

Community Quarterly



White Elephant Section Pgs 11-30

Fall 2026

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Volume 17, Issue 4

Guy Chats with White Elephant Shoppers

By Guy Atchley



Holly Alires

"At least once a week I come to look at the antiques and anything that's unique that I can find to decorate my house. They have different stuff all the time. I like that they give back to the community. It goes to a good cause."



Kim Baumgartner

"It's very reasonably priced. Everything turns over so fast that tomorrow will be a whole new day. If you want it, you're eventually going to find it here. Everything is here. I come about four times a week. There has been maybe two times in four years that I walked out without something in my sack. The best thing is how the White Elephant gives back. I couldn't believe how much money they gave out last year. I'll buy clothing, wear it for a while, then it comes right back. So it's kind of a circle. I enjoy it, somebody else enjoys it and they make money again."



Ron Backlund

"The prices are really reasonable. It's a great nonprofit cause here. The money goes to a lot of great organizations and charities. It's a win, win, win situation to shop here. I enjoy looking at bikes and bike parts, men's clothing, and some of the recreational type things. It's like a treasure hunt every time time I come. It's just something I really enjoy."



Rosemarie Cheuer

"I'm manager for the SAV at the White Elephant. I do the calendar. We have between 12 and 16 volunteers. We try for four every day to roam around and maintain a presence for safety. I've been doing it for ten years. I'm a people person, and it's very fun here. Of course, we in the SAV can't shop during regular hours, but we can shop the last five minutes."

YOU'RE INVITED!

Celebrating 25 Years of Community, Connection & Caring!

KGTV RADIO & THE COMMUNITY QUARTERLY

PROUDLY INVITE YOU TO JOIN US!

Tuesday, November 3rd • 9:00 AM–1:00 PM
Desert Hills Lutheran Church
2150 S. Camino del Sol • Green Valley, AZ

For 25 years, the Sr/Boomer Info Fair has brought our community together for a day filled with information, friendship, food, health resources and fun — and we're excited to celebrate this special milestone with YOU!

Each year, KGVY Radio and The Community Quarterly host this special event as our way of saying **THANK YOU!** Thank you to our listeners, our readers, and our loyal clients that make our community so special. We are grateful that you continue to listen to KGVY, read our publications, and support the local businesses that advertise with us.

COME CELEBRATE WITH US!

Visit with more than 50 local businesses and organizations, all ready to share information about their services and how they can help you and your family.

And, of course, there will be **PLENTY OF GREAT FOOD!**

KGTV will be serving a **huge variety of complimentary breakfast, lunch and desserts!** Joining us this year are:

Jerry Bob's • Madera Sunrise • AZ Family Restaurant • El Patio • Mario McGee's Pizza • and MORE!

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- Skin Cancer Screenings with Oasis Dermatology
- A1C Sugar-Level Testing, Diabetic Foot Checks & Blood Oxygen Levels with United Community Health Center
- Balance Screenings with Valley Assistance Services
- Blood Pressure Checks with Santa Rita Fire Department
- Glucose Screening with Northwest Hospital Sahuarita
- Chair Massages with Continental Spa
- Blood Donations with the American Red Cross
- Blood donors are needed! Please sign up in advance by calling KGVY at 520- 399-1000.

As you visit with our local businesses, please let them know how important **shopping locally and supporting local businesses** is to you. Your support helps keep our community strong!

We invite you to bring a **non-perishable food donation** to help the Community Food Bank prepare for the holiday season. Every donation makes a difference!

We extend our heartfelt thanks to **Desert Hills Lutheran Church** for graciously hosting the Sr/Boomer Info Fair throughout the years, and to all the local businesses and organizations who return year after year to make this event possible.

We are especially grateful to our **2026 sponsors, United Community Health Center and Northwest Medical Center – Sahuarita**, for their support.

This celebration belongs to our entire community — and we couldn't do it without you!

Come enjoy the food, meet your neighbors, discover valuable local resources, take advantage of free health screenings, support our local businesses and celebrate **25 years of the Sr/Boomer Info Fair!**

WE CAN'T WAIT TO SEE YOU!

Chet & DeAnna Walker, KGVY Radio & The Community Quarterly



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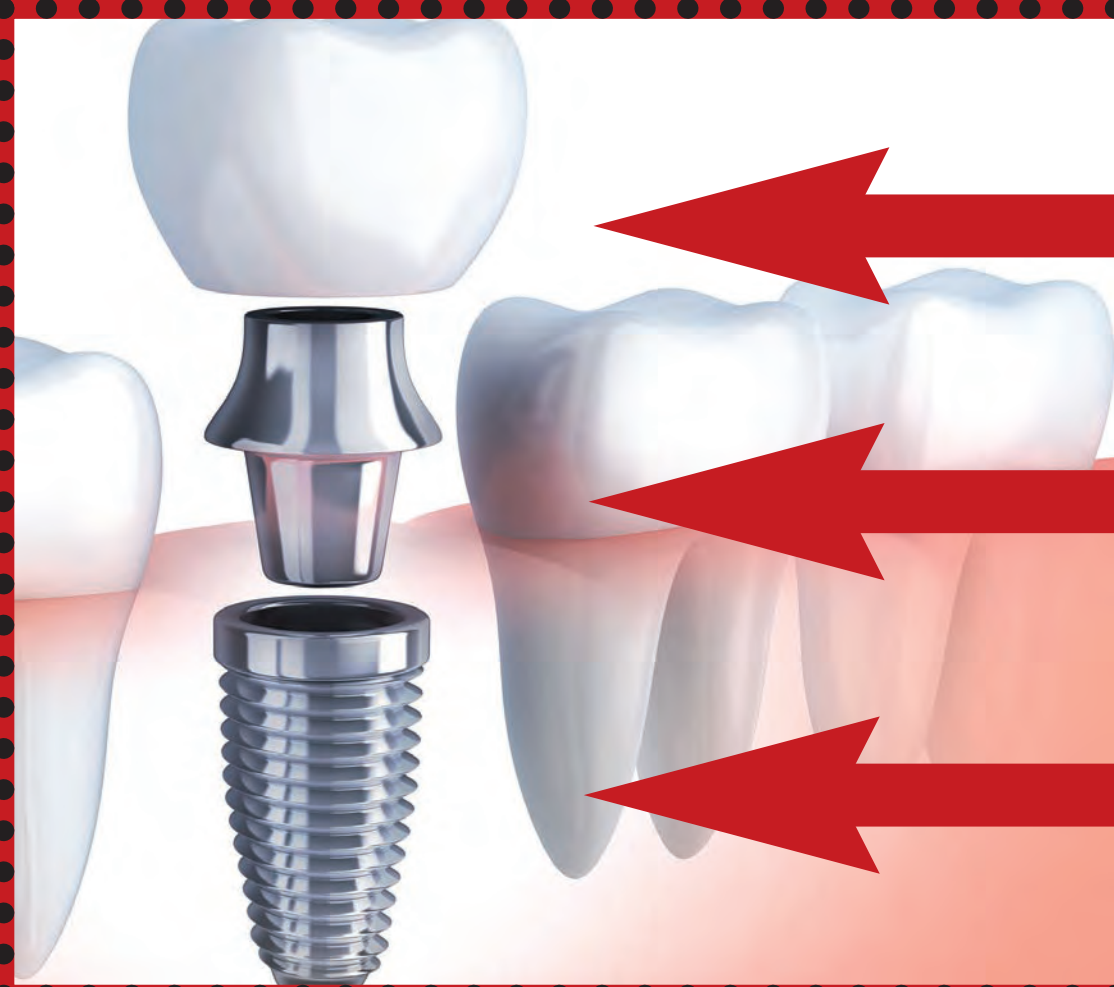
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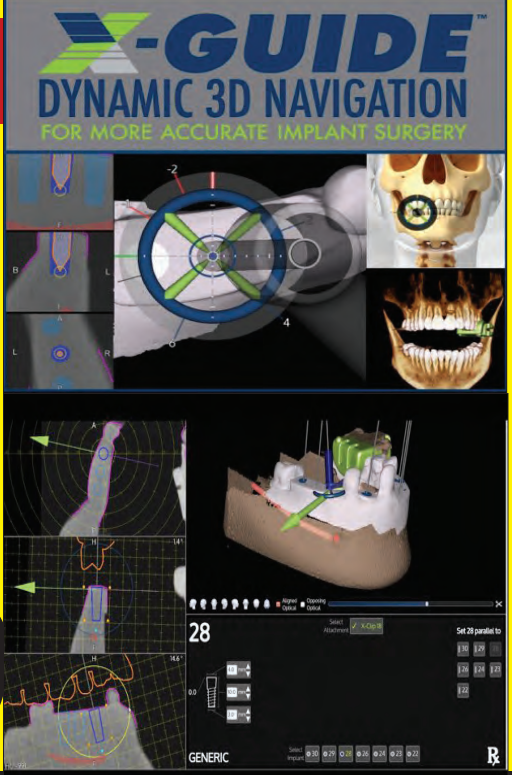
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Tuesday, November 3rd
9AM to 1PM

