert light transforms everyday scenes, from bold shadows and bright sun to reflections and changing light throughout the day.

Night in Sahuarita

Photograph the town after sunset, such as night skies, glowing streetlights, illuminated buildings, or quiet evening scenes.

Parks & Public Spaces

Highlight community life in Sahuarita’s parks, trails, and gathering places, including playgrounds, sports fields, and shared outdoor spaces.

Sahuarita at Work

Show the people, places, and activities that keep the town running, from local businesses and construction to farming, service, and everyday work.

Youth Photographer Showcase (Under 18)

A special category for photographers under 18. Students may submit photos of any subject taken in Sahuarita and share their perspective on the community.

JUDGING & PRIZES

Entries will be judged on technical quality, creativity, composition, and how well the image reflects the theme **Desert in Bloom**. Judges will look for photographs that capture meaningful moments and reflect the spirit of Sahuarita.

A panel of professional artists, photographers, and editorial experts will review submissions. Winners

Photo contest continued from page 16.

will be announced in June 2026, and top photographs will receive cash prizes.

Winning images may also be featured in Art State Arizona's online newsletter, website, and social media, as well as displayed at Sahuarita Town Hall. Selected photos may appear in future Art State Arizona publications and Town of Sahuarita Parks, Recreation, and Community

Services materials.

Sahuarita residents of all ages are encouraged to participate, whether using a professional camera or a smartphone. The competition offers a chance to notice the beauty of everyday life and share the moments

that make this community special.

To learn more about the competition and submit a photo, visit: artstateaz.org/sahuarita-photography-competition



Joel T. Ruiz: Moon Flower, 2025 Winner



Tyler Rushing: High Step, 2025 Winner



Chris Travers: Reach for the Sky, 2025 Winner



Jazz in the Desert 2026 was a great success! Thanks especially to:



Your commitment was instrumental in making Jazz In the Desert 2026 a tremendous success. With your support, Valle Verde Rotary raised significant funds, providing essential resources and opportunities for aspiring musicians in our community. Your contributions also aid in furthering the many impactful projects and services that Valle Verde Rotary sponsors, making a positive difference in many lives.

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 Angel Hernandez
 Ann Marsh
 Arizona Cottons
 Arizona Diamondbacks
 Arizona Family Restaurant
 Aunt Cheryl's Pet Grooming
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 Best Alterations
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 Brenda Kreitzberg
 Brindis Bistro
 Carmen Hernandez
 Carol Pfister
 Charlotte Gates
 Chicago Music
 Ciruli Brothers
 Community Water Company of Green Valley
 Core Construction
 Country Club of Green Valley
 Crown Community Development
 Culvers, John Elam
 Dave Polsky Tire & Auto

Desert Bloom Garden Center
 Desert Hills Golf Club
 DHLC Sewing Bee
 Duffield, Adamson & Helenbolt P.C.
 Ed & Marlene Farver
 Edward Jones
 Francis Howe
 Freeport-McMoRan
 Gary Friedman
 Gaslight Theatre
 Generous Wealth Advisors
 Gene Thomleson
 Go Travel
 Green Valley Glass
 Green Valley Pecan/FICO
 Green Valley Stage Band
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 Joseph Lessard CPA, PLLC
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 Kathy Dean
 KGVY 1080/101.5
 Leak Seekers Roofing
 Madera Sunrise
 Mario Magee's
 Mary & Steve Sibulsky
 Nails, etc.
 Nancy Green
 Nancy Stutter
 Panda House Continental Rd.
 Paul Barker, AMFAM
 Pima Federal Credit Union
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 Rancho Sahuarita
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 True Value Hardware
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 Wisdom's Café

FIND YOUR FUN *at Gr*



Classes at GVR—Learn. Create. Connect.

GVR classes offer members and non-members an opportunity to meet new friends, achieve personal growth, and engage in learning. Choose from arts and crafts, writing and languages, nature and gardening, cooking, fitness, sports, dance and music, and a selection of special-interest classes.

Pick up a spring/summer catalog at any GVR center or go to GVRec.org for the online flipbook.

Many GVR classes are open to everyone!

Events—open to everyone!



Mother's Day Brunch

Celebrate the amazing moms, grandmothers, and mother figures in your life with a delicious spread of brunch favorites, from sweet treats to savory delights..

Saturday, May 9 at 11am – Las Campanas
GVR Members/Guests \$40; General Public \$60

Paint & Sip: Small Courage in Soft Summer

Sip, swirl, and follow step-by-step guidance from a professional artist as you create your own masterpiece. No need to stress about supplies, we've got you covered! Bring a favorite beverage; light snacks will be provided.

Monday, June 1 at 1pm – Del Sol Clubhouse
GVR Members/Guests \$40; General Public \$60



Father's Day Pool Party

Dive into Father's Day with a fun-filled pool party! This is the perfect way to celebrate with good food and live music from Johnnie and the Rumlbers.

Friday, June 19 at 6–9pm – Canoa Hills Poolside
GVR Members/Guests \$40; General Public \$60

Purchase tickets online at GVRec.org, by phone 520-625-3440, or in-person at the West Center Box Office.

Exclusive to GVR Members

Benefits of GVR membership include access to:

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- Over 50 clubs
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- Free events and activities
- Guest privileges
- Connection to an active, social community



If you're curious about GVR member privileges, please contact Membership@GVRec.org.

Green Valley Recreation



Day Trips—open to everyone!

Whipple Observatory

Discover the Whipple Observatory on a guided walking tour, with time to explore the Science Center and enjoy a relaxed picnic lunch (choose boxed lunch or bring your own).

Monday, May 18 at 9am – Del Sol Clubhouse/Whipple Observatory
 GVR Members/Guests \$79; General Public \$99
 Add a boxed lunch for \$16.50



VIP BASEBALL EXPERIENCE— AZ Diamondbacks vs. San Francisco Giants

Your ticket includes round-trip transportation and Club-Level access: all-you-can-eat food package, shorter lines, private restrooms, and wider seats with extra legroom.

Wednesday, May 20 at 8:30am –
 Del Sol Clubhouse to Chase Field, Phoenix, AZ
 GVR Members/Guests \$129; General Public \$149

Kartchner Caverns State Park

Explore Discovery Center exhibits, watch a short film on cave preservation, and stroll through the hummingbird garden. Marvel at the Rotunda/Throne Room's towering columns and stalactites, then enjoy a scenic trail walk and lunch under shaded ramadas. Choose a boxed lunch or bring your own.

Thursday, June 4 at 7am – Del Sol Clubhouse/Kartchner Caverns State Park
 GVR Members/Guests \$89; General Public \$109
 Add a boxed lunch for \$16.50



Bisbee

Visit the Bisbee Mining & Historic Museum, then venture 1,500 feet underground on the Queen Mine Tour, riding a train through historic tunnels and hearing stories from former miners. Enjoy free time for lunch and exploring Bisbee's unique shops, galleries, and winding streets.

Tuesday, June 16 at 8am – Del Sol Clubhouse/Bisbee
 GVR Members/Guests \$89; General Public \$109

Three VIP Wine Tours: The Grape Escape to Sonoita Wineries

Spend a delightful day visiting three Sonoita wineries, with three to five tastings at each stop. Round-trip transportation, water, snacks on the bus, and a box lunch are included—just sit back and enjoy the ride. Each date features different wineries, so you can join us more than once. Meet at Del Sol Clubhouse at 9:30am.

GVR Members/Guests \$139; General Public \$149 (per trip)
Thursday, June 25 • Thursday, July 23 • Thursday, August 20



AMAZING!

The Salvation Army: Serving through all Seasons

In a season defined by generosity, the volunteers of The Salvation Army in Green Valley reminded us of what community truly looks like.