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Amado Youth Center
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American Southwest Credit Union
Animal League of Green Valley
Arroyo Gardens Independent & Assisted Living
AZ Home Improvement Services
Bill's Home Service Co.
Canyon Valley Memory Care
Community Food Bank - GV/Amado
Continental Spa – (Chair Massages)
Community Performance & Art Center -CPAC
Desert Hills Lutheran Church
Desert Life Pharmacy – (Flu & Covid Vaccines)
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Lions Club – (Vision Screenings)
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NW Hospital – Sahuarita (Glucose Screenings)
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Nurturing our Habitat

Starts in your yard

Submitted by Green Valley Gardeners

Why does our habitat need nurturing? Urban development and ecological strain destroy natural habitats and cuts off migratory pathways along the Santa Cruz Valley. Highly aggressive invasive plants like buffelgrass is spreading throughout the watershed. But your private property can have a positive impact when you create your own backyard habitat. Where to begin? The Green Valley Gardeners are providing a new, **free event for the community on Friday November 6 at Desert Meadows park**, that will provide you with all the resources and suggestions you need to develop your own backyard habitat.

The “Nurturing our Habitat” event will feature participation by a wide variety of local organizations dedicated to offering mini workshops, sales of native plants to attract wildlife, and bird feeders/nest boxes. Tucson Bird Alliance will have information on how to officially certify your yard as a “Habitat at Home” once established. In the past 59 years, 2.9 billion birds and up to 85% of monarchs have vanished. Learn why lizards make a great addition to your habitat. Other participating habitat partners include: Tucson Clean and Beautiful, Xerces Society, Borderlands Restoration Network, Arivaca Pollinator Pathways, U of A Pima County Extension Master Gardeners, Friends of Madera canyon, and the Sonoran Institute. If your stomach starts to growl while you’re collecting all this information, there will be a food truck on site.

Planting native plants is an essential element. How can you tell the difference between a native and non-native plant? AI defines a native plant as follows: “A native plant is legally and ecologically defined as a plant species known to grow, reproduce and exist naturally with the state’s boundaries without human introduction.” When disturbed, non-native plants really invade.

“Native” versus “adapted”? Native flora have spent millennia adapting to Arizona’s Rocky, alkaline soils and extreme weather. A plant can be perfectly suited to Arizona’s hot climate (like certain non-native Mediterranean or South African desert plants) but it is not classified as a “native” unless it originated naturally in the southwest’s ecosystem. There are roughly 20,000 species in the U.S. Arizona is home to 4,200. Of those, 1,100 species have been collected within a few miles of Green Valley. If you’re not sure, find out the scientific name and look it up in the USDA database.



Blackfoot Daisy



Fairy Duster



Chocolate Flower



Gaillarda

10 Reasons to Use Native Plants in Your Yard

- 1. They support local wildlife.**
Native plants provide the food, shelter, and breeding habitat that birds, insects, and mammals rely on. Many caterpillars and pollinators can only use specific native species.
- 2. They support biodiversity.**
Native gardens sustain a wider variety of organisms – from pollinators to soil microbes – helping stabilize ecosystems and prevent monocultures.
- 3. They require far less water.**
Because they’re adapted to our climate, native plants thrive with minimal irrigation once established.
- 4. They reduce maintenance and chemical use.**
Native plants typically need no fertilizers, pesticides, or constant care, lowering your workload and keeping chemicals out of waterways. Native plants thrive in Arizona’s natural soil conditions without needing chemical boosters. Native plants have built-in, co-evolved defenses against local pests, eliminating the need for toxic chemical sprays.
- 5. Wildlife Habitat**
Native plants offer food, shelter and nesting sites for birds, pollinators and other wildlife, helping reverse declines in insect populations. Because they co-evolved with local wildlife over thousands of years, native plants provide the exact food and shelter that indigenous birds and pollinators need to survive. Native insects often cannot eat non-native plants. Certain pollinators like the Monarch butterfly can only lay eggs on specific h like native milkweed.ost plants
- 6. Erosion Control**
Deep root systems stabilize soil, prevent erosion, and improve water infiltration, keeping your yard healthy and stable.
- 7. They help fight climate change**
Native plants sequester more carbon than many ornamental non-natives, storing it deep in the soil through extensive root systems.
- 8. They resist local pests and diseases**
Their long co-evolution with local conditions makes them naturally resilient, reducing the need for intervention.
- 9. They protect ecosystems from invasive species**
Using natives reduces the risk of introducing plants that could escape cultivation and disrupt habitats.
- 10. Seasonal interest**
From spring blooms to autumn foliage, native plants provide your yard year-round visual appeal.

Join us to learn the importance of, and how you can contribute to, the preservation of the Santa Cruz Valley migratory pathways. We've designed a fun, informative event within a functioning habitat.

Nurturing our Habitat

Starts in your yard

Friday ~ Nov 6th
10 am to 2 pm
Desert Meadows Park
An urban native habitat
at 999 S La Huerta

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Educational booths



Native plants for sale



Mini workshops



Food trucks



Games



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Participating Organizations

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Friends of Madera Canyon
Borderlands Restoration Network
Arivaca Pollinator Pathway Project
Tucson Clean & Beautiful
Pima County Master Gardeners Green Valley
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Deserting a Habitat Garden—easy steps
University of Arizona Invasive Species Outreach
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This column is provided by Joseph Lessard, CPA PLLC

TAX *update*

TAXES, TECHNOLOGY, AND THE HUMAN TOUCH

By Joseph Lessard, CPA PLLC

If you’ve noticed that Artificial Intelligence (AI) seems to be showing up everywhere lately, you’re not imagining it. From asking your phone a question to helping businesses organize information, AI is becoming a bigger part of everyday life. The tax and accounting world is no exception.

That doesn’t necessarily mean your accountant is going to be replaced by a robot anytime soon.

What it does mean is that the way we prepare taxes and work with information is changing. As tax professionals, we have an opportunity to learn how these new tools can help us do our jobs better and, more importantly, give us more time to spend with the people we serve.

Tax preparation involves a lot more than simply entering numbers into a computer. There are documents to organize, information to review, questions to answer, and details that need to be looked at carefully. Some of those tasks can be time-consuming and repetitive. If technology can help with some of that work, it can free up time for the parts of the job that require experience and judgment.

That’s where I think AI can be especially useful.

The goal isn’t to let AI make all of the decisions. Instead, it’s about using it as another tool. Just like calculators, computers, tax software, and electronic filing changed the way accountants worked, AI is another technology we need to learn how to use responsibly.

And there’s a lot to learn.

As we head into the upcoming tax season, I’m spending time learning about AI and how it can be incorporated into the tax preparation

process. I’m interested in the ways it can help with organization, research, and other time-consuming tasks. Used properly, these tools may allow us to spend less time on some of the behind-the-scenes work and more time sitting down with clients and actually talking with them.

That personal conversation is still important.

A tax return doesn’t always tell the whole story. Someone may have moved, retired, started a business, sold property, received an inheritance, or experienced another major change during the year. Those are things that are often better explained through a conversation than by simply checking a box on a form.

Technology can help us process information, but it doesn’t replace knowing the person behind the numbers.

We’re already seeing this same idea with secure online tax portals. Clients can upload documents, complete forms electronically, and communicate with their tax professional without having to make multiple trips to the office. These tools make the process more convenient while still allowing the important conversations to happen when they’re needed.

I don’t think the future of tax preparation is going to be “people versus AI.” I think it will be people **using** AI.

The accountants who learn how to use these tools effectively will be able to spend more time on the things that technology can’t do as well: listening, explaining, asking the right questions, and helping clients understand their individual tax situations.

Of course, there are also important questions that come with AI, particularly when we’re dealing with sensitive financial information. Privacy, security, accuracy, and re-

sponsible use all need to be taken seriously. Just because technology can do something doesn’t necessarily mean it should.

The tax industry has always adapted to new technology, and I don’t expect that to stop. The important thing is to make sure that as technology changes; we don’t lose sight of the people we’re using it to serve.

AI is here, and it’s going to continue growing. Rather than being afraid of it, I think it’s better to learn about it, understand its limitations, and figure out where it can genuinely make our work, and our clients’ experience, better.

Technology may change, but the



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importance of the human connection doesn’t have to.

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Denim and Diamonds: Remembering Diamond Rio

Submitted by Equine Voices

Fall is just around the corner, bringing relief from the relentless summer heat, the arrival of winter visitors, and, of course, the Equine Voices Rescue and Sanctuary Annual Fall Fundraiser!

For 22 years, Equine Voices has provided second chances to equines in need of care. This year's event is being held in memory of a horse who was very special to staff and volunteers alike. He was named Diamond Rio for the diamond marking on his forehead.

When Diamond Rio was found by Border Patrol in 2009, he was carrying hundreds of pounds of drugs on his back and suffering from a devastating leg injury. That injury would prevent him from ever being ridden and from experiencing the joy of running free. He had every reason to lose trust in the world around him.

Instead, Diamond Rio carried himself with quiet strength and dignity, becoming a symbol of courage and resilience. Although he could never be the riding horse, he might once

have been, he found a different purpose at Equine Voices. He became a comforting presence to those who cared for him and a reminder that an animal's value is not defined by what it can do for us.

Diamond Rio passed suddenly in January at the age of 26, surrounded by those who knew and loved him. It is in his memory that this year's Fall Fundraiser is dedicated.

The event, **Denim and Diamonds**, will take place at the Tubac Golf Resort and Spa on Sunday, November 15, from 4 to 8 p.m. There will be a champagne reception followed by a gourmet dinner. Guests can participate in both silent and live auctions, with music provided by locally renowned artist Ivan Orellana and the popular Javelina Blu band.

All proceeds will support the 55 horses, burros and mules currently at Equine Voices in Amado, as well as the continued establishment of Equine Voices East in South Carolina. The new facility will help bring attention to the fact that equines throughout the country face many



Diamond Rio

of the same challenges as those who find refuge at Equine Voices in Amado.

The staff and volunteers of Equine Voices believe that every horse, burro and mule deserves safety, care and a second chance at a happy life. Diamond Rio was given that second chance—and in return, he gave something equally valuable: his trust, his gentle presence and the inspiration to keep helping others like him.

You can help make that possible by attending the event, donating an auction item or making a monetary contribution.

Tickets to the event sell out quickly. For more information, visit equinevoices.org or call 520-398-2814. Come celebrate an evening of Denim and Diamonds while helping give more deserving equines the second chance they deserve.



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20 Years of Chrome, Community & Classics - Oct. 24th

Written by Cindy Barbee. Photos by Guy Atchley

There's a reason the Tucson Classics Car Show has become one of Southern Arizona's most anticipated fall traditions. Celebrating its 20th anniversary, this one-day event brings together more than **420 original and beautifully restored classic cars and trucks**, thousands of enthusiasts, automotive vendors, delicious food, and the stories behind the vehicles that shaped generations. We can't forget the hundreds of Rotary Club of Tucson volunteers who make it happen.

Returning visitors will discover plenty that's new this year. For the first

time, the show welcomes a **Classic Motorcycle** category, while a special **Rolls-Royce and Bentley Club Row** showcases some of the world's most elegant automobiles. A local private collector will unveil several rarely seen classics from a personal collection, and the **Classics Club** will reunite four previous **Best in Show** winners—giving guests a rare opportunity to see these award-winning vehicles together in one place.

Whether you're reminiscing about your first car, admiring the craftsmanship and engineering behind these automotive masterpieces, or

simply enjoying a beautiful Arizona fall day, every row offers another discovery and another conversation waiting to happen.

Admission is just **\$10**, and every ticket includes a chance to win a **2026 Corvette Stingray or \$40,000 in cash**. Best of all, every ticket purchased helps support **Youth On Their Own, Interfaith Community Services**, and the **Amphitheater Foundation's ECHO Program**, proving that a great day out can also make a meaningful difference in our community.

The Tucson Classics Car Show takes place on **October 24th** from **10 a.m.**



Tucson Classics Car Show

to **4 p.m.** at **The Gregory School, 3231 N. Craycroft Road**, with the grand prize drawing at **3:45 p.m.** Free parking and continuous shuttle service are available from the Wyatt Drive lot, off Glenn Road between Craycroft and Swan Roads, making it easy to avoid traffic and enjoy one of Tucson's premier fall events.

For tickets and event information, visit **TucsonClassicsCarShow.com**. Presented by the Rotary Club of Tucson sponsored by WeBuyHouses.com.





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The White Elephant’s 62-Year Legacy: A Community Treasure Still Going Strong

Written by Daniel Esquivel, CFWE Executive Director

The White Elephant has reached a remarkable milestone with 62 years of service, generosity, and community spirit. What began as a modest volunteer-driven thrift shop has grown into one of Green Valley’s most beloved institutions, known not only for its bargains but for its heart. This anniversary isn’t just a celebration of longevity; it’s a celebration of people, purpose, and the power of community.

A Legacy Built by Volunteers

From its earliest days, the White Elephant has been powered by volunteers who show up with dedication, humor, and a shared mission to give back. Generations of locals have sorted donations, greeted customers, repaired items, and kept the store running with a level of care you simply don’t find everywhere.