This past year's Angel Tree and Red Kettle bell ringing efforts were powered entirely by dedicated volunteers who stepped up without hesitation. From early mornings to chilly evenings, they rang bells with joyful hearts, greeting neighbors with smiles and gratitude. Their enthusiasm turned a simple red kettle into a symbol of hope for families throughout Green Valley and Sahuarita. Because of them, countless children woke up to gifts under the tree, and parents felt the relief of knowing their community cared.

Our Angel Tree program was especially meaningful this past year. Local businesses, civic clubs, churches, and community organizations poured their hearts into giving. We received beautiful handmade lap blankets, stunning quilts crafted by local quilters clubs, generous gift cards from local churches, and piles of thoughtfully chosen presents. Each item represented more than material support — it represented love, dignity, and compassion for neighbors in need.

We are especially grateful to the Santa Rita Fire District, who truly went above and beyond the call of duty. Their team didn't just participate — they embraced the mission. Time and again, they showed up ready to serve, support, and encourage. They were, in every sense, the gift that kept on giving, reminding us that service extends far beyond emergency calls.

Our volunteers' impact didn't stop at Christmas. They were instrumental in helping serve at both our 2025 Thanksgiving and Christmas community luncheons, ensuring every guest felt welcomed and valued. And it all began months earlier with our Back-to-School Backpack Program, where volunteers came together to prepare children for a confident start to the school year. That program became the spark that carried momentum through every outreach that followed. As each event unfolded, more hands joined in, more hearts connected, and our circle of service grew wider.

Because of our volunteers, The Salvation Army in Green Valley has become more than a place of assistance — it has become a joyful place to serve. There is laughter in the work, friendship in the service, and purpose in every effort.

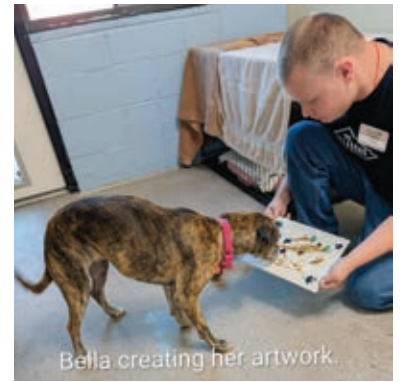
We are deeply thankful for every volunteer, every partner, and every generous heart. Together, you have made the 2025 season — and a year — filled with hope.



AWESOME!

The Heart of the Shelter: Celebrating Volunteers of The Animal League of Green Valley

At The Animal League of Green Valley, every life saved, every adoption celebrated, and every frightened animal comforted has something in common: the dedication of volunteers. These compassionate individuals form the heart of the organization, giving their time, energy, and kindness to ensure that every dog and cat in our care has the chance to feel safe, loved, and hopeful.



Volunteers help in countless ways. Some start their mornings walking dogs, giving them exercise, enrichment, and a break from kennel life. Some clean kennels with an eye towards the health of the cats and dogs. Others spend time in the cat rooms, gently socializing shy cats, offering treats, toys, and quiet companionship that helps them gain confidence. Behind the scenes, volunteers assist with laundry, administrative tasks, events, and adoption support. Every role—large or small—helps create a safe and welcoming environment for the animals and the people who come to meet them.

In recent months, the shelter has experienced an especially joyful challenge: a wave of puppies. Over the last few months, approximately **40 puppies** have come into the care of The Animal League of Green Valley. These young dogs require extra attention, specialized care, and plenty of patience. Thanks to our volunteers and dedicated foster parents, these puppies have received the nurturing environment they need during their earliest weeks.

Many of these puppies have been cared for in loving foster homes. Foster parents play a vital role in the rescue process, providing temporary homes where animals can grow, heal, and prepare for adoption. For puppies, foster homes offer the chance to experience normal household life, socialization, and the comfort of a family setting. For animals recovering from illness, surgery, or stress, foster care can make all the difference in their journey toward a permanent home.

The commitment shown by our foster volunteers is extraordinary. They open their homes, adjust their schedules, and pour their hearts into helping animals thrive. From late-night feedings to early-morning playtimes, their dedication ensures that even the youngest and most vulnerable animals receive the care they deserve.

At the shelter itself, volunteers work side by side with staff to ensure every animal's needs are met. Whether they are comforting a nervous newcomer, helping an adopter meet their future companion, or simply offering a gentle scratch behind the ears, volunteers help create the moments that lead to happy endings.

The Animal League of Green Valley is deeply grateful to every volunteer and foster parent who contributes their time and compassion. Their efforts transform lives—not only for the animals who find safety and love, but also for the families who welcome those animals into their homes.

Because of our volunteers, hope arrives every day on four paws.





OWN YOUR PIECE OF THE OLD WEST!

**Large Acreage Ranch Estates Available!
458 Acres with Only 14 Exclusive Parcels
12-39 Acre Parcels**

- No HOA Low annual fee ~\$132/year (covers trails & maintenance)
- 8.25+ miles private riding/hiking trails — Exclusive community paths + private washes on some parcels
- Adjoins thousands of acres BLM & State land — Endless outdoor adventures from your doorstep
- 12-39 acre parcels — Build up to 3 residences + 2 guest houses for multi-generational living
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- Panoramic Santa Rita Mountain views — Stunning sunsets, starry skies & desert wildlife
- Only 5 minutes to Sahuarita — Shopping, dining, medical & schools nearby



**Contact: Danny Roth, Real Estate Consultant
520-490-4000 • OldWestRanchAZ.com**

Oh, Say Does Our Flag Still Wave...

Written by Mari Nelson, President of GVC Foundation



The GVC Foundation is a proud partner with many local organizations dedicated to continue proudly displaying their civic pride.

Eight times each year on patriotic holidays, our community comes together to create a powerful and patriotic display with nearly 100 American flags lining La Cañada Drive between Esperanza Blvd and Continental Road in honor of the nation and those who have served it.

From the early morning hours on each holiday, volunteers carefully post the US flags. By sunrise, La Cañada Drive becomes a moving tribute to the ideals of freedom, service and unity that define our country.

This tradition is carried out on these holidays throughout 2026 powered with our community partners, that is coordinated and Chaired by GVC Foundation Director, Jeff Hotchkin.

- MLK Day, Jan 19 by American Association of University Women

- Presidents Day, Feb 22 by The Optimists Club of Green Valley
- Memorial Day, May 2 with The Green Valley Hikers
- Flag Day, June 14 with American Legions Posts 66 & 131
- Independence Day, July 4 with Valley Verde Rotary & GV Rotary
- Patriots Day, September 11 with The Marine Corps League
- Veterans Day, November 11 with The McDonalds Hikers
- Pearl Harbor Day, December 7 with The Optimists Club and the Desert Hills Lutheran Church

These local volunteers in community organizations work together to place the flags and later remove them at sunset, ensuring the display is respectful, safe, and meaningful for residents and visitors alike. Gratefully, the Sheriffs Auxiliary



Volunteers provides the security and safety patrol for this workforce.

For many, driving down La Cañada Drive lined with American flags has become a cherished reminder of our shared values and the sacrifices made to protect them. The display has also become something more – a symbol of community pride. Families pause to take photos, veterans feel honored, and neighbors are reminded of the importance of patriotism and service.

Help Keep The Flags Flying

Maintaining this display takes more than volunteer time. Each year, flags must be replaced as they wear, poles must be repaired and supplies must be maintained so the tradition can continue.

If YOU enjoy seeing the flags displayed and would like to help ensure this custom continues, please consider making donation to AVENUE OF FLAGS to cover the costs, with any amount.