Their commitment has shaped the White Elephant into more than a thrift store—it’s a community anchor, a place where friendships form, stories are shared, and every shift feels like you’re contributing to some-

thing bigger.

More Than a Store it’s A Community Force

Over 62 years, the White Elephant has become known for:

- Supporting local charities through grants and donations
- Providing affordable goods to families, newcomers, and bargain hunters
- Creating a welcoming space where everyone feels at home
- Hosting events and fundraisers that bring Green Valley together

Its impact stretches far beyond its walls. Many local organizations rely on the White Elephant’s support, making the store a vital part of the region’s charitable ecosystem.

A Tradition That Keeps Growing

The White Elephant’s success comes from its ability to evolve while staying true to its roots. As Green Valley has grown, so has the

store by expanding departments, improving operations, and embracing new ways to serve the community. Yet the heart of the White Elephant remains unchanged: neighbors helping neighbors.

This 62-year celebration honors every volunteer, donor, shopper, and supporter who has kept the mission alive. It’s a reminder that when a community comes together, incredible things happen.

Looking Ahead

As the White Elephant steps into its 63rd year, the future looks bright. With continued volunteer support,

strong community ties, and a mission that resonates across generations, the store is poised to keep making a difference for decades to come.

The White Elephant isn’t just celebrating 62 years, it’s celebrating 62 years of kindness, connection, and community impact.

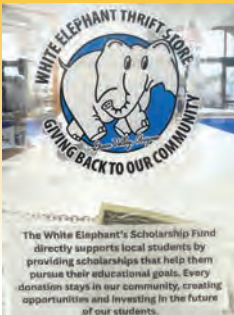
**Country Fair
White Elephant**
601 N La Cañada Dr,
Green Valley, AZ 85614

Mon-Sat: 9AM-12PM

2026 WHITE ELEPHANT THRIFT STORE STATS FROM JANUARY THROUGH SEPTEMBER

Total number of shoppers.....	180,452
Total Store Revenue	\$1,618,745.22
Total Student Scholarship Donations*	\$25,352.99

*These are any donations that The White Elephant receives for the Scholarships and the donation boxes at the cash registers. Money that is found in clothes, bags, purses, luggage when it is donated is also put towards scholarship donations.



Modernizing The White Elephant: Credit and Debit Cards Coming Soon

Written by Daniel Esquivel, CFWE Executive Director

One of the most exciting improvements on the horizon for The White Elephant is our progress toward accepting credit and debit card payments. While we will always continue to welcome cash transactions, adding electronic payment options has been a frequent request from our customers for many years.

This enhancement will provide greater convenience for shoppers, make it easier to purchase larger items, and modernize the overall shopping experience. Most importantly, it will

help us better serve our community by offering more flexibility at checkout.

We have already completed the installation of some communication wiring and are taking the next steps toward making this project a reality. Over the coming weeks, we will be working with a Cox Communications Project Manager to bring connectivity equipment from the main underground service box into our building. Due to the logistics and coordination involved, this phase is expected to take about a month to complete.

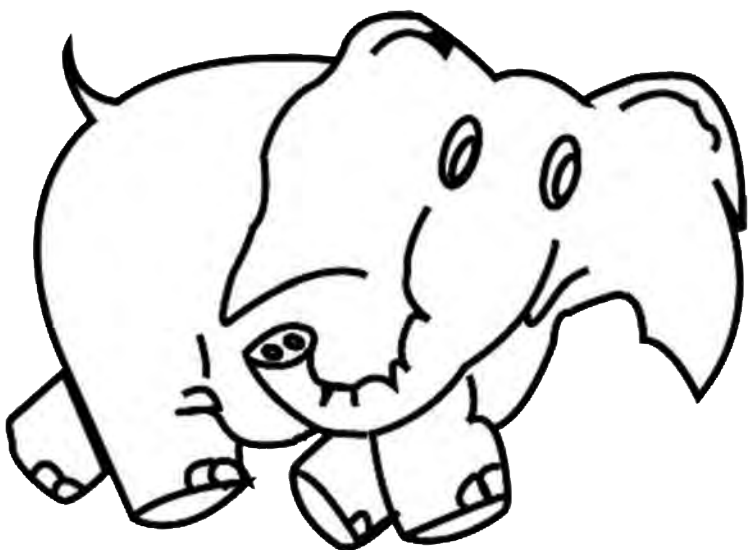


Once the infrastructure work is finished, we will begin meeting with several payment processing companies to evaluate the options and determine which provider is the best fit for The White Elephant. Our goal is to select a system that is reliable, secure, cost-effective, and easy for both customers and volunteers to use.

If everything continues to move forward on schedule, we anticipate being ready to accept credit and debit

cards before the start of next year. This is another important step in ensuring The White Elephant continues to evolve while maintaining the outstanding service our customers have come to expect.

We look forward to sharing more updates as this exciting project progresses. The future is bright, and we are committed to making The White Elephant an even better place to shop, donate, and support our community.



CFWE Awards Five Scholarships in 2026

The Country Fair White Elephant (CFWE) Scholarship Foundation recently awarded five \$5,000 scholarships to Sahuarita and Walden Grove High Schools students.

Sahuarita High School winners are Karson Darre, Brooke Bowman, and Mia Giblin-Diaz. Winners from Walden Grove High School are Jazlene Dominguez and Viannai Peralta. Scholarships are available both for university or vocational education. All five of the 2026 winners will be attending college.

Academic Scholarships are renewable for four years if a student maintains a minimum of a 2.5 average

on a four-point scale. Vocational scholarships are for one year. They are open to graduates of Sahuarita and Walden Grove High Schools, or any student who has graduated from Continental Elementary School and finished at a high school in the county.

Scholarships used for tuition, fees, & other student expenses.

The committee begins the selection process in March of each year by soliciting applicants through the counselors at the high schools. The applications are carefully reviewed, and ten students are selected for the interview.

Recipients must agree to use the scholarship for four contiguous years. There is no restriction on where a student may attend as long as the school is accredited. Funds are paid directly to the schools, and may be used for tuition, fees, or other student expenses.

“In the past, we have funded scholarships with a Grant from the White Elephant, and a duplicate Grant has gone into the endowment. However, this year the endowment, through careful management, has reached \$3 million and we anticipate in the future our foundation will be self-sustaining without requiring funds from the White Elephant. The endowment having reached this level is a really big deal and one we have been striving for many years. It means that the roughly \$100,000 the foundation has received from the White Elephant will now be able to go to other local charities. We are hopeful the endowment will continue to grow in the future, which will enable us to expand our scholarship activities,” said Tom Cooke, Scholarship Foundation President.



Tom Cooke, Scholarship Foundation President

This year the Foundation received 40 applications. The applications were reviewed in detail by Foundation members Tom Cooke, Judy Oestreich, and Chris Ashcraft. The 10 most promising applicants were interviewed in person. From those interviews, five students were awarded scholarships. Alternates are also named in the event a selectee is not able to attend college. They are Geneva Sparks and Jaylene Yanez.

“The quality of our applicants was very high and making the decisions as to which students to award scholarships to are very difficult,” said Tom Cooke. “We have confidence that the students we did select will do well and make us proud,” he added.



Jazlene Dominguez
Walden Grove High School



Viannai Peralta
Walden Grove High School



Mia Giblin-Diaz
Sahuarita High School



Brooke Bowman
Sahuarita High School



Karson Darre
Sahuarita High School

2026 Scholarship Recipients



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History of the White Elephant

Written by Maureen McCarthy, CFWE Historian

The Country Fair White Elephant Thrift Store is one of Southern Arizona’s most successful non-profit operations because of its loyal community support and ability to adapt to ever-changing customer needs.