While the sight of nearly 100 American flags lining La Cañada Drive is inspiring, keeping this practice alive requires ongoing support, so the display remains respectful and dignified. So, if this pageantry has made you pause with pride, reminded you of a loved one who served, or simply lifted your spirit as you drove down the street, we invite you to help ensure it continues.

Please, Send your donations to The GVC Foundation, 555 N. La Cañada Dr., Green Valley, AZ 85614. Thank you for helping the flags wave.



Do you want your wacky kids or relatives to make your burial choices?

PLAN NOW!!!

Don't wait until it's too late. Plan your burial with the professionals at **Green Valley Mortuary & Cemetery**. You know what you want and our caring staff at the Green Valley Mortuary and Cemetery can help you with all your preplanning. If you leave it to your family the important details may be missed.

Our Pre-Need Advisor, Francisca "Paky" Molina is available to assist you with pre-arranging a funeral. We work hard to see that your wishes are completely fulfilled, and all your needs are met.

Over 40 years Serving the Communities of Green Valley, Tucson, Sahuarita, and Southern Arizona

**18751 S. La Cañada Drive, Sahuarita AZ
(520) 625-7400
greenvalemortuary.net**



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New customers only

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Discounts available

▶ **Free Security Lock with New Rentals**

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(520) 625-5211**

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STAY CONNECTED.**



Everything You Need. Right Here at Home.

From restaurants and retail to home services and healthcare, The Green Valley Sahuarita Chamber Member Directory connects you to the businesses that keep our community strong.

Discover trusted local businesses
Shop and support local
Stay connected with updates & special offers

Explore Local Businesses
Sign Up for Updates & Coupons
greenvalleysahuarita.com
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Pain Less. Live More.

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Book Your Consult with Dr. Tait Today!

We'll work with you to solve your pain, so that you can keep working on solving your game



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Transforming Healthcare Through Transportation: *A new solution for transportation and medical challenges at VAS*

Written by Christine Erickson, BA, RN, Executive Director, Valley Assistance Services

A new solution. Valley Assistance Services has been providing social service and community health programs dedicated to assisting those in our communities for over 60 years. Our transportation program assists more than 750 homebound older adults, who are no longer driving due to mobility, hearing, and vision issues, and continues to grow at an alarming rate.

Transportation impacts our health. Transforming Healthcare Through Transportation was created, allowing passenger vans to provide transportation to medical visits or allowing the medical appointments to come to your house with support/advocacy, a telemedicine visit, especially in our rural communities. Our telemedicine vans are critical to this program for older and disabled adults, to remain connected to their medical appointments and other health needs. There are greater risks for health issues due to geographical location and distance to providers. This program ensures older adults maintain access to medical care, at a hub or in-person. Health screenings are also provided.



Transforming Health Through Transportation is in Santa Cruz County, with a hub at the Tubac Community Center on Tuesday and Thursday mornings; team visits with resources on Thursday afternoons on April 9th and April 23rd from 1:30 – 3 pm. The Pima County program will be launched within a month and will begin with Green Valley, Sahuarita, and rural unincorporated Pima County.





Everyone Welcome

At Desert Hills Lutheran Church we:

CELEBRATE *Grace*, MAKE *Disciples*,
MAKE A *Difference*

Join us in worship!

Saturdays: Country Gospel at 3 & 5pm

Sundays: Traditional at 8am

Blended at 9:30am • Contemporary at 11am



2150 S. Camino Del Sol, Green Valley, AZ 85622
(520) 648-1633 • www.dhlc.org




Valley Presbyterian Church
Oasis of Grace

Join us for Worship,
Sundays at 9:30 am
In person and online

- Child Care and handicap access.
- Communion the first Sunday of every month

2800 S Camino del Sol • full details at valleypres.net • (520) 625-5023

Our Lady of the Valley

Roman Catholic Church

MASS TIMES

Daily Mass at 8:00AM • Monday through Saturday
Rosary at 7:30AM before daily Mass

Weekend Masses - Saturday at 4PM
Sunday at 7AM • 9AM • 11AM • 1PM (Spanish)

ADORATION OF THE BLESSED SACRAMENT
Monday-Friday 8:45AM-Noon

CONFESSIONS: Wed at 8:45 AM, Saturdays 3PM

Visit our YouTube Channel: [Our Lady of the Valley, Green Valley AZ](#)
www.olvgv.org

550 S. La Cañada Drive • Green Valley, Arizona • (520) 625-2776

Sunday Service & Sunday School 10AM
Wednesday Testimony Meeting 5PM
Services on Zoom: See the Website

Reading Room/Bookstore Hours
Monday-Friday 11AM-1PM
Weekly Bible Lesson at (602) 222-6220

First Church of Christ, Scientist
in Green Valley

Sentinel Watch has inspirational broadcasts changing each week by calling (602) 200-7002 and on www.greenvalleychristianscience.org



Together In Christ +
To Gather His People

Saturday Blended Service - 5:00 p.m.

Sunday Worship - 9:00 a.m.

Adult Christian Education - 10:25 a.m.

S.O.U.L Lunch 2nd & 4th Thurs. 11 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

Sunday on KGVY 1080/101.5FM - 8:30 a.m.


Learn more at
www.risen-savior.com

555 S. La Cañada Dr | Office phone - (520) 625-2612
A congregation of the Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod



St. Francis in the Valley Episcopal Church

Our Mission: "To live as Christ's Heart and Hands in the World"



Our Services:

Sunday Holy Eucharist: 9AM Service and Music (services streamed live and recorded)

Wednesday Eucharist: in the chapel at 9AM

Saturday Afternoon Contemporary Eucharist: Every second Saturday of the month in the chapel at 4PM

600 S. La Cañada Dr., Green Valley, AZ 85614
(520) 625-1370 • www.stfrancisgvaz.org



UNITED METHODIST CHURCH OF GREEN VALLEY

Join us for Worship on Sundays

APRIL	MAY - JUNE
8:00 and 10:15	9:30

umcgv.org 520-625-4712
300 W. Esperanza Blvd

Our Lady of the Valley

Roman Catholic Church



Religious Gift Shop
Sunday
10AM-12:30PM

The Gift Store will be closed in June for refreshing. Stop in the first week of July to see our new look

Located off of the North parking lot near the Holy Family Center entrance.
505 N. La Cañada Drive • Green Valley, AZ

Green Valley Baptist Church

"Reflecting the Son in the Valley"

Service Times:

Sunday School 9AM
Fellowship Time..... 10:00AM
Sunday Worship 10:30AM
Wednesday Prayer & Devotion Time 6:00PM

Our services are live streamed

1111 N. La Cañada | Green Valley, AZ 85614
(520) 625-3600 | www.gvbcaz.com
Shepherd's Fold Pre-School ~ (520) 625-6820

AMAZING!

The Food Bank Force: A Tribute to Our 400+ Community Heroes!

**IN A WORLD
WHERE HUNGER
THREATENS OUR
NEIGHBORS...
ONE GROUP RISES
ABOVE!**

They arrive before dawn, their mission clear. They are the Sahuarita Food Bank Force—more than 400 volunteers united by a single purpose: to vanquish hunger and deliver hope to every corner of our community!



With superhuman strength, they lift tons of provisions. With lightning speed, they sort and organize mountains of nourishment. With unwavering compassion, they stand as the first line of defense against food insecurity!

BY DAY, THEY'RE OUR NEIGHBORS. BY DEED, THEY'RE OUR SUPERHEROES!

Witness their incredible powers! The Box Brigade, whose teamwork and precision pack thousands of food boxes with flawless efficiency. The Welcome Warriors, whose warm smiles and kind words provide comfort and dignity to all who enter. The Stockroom Sentinels, who maintain our fortress of food with expert organization. And the Logistics Legion, who navigate the supply chain challenges to ensure our shelves are always ready for battle!