It all began in October 1964, when a small group of community leaders organized a “country fair” to promote “good fellowship and to provide a means for residents to get better acquainted.” Their idea caught on. White Elephant annual sales over the next six decades evolved from \$146.20 to close to \$2,225,000!

In 2025 alone, the White Elephant donated \$1,762,500 in grants to local schools, youth groups, adult and child assistance groups, volunteer fire departments and thousands of dollars in scholarships for local students. In fact, White Elephant financial grants exceeded \$38 million over the years. But that’s not all the White Elephant contributes to the community. It also donates hundreds of boxes of usable, but not saleable, merchandise to various organizations every month.

This legacy is made possible by selling an enormous collection of

gently used merchandise at extremely low prices. Shopping at the White Elephant is like going on a treasure hunt where customers can find the best bargains in clothing, shoes, furniture, household items, linens, toys, books, electronics, sporting goods, patio items and so much more. Everything is donated, tax-deductible and proceeds go directly to the local community.

The 34,000 square foot Thrift Store, located at 601 N. La Canada, sits on property leased from Pima County. It is open Monday through Saturday, from 9am to 12 noon. A total of 242,066 individuals shopped at the store in 2025 and donated \$8,426 to the White Elephant Scholarship Foundation in left-over change from their purchases.

Since Daniel Esquivel became Executive Director at the White Elephant in March of 2026, he has made some policy and procedure changes, including removing the plexiglass barriers at cash registers that were installed during the COVID 19 pandemic.

“We’re committed to making things even better and smoother across several departments,” Esquivel explained. “Change is never about

progress on paper, it’s about people, and ensuring that every person here feels supported and valued.”

Another change that really is making a difference, for the first time in many years, “snowbirds” are allowed to volunteer in the store, and they really are pitching in. “We thank them very much for their assistance and certainly are welcoming them back this fall,” said Board President Fred St. Jean. “In addition, we recently ushered in a new group of year-round volunteers who already are trained and enthusiastically working both in the front and the back of the store,” he added. The White Elephant welcomed 51 new volunteers since January 2026.

To be sure, the successful history of the White Elephant would not be possible without the continued support from donors, shoppers and especially its team of over 500 volunteers. With their greatly appreciated backing, the White Elephant has grown and evolved as a wonderful place to make friends, to donate and recycle items and to go shopping without blowing up the budget.



Maureen McCarthy, CFWE Historian

“The White Elephant is not just a store or a fundraising organization, it’s a family built on kindness and purpose,” Esquivel noted. “Together, we’ll continue to build a stronger community, one donation, one project and one act of service at a time.”

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Ryan Clark..... Truck Driver
Ethan Clark..... Truck Driver



Daniel Esquivel.....Executive Director
Stacy KafkaCustodian
Manny JacquesFacilities Manager
Reggie Howell Facilities Assistant
Patti Wilkinson Office Manager
Sarah Gilbert (not available for photo).....Custodian

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Thank you Country Fair White Elephant from:

Green Valley Community Chorus

As a 2025 Country Fair White Elephant Grant recipient, Green Valley Community Chorus (GVCC) is pleased to participate in this special feature and are honored for the grant.



This support helped offset costs for our University of Arizona partnership, which placed a choral conducting student as Artistic Director every two years through summer 2026.

For years the White Elephant has supported GVCC with grants, and we thank you. We are very appreciative, especially in these hard times when funding for the arts and other social service programs has been slashed by the federal government. These grants keep tickets affordable, making quality entertainment accessible to more of our community. Our music resonates with our senior population who enjoy music that can transport them back in time. Ah, nostalgia! The grants also allow us to nurture choral music development in our local high schools.

GVCC is thrilled to now have a permanent Artistic Director, Larry Sill, who brings incredible creative talent and exceptional experience to our group. We are a passionate and vibrant community of singers dedicated to bringing the joy of music to audiences of all ages. Since 1975, GVCC has stood as a beacon of artistic excellence and community spirit in the heart of Green Valley. Guided by a steadfast mission to promote the Arts, GVCC has woven itself into the cultural fabric of the region, entertaining, educating, and inspiring audiences through its heartfelt performances of choral music. We strive to foster a love of choral music and create meaningful connections within our community.



Thank you Country Fair White Elephant from:

Santa Rita Fire District

Santa Rita Fire District extends its sincere appreciation to the White Elephant Thrift Store, operated by White Elephant Country Fair, for its generous support of fire prevention and public education. In December 2025, White Elephant provided \$24,000 toward the purchase of a LION BullsEye Fire Extinguisher Training System.



The simulator gives community members realistic, hands-on practice using an LED fire display and a laser training extinguisher. Because it does not discharge dry chemical agents or carbon dioxide, the system provides a cleaner and safer way to conduct repeated training sessions indoors or outdoors. A wireless smoke generator can add realism while allowing instructors to control the training environment.

Demand for fire prevention presentations continues to grow throughout our district. Santa Rita Fire Corps has used the simulator with local schools, Green Valley Recreation employees and volunteers, community groups and clubs, Town of Sahuarita employees, CERT members, Sheriff's Assist Team volunteers, Camp Nitro students, churches, and other community organizations.

This contribution has helped us expand practical fire extinguisher training and give more residents the confidence to respond safely during the early stages of a fire. On behalf of Santa Rita Fire District and Santa Rita Fire Corps, thank you to the White Elephant Thrift Store, its volunteers, donors, and shoppers for investing in the safety of our community.



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Over the Past 62 Years the CFWE has Granted a Total of \$38 Million to Organizations in Green Valley, Sahuarita & Surrounding Areas

Written by Maureen McCarthy, CFWE Chair of Contributions Committee

The Country Fair White Elephant Contributions Committee invited 125 organizations in June to apply for grant contributions from the White Elephant. Grant categories include Schools (Public, Private and Other,) Youth Organizations, National Disease, Fire Districts, Adult/Child Assistance, Area and Nature Study, and Community Arts. Organizations and schools should be located and/or serve clientele in the I-19 corridor of the San-

ta Cruz Valley. These invitations do not guarantee organizations will receive a contribution from the White Elephant, even if they do meet contribution guidelines provided by the Board of Directors.

Applications with the highest level of priority include those that: Aid youth of the area (either through school sponsored or other programs,) Care for physically, mentally or financially distressed individuals, Are medical clinics, hospices, hospitals, and other health-oriented organizations (particularly those which cater to the disadvantaged,) Aid the elderly, Are social service organizations. We do not consider contributions to major building programs, startup businesses for profit, organizations with annual dues or fees and organizations

which duplicate services provided by other organizations in the same area.

Applicants had until September 15 to return their completed applications which must include a copy of their 501(c)3 letter from the IRS stating they are exempt from federal income tax and that donors may deduct contributions made to their organization. In addition to providing a current financial statement, applicants also must provide a Mission Statement and what they would use the funds for if issued a grant.

Members of this year's Contributions Committee are Maureen McCarthy (chair) Joan Fischer, Cene Backus, Fred St. Jean, Di-Ann Bresina, Gary Giovanelli and Beverly Haney. They recently visited 15 organizations who received contributions in 2025.



Maureen McCarthy, CFWE Chair of Contributions Committee



Wrightson Ridge: Principal Shelly Lizardi (who recently retired) and Contributions Committee members Gary Giovanelli and Joan Fisher.



Helmet Peak Fire: HPVFD Chief Kenneth Schultz and committee members Maureen McCarthy, Gary Giovanetti and Joan Fisher..



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- Deborah, family member

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White Elephant Shoppers Chat with Guy

By Guy Atchley



Sandy Richardson

"I come whenever I can when I'm not working. This is the place to go. Prices are awesome. I bought a 1947 Juke Box, a Wurlitzer here. I love the place. Been coming here since 1999. I keep moving back to Sahuarita because of the White Elephant."



Lee Goldberg

"I've been coming to the White Elephant since 1984 before they had this big building. I come here to get exercise, be with friends and just seeing all these old familiar faces after 40 some years. It's a good community place. Plus I like odd stuff, and you find odd stuff here."



Mary Hubbard

"Well, I love the prices, and I also volunteer in the linen department to get all that stuff out on the shelves. We come here because it's something to do. It gets us out of the house in the morning, and you never know what you're going to find. One person's junk is another person's treasure, so there you go."



Alex Nielsen

"I'm 18 and just killing time until I head for college next week. I first came here with my grandma. I mainly look for clothes for school."



Kathy MacLeod

"The first reason I shop here is because the money goes to a good cause. Everybody needs help today. Plus I get reasonable prices. The books are wonderful here. That's what I come for — books and baskets."



Oscar Caldana

"I come twice a week. I come for tools—power tools, hand tools, hats. I use them at home, just keeping up the home. And I enjoy the people here."



Lilia Aguirre

"I come all the way Magdalena, Mexico several times a month. It's a two-hour drive, but it's worth it."



Maureen Sutterfield

"I live in Sahuarita so it's close, and they have great deals. Who doesn't love a discount. Every day they have new stuff to look at and browse. It's fun. I usually go to the art first, because I love art. Then I head for the jewelry."



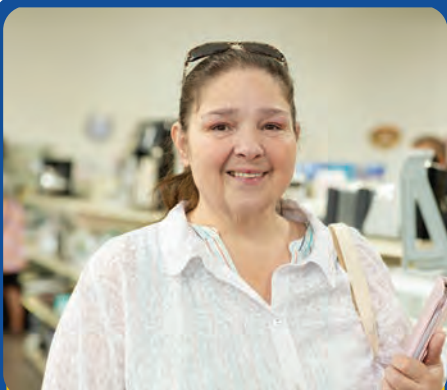
Noble Manrique

"It's a great place to buy artwork. It's inexpensive. I've already found something today. A big piece for only \$20."



Nate Wright

"I live in Green Valley. I shop here because I have nothing else to do. I look for collectibles, any kind of collectible."



Julie Kroener

"I live just up the road, and I shop here every day. I wait in line with people, and I like it because it's social. I normally gravitate to the patio and the crafts."



Gary Dyer

"It's something to do. I just look. You never know what you're going to find. The best thing I ever found was a ten dollar bill, so I made money on that trip."



Grace Kinkhead

"I shop for knick-knacks and jewelry, clothes, and I love it here. I come here every Thursday. I actually live in Tucson, and I've been making the trip for five years. My friend brought me here one time, and that did it. I buy something just about every time — even if I don't need it. But it's fun to come here."



Greg Lockley

"We moved here about ten years ago and learned about the White Elephant. My wife is the main shopper. I usually look for sheet music books. I collect them. I play them. I play the guitar with the Green Valley Stage Band."



Gail Farmer

"I come here probably 3 or 4 times a month. I look for clothes, shoes, household items. White Elephant does a lot for the community with their donations. Also, I like to keep things out of the landfill — reuse, repurpose and recycle."



Holly Farmer

"I'm Gail's sister, and I enjoy our time together here at the White Elephant. I love the deals. You can get great clothes. I love that it supports the community. There are so many worker bees that come here. They always have big smiles and are willing to help."



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Turning Scrap into Support: The White Elephant Recycling Program

Written by Daniel Esquivel, CFWE Executive Director

Many people know The White Elephant for its unique treasures, quality furniture, and commitment to giving back to the community. What many may not realize is that even items that cannot be sold continue to support our mission through our recycling program.

From January 1 through the end of August, The White Elephant received \$9,416.28 from recycled metal. These funds help offset the costs of operating our truck program, including truck maintenance, repairs, and fuel expenses that keep our pickup and delivery services running throughout the community.

Not every donated item can make it to the sales floor. Some items are simply beyond repair, no longer work, cannot be properly cleaned, or do not meet the quality standards our customers expect. Rather than sending these materials directly to the landfill, our recycling team finds



Glen Pfefferkorn

a way to give them a final purpose.

This important work is made possible by two dedicated volunteers, Glen Pfefferkorn and Jim Williams who remove metal from donated items that are no longer suitable for sale. I refer to them as the “Demolition Brothers”. Their efforts ensure that valuable recyclable materials are recovered and processed re-

sponsibly.

The results are remarkable. During the first eight months of this year, The White Elephant recycled 26 tons of metal. That is 26 tons of material kept out of our local landfills, reducing waste while generating revenue that directly supports our operations.

The recycling program is a perfect example of how the White Elephant mission comes full circle. Donations that cannot be sold still create value for our organization and our community. The proceeds help maintain the trucks that collect future donations, while the recycling effort helps protect our environment for future generations.

We extend our sincere appreciation to the volunteers who make this program possible. Their hard work behind the scenes often goes unnoticed, but the impact is significant.

At The White Elephant, every donation matters. Even when an item cannot make the cut for the store floor, it can still make a difference. That’s the White Elephant way, finding value in every opportunity and turning it into support for our community.



Jim Williams

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Honoring 20 Years of Service: Celebrating Four Exceptional Volunteers

Written by Daniel Esquivel, CFWE Executive Director

The White Elephant in Green Valley, AZ is built on the dedication, heart, and generosity of its volunteers. This year, the organization proudly recognizes four remarkable individuals, Nancy Crosby, Janet Flowers, Anita Larson, and Yvonne Steinbring, each celebrating 20 years of volunteer service. Their commitment has shaped the White Elephant's legacy and strengthened the community it serves.

Nancy Crosby

For two decades, Crosby has been a steady, uplifting presence at the White Elephant. Known for her reliability and warm personality, she has helped create an environment where volunteers feel supported and customers feel welcome. Her dedication reflects a deep love for community service and a belief in the mission of giving back.

Janet Flowers

Janet's 20 years of service are marked by kindness, patience, and a willingness to help wherever she's needed. Her work behind the scenes and on the floor has made a lasting

impact on the store's operations and the people who rely on it. She embodies the spirit of volunteerism through her consistency and compassion.

Anita Larson

Anita has spent two decades contributing her time, energy, and expertise to the White Elephant. Her attention to detail and strong work ethic have helped maintain the store's high standards. Volunteers admire her dedication, and customers appreciate the care she puts into every task.

Yvonne Steinbring

Yvonne's service is defined by her positivity and her commitment to helping others. Over 20 years, she has become a familiar and friendly face to many. Her contributions have strengthened the White Elephant's ability to support local charities and serve the Green Valley community.

A Legacy of Service

Together, these four volunteers represent 80 combined years of dedication. Their work has supported

countless customers, uplifted fellow volunteers, and helped the White Elephant continue its mission of community support and charitable

giving. Their milestone is not just a celebration of time, it's a celebration of impact.



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Our curriculum includes subjects from across many fields, including literature, science, history, art, languages, current events, music, health and medicine, movies, technology, and more!