THEIR IMPACT? NOTHING SHORT OF LEGENDARY!

Thanks to this mighty alliance, the Sahuarita Food Bank stands as an impenetrable fortress against hunger. Families in crisis receive the lifeline they need. Children have the fuel to learn and grow. Seniors live with security and peace of mind. Each volunteer is a hero in their own right, but together, they form an unstoppable force for good that transforms our community!

**TO OUR EXTRAORDINARY VOLUNTEERS:
THE SAHUARITA FOOD BANK SALUTES YOU!**

If you would like to volunteer a few hours of your time each week and take a tour, contact ktonks@sfb-crc.org. To donate, go to our website www.sahuaritafoodbank.org

Thank you for you past and future support.



Sheriff's Auxiliary Volunteers Green Valley

The Sheriff's Department is your Law Enforcement Agency in Green Valley.

SAV is your Sheriff's Assist Team composed of volunteers dedicated to Crime Prevention in Green Valley.

We are a community driven organization made of 100% dedicated volunteers and we need you.

Neighbors helping Neighbors...That is who we are!

FREE services offered by the SHERIFF'S AUXILIARY VOLUNTEERS of Green Valley

Emergency Response Team (ERT)
Highly-trained SAV personnel assist the PCSD 24/7

Fingerprinting
Using state-of-the-art equipment

Home Security Checks
Home security checks for out of town residents

Neighborhood Watch
Citizens working together to reduce crime

Patrolling
Daily in marked vehicles, bicycles and on foot

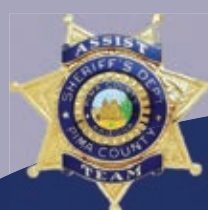
Park Patrol
Golf Cart, Walking

Scam Squad
Crime prevention using Hang Up! Shred! Delete!

PCSD Office Front Desk
Office and administration support

TeleCare Services
A 5-second welfare call every day

Special Events
Event participation, traffic and crowd control



**Pima County Sheriff's Department
Auxiliary Volunteers**

601 N. La Cañada Dr., Green Valley, AZ 85614

Phone: (520) 351-6744

gvsav.org

This column is provided by United Community Health Center

medicalnews

QUALITY CARE THAT GOES BEYOND THE NUMBERS: WHAT IT MEANS FOR OUR COMMUNITY

United Community Health Center (UCHC) is proud to have earned several Community Health Quality Recognition badges, national recognitions awarded to health centers that demonstrate strong performance in preventive care, chronic disease management, and overall patient outcomes. But what do these recognitions really mean for the patients and families we serve?

At their core, these badges represent a commitment to high-quality care. They reflect the work happening every day inside our clinics, providers, nurses, medical assistants, and support staff all working together to ensure patients receive safe, effective, and compassionate care. For our patients, it means they can feel confident knowing they are receiving care that meets strong national standards.

Behind these recognitions are what we call clinical quality measures. While that may sound technical, the concept is simple. Clinical quality measures help us track how well we are caring for our patients. They focus on important areas like blood pressure control, diabetes management, cancer screenings, and follow-up care. These measures give us insight into what we are doing well and where we can improve.

But it's important to remember, these measures are not just numbers on a report. Each number represents a real person. A patient who received a life-saving screening. Someone who is managing their blood pressure and avoiding serious complications. A family member whose health has improved because of the care they received. As healthcare professionals, we never lose sight of that. The data helps guide us, but the true focus is always on people.

Many of these measures focus on preventive care and chronic conditions, and for good reasons. Preventive care helps us catch health issues early, before they become more serious and harder to treat. Screening for cancers, routine check-ups, and wellness visits all play a role in keeping our community healthy.



UNITED COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTER
Serving Southern Arizona Since 1983

Chronic conditions like high blood pressure and diabetes are very common, especially in rural communities. When left unmanaged, these conditions can lead to serious complications such as heart disease, stroke, and kidney problems. By helping patients manage these conditions early and consistently, we can improve their quality of life and prevent more serious health issues down the road.

At UCHC, quality improvement is not something we do once, it is an ongoing process. Behind the scenes, our teams are constantly reviewing data, looking at outcomes, and identifying opportunities to improve care. This work involves collaboration across many departments. Providers, nurses, care coordinators, and quality staff all play a role.

For example, a provider may identify a patient who needs additional follow-up. A care coordinator may help schedule appointments or connect the patient with resources. A nurse may provide education on how to manage a condition at home. At the same time, our quality team is looking at trends and supporting improvements across the organization. It truly takes a team effort to ensure every patient receives the care they need.

So how do these national standards translate into the care patients actually experience?

For our patients, it means care that is coordinated, consistent, and centered around their needs. When someone walks into a UCHC clinic, our goal is to make sure they receive the right screenings, the right follow-up care, and the right support. It means taking the time to listen, answer questions, and help patients feel confident in their care. It's not just about treating illness; it's about supporting overall health and well-being.

For me personally, this work is deeply meaningful. My background is in nursing, and over time

I became interested in how systems and processes can improve patient outcomes. While quality improvement often involves data and measurements, my perspective has always been centered on patients. The numbers guide us, but what truly matters is how the care we provide impacts people's lives.

The most rewarding part of this work is knowing that what happens behind the scenes truly makes a difference. When we improve a process, it can mean a patient gets seen sooner. When we focus on managing chronic conditions, it can mean someone avoids a hospital stay. When we increase screenings, it can mean catching a serious illness early.

These are real impacts for real people in our community.

At UCHC, we are proud to serve the rural communities of Southern Arizona across 11 locations in Green Valley, Sahuarita, Amado, Arivaca, Three Points, and Vail. Our goal is to improve access to care and remove barriers so patients can receive the services they need close to home.

We offer a wide range of services,

including primary care, pediatrics, women's health, behavioral health, and dental care, all designed to support the whole person. In addition to clinical services, we provide programs

that help meet patients where they are, such as door-to-door courtesy transportation, enrollment assistance for well-women's programs, and mobile dental services.

These efforts are part of our commitment to making care more accessible, coordinated, and patient-centered. We understand that healthcare is not one-size-fits-all, and we strive to support each patient's unique needs.

Our work continues every day, and these recognitions are just one reflection of that ongoing commitment. *At UCHC, quality care goes beyond the numbers, it's about improving lives and strengthening the health of our community.*

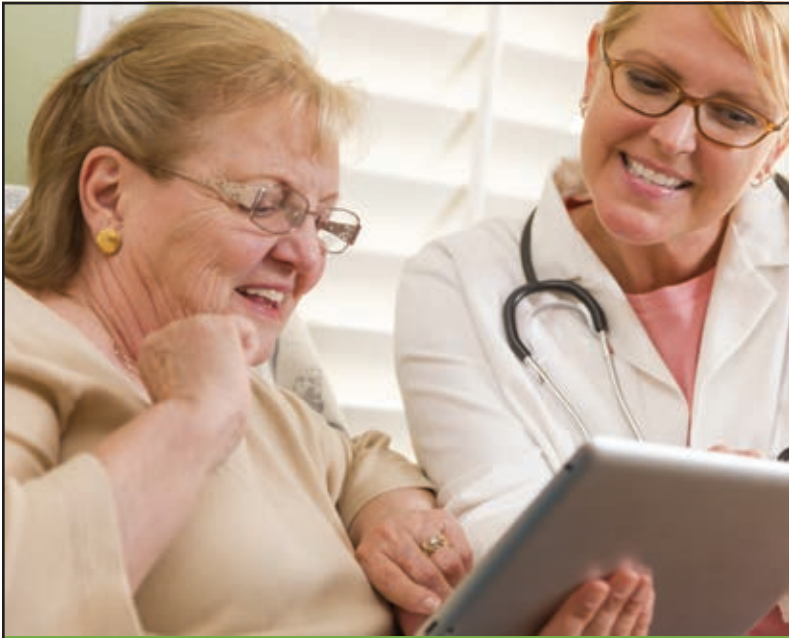
If you would like to learn more about United Community Health Center, the services we offer, we invite you to visit uchcaz.org or follow us on Facebook, Instagram, and LinkedIn.

Educating the Community



Jessica Navarrete
Director of Quality Improvement & Risk Management

Jessica Navarrete serves as UCHC's Director of Quality Improvement, where she leads initiatives focused on clinical quality, patient safety, risk management, and population health across the organization. With over 20 years of healthcare experience, Jessica brings a strong background in nursing and quality improvement to her work supporting providers and care teams. She has been with UCHC for more than a decade and is passionate about strengthening systems that improve patient outcomes and advance high-quality, patient-centered care.



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Are you or a loved one impaired and often find yourself unable to attend appointments?

We've got the program for you!

We offer free transportation to our telemedicine site/free telehealth services to attend your medical appointments from the comfort of your own home!

CONTACT VAS TODAY

Valley Assistance Services



valleyassistanceservices.org
520-625-5966

Transforming Health Through Transportation
 now available in Santa Cruz County
 and coming soon to Pima County



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Regaining your quality of life begins when you **CHOOSE** exceptional results in rehabilitation.

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Arizona
Family Restaurant

HOURS
 7AM - 9PM




UPCOMING EVENTS:

RIBS SPECIAL

Our popular ribs will be available on Saturdays in addition to Mondays! We slow roast the ribs so they are fall-off-the-bone tender, coat them in delicious BBQ sauce, and serve them up with your choice of 2 sides. Available at 3pm both Saturday and Monday.

Sunday, May 11th we'll begin our special meal for Mother's Day at 11:00am. Our full menu will be available all day. Join us to celebrate the special women in your life. Call 520-625-3680 to reserve.

\$4.00 OFF

Breakfast, Lunch or Dinner

Buy one entree at regular price and get \$4 off 2nd entree of equal or lesser value with purchase of 2 beverages
 Excludes Friday, Sunday & Holiday
 One coupon per customer. Coupon may not be combined with any other offer.
 Expires 6/30/2026

\$2.00 OFF

with purchase of 1 entree and 1 beverage

Excludes Friday, Sunday & Holiday
 One coupon per customer. Coupon may not be combined with any other offer.
 Expires 6/30/2026

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Bringing the flavors of Mexico to your table since 2007 - where every meal feels like coming home.



At El Patio, it's more than just great food—it's an experience. Step into a warm, colorful atmosphere filled with friendly smiles, lively conversation, and the comforting aroma of traditional cooking. Whether you're gathering with family, catching up with friends, or enjoying a quiet dinner, you'll always feel welcome here.

EL PATIO
Mexican Restaurant

100 W DUVAL MINE RD
Phone: 520-399-3300
Open Tuesday - Sunday 8AM- 8PM

 **ELPATIOAZ**  **ELPATIOAZ**

AMAZING!

Thank You White Elephant Volunteers

The White Elephant is truly a unique store, filled with amazing volunteers, and supported by a generous and exceptional community. Our volunteers give wholeheartedly and generously, loving the work they do and doing it so well. Our donors are always thanking the Elephant for being here to take their items, and they give willingly and repeatedly. Our customers come regularly and with gusto, always happy to find that one perfect item they just have to have. Rarely does one leave the White Elephant empty-handed!

Volunteers at the Country Fair White Elephant fill the many positions available that make the store the success that it is today. We have volunteers who keep us working in good form, from our donation drop-off area where items are received and delivered to the different departments for processing, to the many work areas where items are sorted, priced and displayed in our store, to the various positions in the store itself like sales people, cashiers, and baggers. We also have physically able folks who help in our customer pickup area and on our trucks that go out into the community to pick up furniture and large appliances. If you're looking for a volunteer position, we're sure we can find one for you at the White Elephant. You'll have fun, make friends and get a good workout while helping raise money to support the many programs and services vital to the welfare of the community and its residents. People who volunteer on a regular basis have a healthier outlook on life. They are more inclined to be go-getters and consistently report being happier. Young, old, professional, student, teacher - it doesn't matter. Volunteering is good for everyone and it's a great way to help raise money for your community.

The White Elephant extends a huge THANK YOU to all of our volunteers and welcome additional helpers. If you are a year-round resident and would like to volunteer at the White Elephant, please stop into the store or to our donation drop-off area and pick up a volunteer application. We are located at 601 N. La Canada, just west of the library.

CFWE 2025 GRANT DISTRIBUTION SUMMARY

White Elephant Scholarship Foundation	\$162,500
Public Schools	\$476,000
Private Schools	\$51,000
Youth Organizations	\$146,000
National Disease Control	\$4,000
Adult and Child Assistance	\$774,300
Community Art Support	\$32,400
Area Nature Study	\$32,300
Fire Departments	\$84,000
Total	\$1,762,500




We are very grateful to all our volunteers at Friends In Deed. Whether you are working at our front desk, equipment area, transportation, staff office assistance, blood pressure screening or helping with our Friday socials YOU make Green Valley a better place to live.

THANK YOU

If you would like to help, go to FriendsInDeedGV.org or call 520-625-1150



Valley Assistance Services
Thanks their wonderful volunteers who continue to strengthen Valley Assistance Services's mission. Thank you for your time, talents and caring. Your generous time and talent helps those from Sahuarita to Rio Rico with transportation, friendly visits and calls, education, coaching, data entry, office and reception and program and outreach assistance. Thank you for being a part of our organization.



CELEBRATING VOLUNTEERS
WE THANK YOU ALL!



We also thank those who have interned at VAS from colleges & high schools Thank you for being a part of our team

Valley Assistance Services
520-625-5966
www.valleyassistanceServices.org



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Visit our showroom. Serving the Green Valley and surrounding communities for over 35 years. You can trust Green Valley Jewelers... **JUST ASK YOUR NEIGHBOR!**

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- DON'T SELL YOUR GOLD JEWELRY! PUT YOUR JEWELRY ON CONSIGNMENT
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Exceptional Discounts Every Day

Connie Lamberto, Owner/Goldsmith
Come Visit Us! Continental Mall, 4 doors down from Safeway
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Putting the Green in Green Valley ~ Since 1980



Visit the Arid Garden and Desert Meadows Park
 These and other green spaces have been created and maintained by garden club volunteers for the benefit and enjoyment of Green Valley residents and visitors


THANK YOU.

Celebrating 62 Years

The White Elephant extends a huge THANK YOU to all of our volunteers.

Thank you to all the volunteers at the White Elephant in Green Valley. Every day you donate your time allows us to give back to so many organizations in need, we truly couldn't do it without you. Your time will always be appreciated.

COUnTRY FAIR



WHITE ELEPHAn T, In C

Celebrating 55 Years

Our Volunteers Make it Happen, Your Donations Make it Possible

Friends In Deed

Serving Green Valley Areas

Looking for Drivers and Transportation Office Volunteers

We are a 100% volunteer organization and we need YOU to keep our mission alive!

For more information call (520) 625-1150 or visit us at 301 W. Camino Casa Verde, Green Valley
 Office hours: Monday-Friday 9AM-3PM

You may donate online at FriendsInDeedGV.org





Durable Medical Equipment



Chuck Dorr, Board President with new social van



Tomi Smith, Friday Social Manager



NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF LETTER CARRIERS
Stamp Out Hunger
FOOD DRIVE

MAY 9

Fill a bag, feed families!