OLLI's social programming — such as mahjong groups, lunches out, and arts and crafts groups — provides a wonderful way to meet new people with similar interests or to try out a new hobby. You can even travel overseas with OLLI!

OLLI's in-person classes in Green Valley take place at 1250 W. Continental Road. We hope to see you there!

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For information on classes, memberships, or teaching at OLLI, visit olli.arizona.edu or call 520-626-9039



Thank You to Our White Elephant Volunteers



Monday Morning Volunteers



Monday Afternoon Volunteers



Tuesday Morning Volunteers



Tuesday Afternoon Volunteers



Wednesday Morning Volunteers



Wednesday Afternoon Volunteers

Thank You to Our White Elephant Volunteers



Thursday Morning Volunteers



Thursday Afternoon Volunteers



Friday Morning Volunteers



Friday Afternoon Volunteers



Saturday Morning Volunteers



Saturday Afternoon Volunteers

A Community That Shows Up

Written by Daniel Esquivel, CFWE Executive Director

The White Elephant thrives because the people of Green Valley, Sahuarita and the surrounding communities show up consistently, generously, and with heart. Volunteers bring energy and dedication, donors bring items that find new life, and shoppers bring enthusiasm that keeps the mission moving forward.

This partnership between the store and the community has created something rare: a place where every action, big or small, makes a difference.

Every box dropped off at the donation door becomes part of a larger story. Items are cleaned, sorted, repaired, and placed on the shelves where they become affordable essentials for families, collectors, newcomers, and bargain hunters.

Those donations also fuel the White Elephant’s charitable giving. Through grants and community support programs, the store has been able to uplift local organizations, fund vital services, and strengthen

the fabric of Green Valley.

The White Elephant’s success is not measured in sales or inventory it’s measured in impact. It’s seen in the smiles of customers, the relief of families finding what they need, the joy of volunteers working side by side, and the strength of local organizations supported through grants. None of this would be possible without the community that stands behind the store.

A Heartfelt Thank You

To every donor, volunteer, shopper, supporter, and friend: thank you. Your generosity keeps the White Elephant thriving. Your spirit keeps its mission alive. And your commitment ensures that the store will continue to serve Green Valley and surrounding communities for many years to come.

The White Elephant is proud to be part of this community and even prouder to say that everything it accomplishes, it accomplishes with you.



Country Fair White Elephant (CFWE) Board Treasurer, Judy Barkley was recently honored in The Nogales International, Green Valley News and Sahuarita Sun AZ19 region’s most influential people awards.

Her many years and hours of volunteering are also recognized here at the CFWE.

Judy has worn the hat of Board President, Parade Chair, Grant Chair and Committee Member, Scholarship Foundation President, Treasurer, and Store Volunteer over the years.

Congratulations Judy and Thank You for helping to make the CFWE what it is today, for our community!

HOURS
7AM – 9PM

UPCOMING EVENTS:

Every Tuesday & Thursday: Karaoke – 6-9PM

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Our popular ribs are available Saturdays and 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 days!

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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 12/31/2026

\$2.00 OFF

with purchase of 1 entree and 1 beverage

Excludes Friday, Sunday & Holiday

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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.

Letter from the CFWE Board President

Written by Fred St. Jean, CFWE Board President

The Country Fair White Elephant is a unique thrift store. It gives back to the community grants that help many non-profit organizations in the area. The groups include public schools, private schools, youth organizations, community arts, theatre studies, adult and children assistance programs.

In 2025 over \$1,700,000 was awarded. You can look online and see all the groups that received grants. Besides grants, it also funds high school students for college and vocational programs for 20 students each year. It has helped more than 150 local students since the late 1990s.

Each year the grants are distributed in December. This year it is Thursday, Dec. 10th at 8:30 AM in the GVR West Center, and I invite you to attend. The general public is welcome. Last year I was given the honor to hand out the grants to each organization that also do so much in our community, and we know that help is needed more than ever.

It is a very special day because each group is given the opportunity to tell about their organization and what they do in the community. All of the programs are working hard to help so many, many people in need.

This wouldn't happen each year if it wasn't for the people who donate goods, the generosity, and shop at the White Elephant stopped coming.

It is really an amazing place to shop. Every year there seems to be new customers who have never been to the White Elephant and lived in Green Valley — sometimes 4 or 5 years.

Perhaps you're one of these residents. Stop in sometime soon and I am sure you will be amazed at what you find. The selection is unbelievable and the volunteers are friendly and helpful.

If you are a regular customer and someone new has moved in your area,

invite them to come with you some day. I'm sure they will be pleasantly surprised.

We have so many dedicated volunteers who make this all possible. You might also consider becoming one. It is a great place to make new friends along with helping the White Elephant continue its goal of giving back to the local community.

On behalf of the Board of Directors, thank you for supporting the White Elephant. We do hope that we can continue to support these organizations in the Green Valley area for years to come.



Fred St. Jean, CFWE Board President. Photo courtesy of Regina Ford

COUNTRY FAIR WHITE ELEPHANT BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2026

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VALLEY ASSISTANCE SERVICES

520-625-5966

CARING FOR OUR COMMUNITY

Valley Assistance Services is a blend of social services and community health that supports, guides, and empowers all individuals, with 18 person-centered programs that restore futures & enrich lives of those in our communities in Pima and Santa Cruz Counties.



SOCIAL SERVICE PROGRAMS

Rental, mortgage, and utility assistance. Benefit advocacy. Workforce development and work readiness programs. Essential pantry (food and essentials), and diaper bank. Financial classes. Computer classes. Transportation and errands program.



COMMUNITY HEALTH PROGRAMS

RN advocacy, medication management, fall prevention, support groups, socialization support groups, friendly phone calls and visits, health education, and telemedicine at hubs and homes with telemedicine vans. Hot meal delivery program.



VOLUNTEER WITH US

Volunteer opportunities: drivers, outreach team, office, support group leaders, data entry, friendly callers and visitors, and assist with fundraisers. There are volunteer opportunities at our outreach and fundraising events.



Save the Date:

Empty Bowls
February 20, 2027 -
Valley Presbyterian
Church

Guac and Give
April 2027
Borderlands UU
Amado

📞 520-625-5966 🌐 valleyassistanceservices.org ✉ info@valleyassistanceservices.org

SIP, SWIRL, SHOP & SHINE FORWARD

WINE & BEER TASTING + HOLIDAY MARKET

November 14, 2026 11am - 4pm, At Historic Canoa Ranch



This event will include our New giving platform, SHINE FORWARD SOUTHERN ARIZONA, built to raise awareness for important causes, to help fund nonprofits and engage community members. Donate \$100. to your favorite nonprofit listed on shineforwardaz.org and receive 2 Free Tickets! Join us for a wonderful day featuring regional Wine & Beer Tasting, a festive Holiday Market, Live Music, and Food Trucks on the beautiful Canoa Ranch grounds. For details please go to ggvcf.org/events. Free Holiday Market entrance to the public. Event Tickets are \$30.pp, and include 10 wine/beer tastings.



SCAN FOR MORE EVENT INFO

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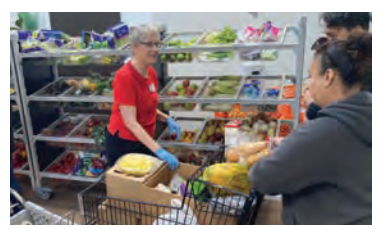




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OUR VETERINARIAN TEAM

Shelley Humphrey, DVM- I grew up with pets of all kinds and knew at a young age that veterinary medicine was my calling. Since I can remember, my education was always geared towards becoming a veterinarian. Pets bring us joy, comfort, and pleasure that is indescribable. It is my job and mission to strengthen and preserve that bond by prolonging the quality and quantity of their lives, especially as they age. I can't think of a better career! I started as a co-owner of Animal Care Center of Green Valley in 2010. In 2018 I became the proud sole owner.