Leave your donations of non-perishable food items next to your mailbox before the time of your regular mail delivery on **Saturday, May 9th**, to support the Community Food Bank.

Powered by **TEP**

communityfoodbank.org/stamp-out-hunger-gv



Celebrating 28 Years!

With heartfelt thanks, the owners and staff of Manuel's Restaurant are grateful to our community for 28 years of loyalty, memories, and shared meals.

Looking forward to serving the community for many years to come!

121 West Duval Rd • Green Valley
(520) 648-6068

Dine In or Order online
 Groups • Parties • Catering

AWESOME!

Celebrating Our Volunteers

April is National Volunteer Month in the United States. Valley Assistance Services (VAS) has many reasons to celebrate this occasion:



- **Over 100** registered volunteers at Valley Assistance Services
- **Over 7,400** hours donated by volunteers annually
- **Over 8,000** community members served by volunteers annually
- **Over 37,000** miles driven by volunteers to transport seniors to essential services, or to run errands for homebound seniors
- **18** community health and social service programs that are served by volunteers

The dedication and hard work of VAS volunteers has, and continues to, serve our community in immeasurable ways. The tasks volunteers complete are as varied as the volunteers themselves who range in former/present vocations from teachers to homemakers to carpenters to law enforcement and every other career imaginable; and who have skills and attributes as unique as their backgrounds.

“I wanted to volunteer to give back to the community I live in.” - A Volunteer at VAS

If you are a current volunteer at VAS, **WE THANK YOU** and could not serve this community without your support! If you have thought about volunteering, or would like more information about the opportunities available to you, please contact us at 520-625-5966, volunteers@valleyassistanceservices.org, brooke@valleyassistanceservices.org or website www.valleyassistanceservices.org. We would love to discuss with you how your unique history, skill-set, interests, and personality can serve the community through VAS.

Please consider volunteering at VAS. Your generous time and talent helps those from Sahuarita to Rio Rico, and west into Arivaca, with transportation, visits, calls, engaging and empowering residents to become active and decreasing health risks such as social isolation. Your gift will make a difference to our neighbors in need. Please consider volunteering: as a greeter/receptionist, as an assistant with data/reports, as a driver in Pima and/or Santa Cruz County, as a financial literacy educator, as a workforce coach, as a friendly phone caller, as a friendly visitor, group facilitator, as an outreach volunteer, or as a volunteer in assisting with one of our many programs. There are many opportunities at VAS, many opportunities that are of assistance to many in our communities.



Our next volunteer orientation is in May with date to be determined.

We look forward to you joining our team.

Thank you,
Valley Assistance Services



This column is provided by Westgate Garden Design (520) 829-0399

gardening *tips*

By Charlene Westgate, Permaculture Landscape Designer

BUILDING HEALTHY SOIL FROM THE GROUND UP

On a warm morning, I stood with a client, “Linda,” in her backyard in Green Valley. She rammed her shovel against the ground and laughed, a little frustrated. “I think I’m digging in concrete,” she said. The hard, rocky soil caused water pooling, running off instead of soaking in. No matter what she tried, the landscape never seemed to thrive.

If you’ve had a similar experience, you’re not alone. But as Linda discovered, it can also become the foundation of a truly resilient and beautiful landscape when we learn how to create healthy soil.

Understanding What You’re Working With

Desert soils are often low in organic matter, lacking the structure needed to hold moisture and nutrients. Many are compacted, limiting airflow and root growth. Add intense sun and sporadic rainfall, and it’s easy to see why plants struggle.

In nature, desert soil health is created naturally through organic matter left in place, minimal soil disturbance, and efficient use of rainfall. This builds microbial and fungal activity.

Soil is a living network of microbes, fungi, and pore spaces allowing air and water to move and tended by living organisms. When we impose a traditional gardening model—leaf blowing that removes vital organic matter, heavy irrigation, excessive gravel, chemicals

that destroy soil micro-organisms, and non-adapted plants—we disrupt natural processes.

We have an opportunity to take a different approach.

Rethinking Soil Disturbance

In Linda’s yard, we started by addressing landscape maintenance practices. Rather than leaf blowers, chemical herbicides and repeated plant shearing, Linda discontinued monthly landscape maintenance.

Leaving organic matter, rather than blowing it away, helped build soil nutrients. Soil organisms began to return as chemicals were flushed from the soil. Replacing gravel with mulch, especially in the backyard, kept soil cooler. Shrubs looked more natural and required less water when excessive pruning ended.

This approach requires patience—but saves money and creates lasting results.

Water as a Soil-Building Tool

As Linda and I working together, the next breakthrough came from rethinking water, where soil moisture increases soil life. Instead of relying solely on irrigation, we looked at how her property could use rainfall more effectively.

We reshaped parts of the landscape to slow and direct runoff—shallow basins around plants to hold rainwater, subtle grading to guide runoff into planting areas, and rocks and berms to slow the flow. Now, water infiltrated deeper into

the soil, supporting microbial life and encouraging stronger root systems.

This is one of the most powerful shifts you can make—seeing water not just as something you apply, but as something you harvest and steward.

The Turning Point: Building Organic Matter

Back in Linda’s yard, we began building the soil from the top down.

Organic matter is the single most transformative element for desert soil. It improves structure, allowing water to infiltrate rather than run off. It feeds beneficial microbes that make nutrients available to plants. It moderates temperature at the soil surface, protecting roots.

We focused on a few simple, powerful practices. Adding **compost** to the soil of planting areas to encourage soil life. Generously applying **mulch** around plants to build soil life, moderate soil temperatures, reduce evaporation and suppress weeds. This includes leaving leaves and small plant trimmings—free mulch, left in place where appropriate.

Within a season, Linda noticed something shift. Water began to soak in instead of pooling. The soil softened and became richer. Plants improved.

Choosing Plants That Build Soil

Perhaps the most rewarding change in Linda’s landscape came from the selection of native plants. These plants did more than survive—they thrived while contributing to the health of the soil itself by adding **organic matter**, adding **nitrogen**, developing **deep roots**, and requiring **less water**.

Native shade trees keeping soil cool and moist. Native grasses with fibrous roots stabilize soil.



Native plants thrive in healthy soil using wood chip mulch. Photo courtesy of Charlene Westgate

Plants with seed pods help add nitrogen to the soil. Tall, native evergreen shrubs act as windbreaks to keep soil from drying out. Native groundcovers and perennials act as a living mulch.

In other words, a well-designed landscape becomes a living system—where plants, soil, and water work together.

A New Relationship with Soil

A year later, Linda invited me back. This time, she didn’t hand me a shovel. Instead, she pointed to a thriving garden—softly mulched soil, healthy plants, birds moving through the space. “My yard feels alive,” she beamed.

That’s the transformation we’re after: a landscape that is more resilient, more water-efficient, and more connected to its place.

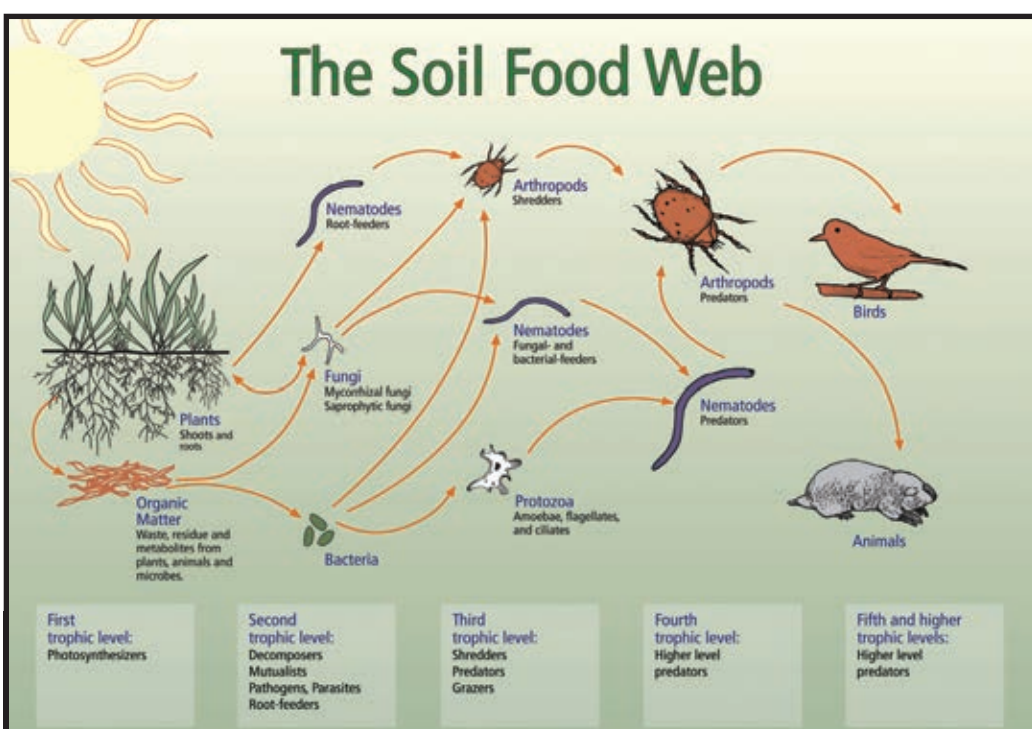
Bringing It All Together

Building healthy soil in an arid climate is not about forcing the land to behave differently. It’s about understanding nature—and partnering with it.

Start small. Adjust maintenance practices for sustainable results. Observe how water moves and contour the soil to use it. Add compost and apply mulch to build healthy soil. Choose plants that belong. Over time, your soil will change—and with it, your entire landscape.

Because when you begin to work with Nature rather than against it, something remarkable happens: your garden becomes not just something you maintain, but something that supports life—yours included—season after season.

Here’s to your landscape—growing from the ground up.



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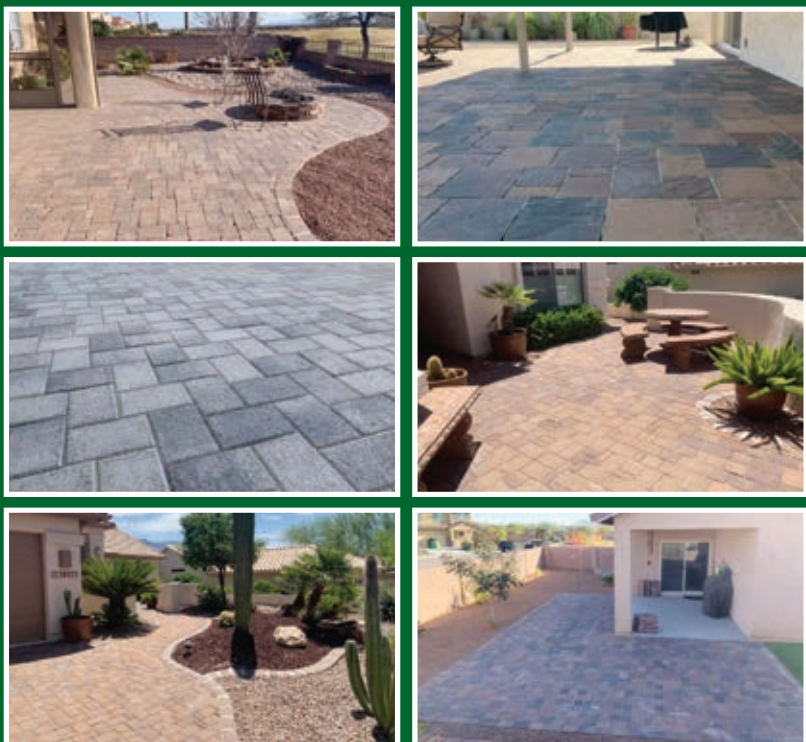
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Community Food Bank of Southern Arizona Celebrating 50 Years of Impact

Submitted by Community Food Bank

When the Community Food Bank of Southern Arizona first opened its doors in January of 1976, it had one employee, one volunteer, and one single donated delivery truck. Its mission was simple but urgent: to address hunger locally. No one could have anticipated just how significantly the organization would grow alongside the community it serves.

The Community Food Bank has evolved from a modest Tucson warehouse on 4th Avenue that distributed 10,000 emergency food boxes its first year, to what it is today – a regional lifeline to many.

Last year alone, through four resource centers, 19 mobile distribution sites, and hundreds of partner agencies, the Community Food Bank distributed over half a million emergency food boxes and 38 million pounds of food to neighbors in need across five counties – a region larger than many U.S. states.

While its reach has expanded dramatically, growth has never been the goal for its own sake. The Community Food Bank has introduced dozens of programs over the years to not only feed those in need today, but to strike at the deeper, systemic causes of hunger and poverty.



“50 Years of Impact” in Southern Arizona. As we commemorate this achievement, we also pause to honor the community that has made this journey possible. Every volunteer, donor, partner, advocate, and neighbor has shaped what the food bank is today. This milestone belongs to all of us.

As we look ahead to the next 50 years, hunger remains a challenge. But it is a challenge we can solve...together. Whether you give your time, your resources, or your voice, your support is essential in strengthening our community and helps us ensure our communities

are healthy and hunger-free today, tomorrow, and always.

To join our fight against hunger and shape the next 50 years of impact, please visit www.communityfoodbank.org/get-involved

Programs like Farm to Child bring hands-on garden education to children in low-income schools, helping them build lifelong connections to healthy food.

The Caridad Community Kitchen Culinary Training Program equips community members facing employment barriers with professional culinary skills and confidence, opening doors to stable, meaningful work.

Our Child Nutrition program not only stocks school pantries in seven school districts across Southern Arizona, but also provides afterschool and summer snacks to help children stay nourished and ready to learn and thrive.

Our local food programs strengthen regional food systems by supporting area farms, connecting growers with reliable buyers, and increasing our community’s access to fresh, locally-grown produce.

These and many other initiatives reflect our commitment to fighting hunger at every level. In recognition of this innovative approach, the Community Food Bank was honored as Feeding America’s “Food Bank of the Year” in 2018.

This year, the Community Food Bank proudly celebrates



AWESOME!

Santa Rita Fire District Fire Corp Volunteer Appreciation

At the Santa Rita Fire District, our mission has always been rooted in compassion, competence, and character—values that guide every fire, medical, rescue, and community service call we answer. Serving more than 55,000 residents across 55 square miles, our district provides all-hazards fire protection, emergency medical response, technical rescues, and an array of proactive community safety programs. Our five fire stations operate 24 hours a day, every day of the year, supported by dedicated crews who respond to fires, EMS incidents, motor-vehicle accidents, hiker rescues, swift-water emergencies, desert animal relocations, and more. Yet, despite the strength of our professional team, there is a critical force behind Santa Rita Fire District's success—our incredible Fire Corps volunteers.



Your contributions elevate and expand what we can accomplish as a district. Fire Corps volunteers provide essential non-emergency support, allowing our firefighters to stay mission-ready and fully focused on emergency response. You make it possible for us to deliver services that directly protect our community's safety, independence, and overall well-being. These programs—many nationally recognized—are thriving because of your generosity, dedication, and heart.

Your work touches the community in countless ways. You support our Smoke Alarm & Battery Replacement Program, ensuring residents have life-saving early-warning protection. You install and maintain residential lockboxes, giving first responders rapid access during emergencies. You assist with the SHiM® fall-prevention program, Envelope of Life packets, administrative support, and so many other services that keep our neighbors safer and better prepared.

But it's not just what you do—it's how you do it. With kindness, professionalism, and genuine care, you show our community what service truly looks like. Whether you're installing a smoke detector for a worried homeowner, giving comfort during a fall-prevention visit, participating in public education events, or representing Santa Rita Fire at outreach programs with local schools and organizations, you help build trust, strengthen safety, and uphold the values our district is known for.

The growth of our programs—everything from safety checks to school presentations to community outreach—has been possible only because of your willingness to step forward and serve. Your efforts ensure we remain proactive,

prepared, and deeply connected to the people we protect.

To every Fire Corps volunteer: thank you. Santa Rita Fire District could not do what we do without you. Your time, your talent, and your heart make our community a safer, stronger, and more resilient place to live.



From Pie Day to Waffle Month, Local Restaurant Looks for Reasons to Celebrate

Written by Katie Laws, AZ Family Restaurant

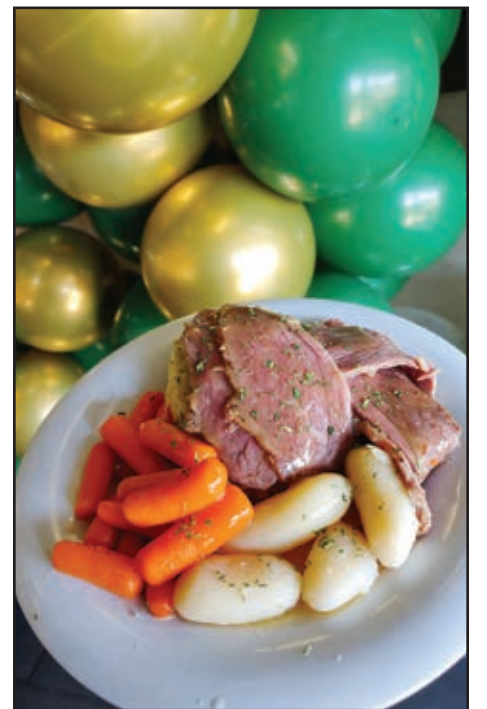
When you think about “holidays” you usually think about Thanksgiving through New Years. It's colder outside and these months are considered the “traditional holiday season.” They conjure images of roasted turkey, ham, maybe duck, a glass of champagne, and tart cranberries. This is definitely a special time of year...but why not spread holiday cheer all year long?

At Arizona Family Restaurant we pride ourselves on looking for every-day events to celebrate, from free dessert on your birthday to really decking out the restaurant for each season, we encourage our staff and guests to celebrate each day. This year we created our inaugural balloon arch, which was an absolute hit and joy-maker for everyone! I mean, who doesn't love a balloon arch?! It was like our very own tunnel of love for Valentine's Day! It was a happy way to begin your dining experience and set an extra-jubilant mood. You really can't be grumpy while you're surrounded by hearts and 4 giant balloon arches!

Since taking over the restaurant in 2022, Brad and Katie have instituted Pie Day and Waffle Month! These food-forward events celebrate our love of old-fashioned comfort food with a twist of silliness. Pie Day just celebrated it's 5th year at Arizona Family Restaurant with chicken pot pie and a HUGE variety of dessert pies. And Waffle Month will be back in September for its 5th year with flavored waffles and gourmet toppings. We love celebrating with our neighbors and creating delicious memories!

And of course, this Green Valley staple wouldn't be here without our amazing staff. They show up and make each holiday special. From our family to yours, we wish you the best holiday: from Valentine's to Independence day, Father's Day to your birthday, and every day in between.

Happy Holidays! Katie and Brad Owners of Arizona Family Restaurant
80 W Esperanza Blvd. Green Valley



Friends in Deed

Written by Chuck Dorr, Friends In Deed Board President

Friends In Deed has been serving the needs of Green Valley seniors for more than 55 years. The organization began in 1971 in a private garage, when two forward-thinking women recognized a neighbor's need for short-term access to a walker and a shower chair. From that simple act of kindness grew the organization we know today. Its motto, "People Helping People," continues to guide a dedicated team of volunteers who give their time and expertise to support others.

The Friends In Deed office is located at 301 Camino Casa Verde, Green Valley, AZ 85614. Office hours are 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., Monday through Friday, and the main phone number is 520-625-1150. More information, including a calendar of events, can be found at FriendsinDeedGV.org.

Volunteers provide a wide range of services that help seniors remain active, independent, and engaged in the community. These include lending durable medical equipment, offering free transportation to medical, dental, and legal appointments, providing regular blood pressure checks, organizing field trips, and hosting week-



Chuck Dorr, Board President with new social van

ly social gatherings. All services are free, and the organization is run entirely by volunteers.

Volunteers are truly the heart of Friends In Deed. They are neighbors and friends who contribute as little as three hours per week, often choosing their own schedules. Many volunteers take on multiple roles, all in support of the organization's mission to enhance the quality of life for aging residents in Green Valley.

One of the most vital services offered is the loan of durable medical equipment. After an injury or surgery, clients can borrow items such as wheelchairs, walkers, transfer chairs, shower chairs, toilet risers, canes, and crutches. Front desk volunteers are trained to help clients select the appropriate equipment, ensure proper fit, and provide instruction on safe use. Equipment is typically loaned for 60 days, with a possible 30-day extension.

Returned equipment is carefully cleaned, sanitized, and repaired by volunteers to ensure it remains in good condition. When items no longer meet the organization's standards, they are donated to other groups for use elsewhere in the world. All equipment is donated; Friends In Deed does not purchase or sell these items.

Transportation is another essential service. The transportation department includes volunteer dispatchers and drivers. Dispatchers schedule rides using an internal system and coordinate with drivers who are available to assist. Drivers often use their own vehicles, though Friends In Deed also operates three wheelchair-accessible vans. No special license is required, but drivers receive training to operate the vans safely.

In addition, the organization has a 15-passenger social van used for group outings to local attractions such as museums, fairs, shopping centers, and restaurants. These trips typically last about four hours and provide both recreation and social connection. While drivers may receive a small stipend for vehicle use, many consider it part of their volunteer contribution.

Clients should call at least one week in advance to arrange transportation. The transportation line is 520-625-4424. Recruiting drivers remains one of the organization's greatest ongoing needs.

Friends In Deed also offers meeting space for nonprofit groups. Four rooms of varying sizes, along with a double kitchen for light food preparation, are available. A volunteer coordinator manages scheduling for more than 50 groups that regularly use these facilities.

Health and wellness services include free blood pressure screenings every Tuesday and Friday from 9:30 to 10:00 a.m.,

provided by retired nurses and healthcare professionals. Readings are recorded so clients can share them with their physicians.

A highlight of the week is the Friday Social, where clients gather to enjoy live music, snacks, drinks, and activities. On the first Friday of each month, birthdays are celebrated with cake and ice cream. These events provide an opportunity for connection and help combat social isolation.

The organization also offers a Speakers Bureau that can provide presentations to local groups. To schedule a 30- to 45-minute program, call the main office.

Friends In Deed is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, and all donations are tax deductible. It also participates in the Arizona Tax Credit Program, which allows eligible donors to receive a state tax credit. Community generosity has sustained the organization for decades.

Visitors are always welcome to stop by, learn more, volunteer, or make a donation. Friends In Deed remains committed to helping Green Valley seniors live active, connected, and supported lives.




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Tomi Smith, Friday Social Manager

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