Jennifer Martin, DVM- Dr. Jennifer Martin grew up surrounded by dogs and cats, and never forgot the deep comfort and love she felt from those childhood pets. Working in veterinary medicine simply made sense—Dr. Martin has never wanted to do anything else! She has enjoyed many wonderful years helping pets and their families live happier healthier lives. Dr. Martin grew up in Southern California and attended the University of California at Davis. She has had the opportunity to practice in many areas on the West Coast, and has owned clinics in Oregon and the San Francisco Bay area.



Jean Huang, DVM- Ask Dr. Huang what is most on her mind when she treats pets and she will reply, “pain management and implementation of Fear Free practices.” Making sure pain and stress are minimized before, during, and following procedures, and throughout their lifetimes, is not only her responsibility as a veterinarian, but is essential to each pet’s recovery, health, well-being, and quality of life.

Lizette Pedley, DVM - I believe my patients should live their best lives, as comfortably and pain free as possible. To support this purpose, I think preventative medicine is key.

It allows for early detection of changes consistent with disease which improves the chances that treatment will be successful.

My two biggest passions, when it comes to veterinary medicine, are internal and alternative medicine. I like to bring together western and eastern medical philosophies and practices to offer the best options for my patients and their humans.

Daniel Murray, DVM - From the time I was 11 years old, I knew that this was the career for me. My best friend’s dad was a veterinarian and I started out by helping him on his rounds of area farms. I worked for him on week ends and school breaks because I was fascinated by the animal world. I loved being able to help animals that were hurt or broken.

A BIG THANK YOU FOR YOUR VOTES!

We want to thank all of you who nominated and voted for us in the AZ19 Readers Pick! We are honored to have won Best Vet Clinic and Best Doggy Daycare since the awards started in 2019! We look forward to upholding our high standards of care for your pets in the coming year! We appreciate your trust and support!

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Thank you Country Fair White Elephant from: Sun Sounds of Arizona

- Sun Sounds of Arizona broadcasts the readings of local and national newspapers and magazines to anyone who cannot read or hold print material due to a disability
- Sun Sounds features localized news and information for Maricopa County, Tucson, and Flagstaff areas 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. All programs are read by volunteer readers. We don't edit, editorialize, or censor material.
- Listeners receive Sun Sounds via special radios, smart home devices, online streaming, and telephone dial-in streaming. Radios and smart home devices are supplied at no cost to listeners.
- Program topics include local and national news, sports, business & finance, short stories, community topics, disability news and information, pop culture, political, women's and men's magazines, and more, including some Spanish-language and weekly audio-described movies.
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- More information and service registration at www.sunsounds.org or by calling 480-774-8343. Radios or smart home devices will be sent within a week free of charge.

Sun Sounds of Arizona is grateful for the 2025 grant we received. Our organization is dedicated to providing live reading broadcasts of books, magazines, and newspapers for those who cannot read or hold print due to a disability.

Grants like this and many volunteers from around the state make our work possible.

Thank you for caring about our work. We appreciate your support.



Thank you Country Fair White Elephant from:

Sheriff's Auxiliary Volunteers of Green Valley (SAV)

The Sheriff's Auxiliary Volunteers of the Green Valley District, Inc. (SAV) have received grants from the CFWE for many years. We have a great partnership with them as we provide staff for them during the hours they are open to the public to help deter theft. In addition to patrolling the aisles of the CFWE we patrol the streets of Green Valley. SAV adds to the quality of life in Green Valley and the surrounding communities by performing several important public safety tasks. These operations include Crime Prevention, Neighborhood Watch, Field Operations, Emergency Response, Telecare, Fingerprinting, and our Scam Squad.



This past year we requested funds from them to replace some of our older office furniture, some of which dated back to WWII. We were very pleased to receive a grant in the amount of \$37,000 to help modernize our offices and give our volunteer staff a more pleasant work environment. These funds help us retain our volunteers with more modern surroundings. We have also received funds in the past to modernize our training facility and purchase a golf cart for patrolling our parks. The CFWE is an amazing place that donates more than \$1M each year to the community to help meet the financial needs of many organizations. We are very proud to partner with them in our needs and theirs.



S.A.V.
SHERIFF'S AUXILIARY VOLUNTEERS
GREEN VALLEY

The White Elephant Summer Student Work Program

The summer of 2026 brought the return of the White Elephant’s very specialized program for Sahuarita School District students. The Summer Student Work Program which began in June of 2006, is a life-skills program that gives students, who are age 14 and older who attend a Sahuarita middle school or high school, the opportunity to work at the White Elephant for an 8-week program during the months of June and July.

Students are notified that the program is available and that application packets can be picked up at their school office right around spring break time. The students then have about two weeks to return their completed application packet to the school and the process begins.

The following qualifications must be met in order to be considered for the program:

- Complete the White Elephant application and submit all the necessary paperwork to Sahuarita Schools Human Resource Department.
- Attend a panel interview with White Elephant management.
- Agree to the work program requirements and have parental permission to participate.
- Be available to work the entire 8-week program.
- Attend orientation and agree to all rules & regulations as outlined in the Student Handbook.

The program gives students a head start for future employment. For many, this is the first paying job they will have. Each student has the opportunity to experience how to complete an application, how to be interviewed, and how to accept a job offer if they are chosen. They learn a variety of positions that will teach them how to be a bagger, a cashier, a salesperson, a donation drop-off and customer pickup worker, or multiple other jobs that

they learn to do by working side by side with White Elephant volunteers who give them on the job training. The experience they gain gives them valuable knowledge that they can use in future employment situations.

Each year, our Summer Student Work Program participants have a positive impact on the work environment at the White Elephant. They fill in for volunteers who may be away for the summer or on vacation and get paid for a job well-done. The students receive a paycheck at the end of June and again on their last day of work in July. It’s a win-win program with many of our students re-applying for multiple summers. Some have even come back to work as volunteers on Saturdays and during holiday time-off during the school year.

The White Elephant is proud to support and fund this innovative program that gives student participants a solid foundation for higher education and future employment.



Melanie, Ramon and Jasmine

This is Melanie Jacques’s second year as a student summer worker at the White Elephant. Sixteen years old, she is a junior at Sahuarita High School.

Melanie is grateful for the opportunity to gain work experience and earn a little cash along the way! During her shifts on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday, Melanie helped out as a cashier, bagger, sorter and “floater.”

“I like that I am learning to work in retail,” Melanie said. “I am happy to have this opportunity. It’s hard to get jobs these days.”

Ramon Orozco said he wanted to work at the White Elephant this summer to “stay busy and help out as much as I could.” He kept very busy in Receiving and Customer Pick-up during his shifts on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday.

His favorite thing about working at the White Elephant was the “people I worked with,” Ramon said. In his junior year at Sahuarita High School, the 16-year-old loves film classes and being on the track and field team.

Moving furniture back and forth in the store certainly helped keep him in shape for the upcoming school year!

Jasmine Jacques is 17-years-old and a senior at Sahuarita High School. She said she was motivated to work at the White Elephant this summer to “get out of the house and be busy all the time.” She ended up making many new friends!

“I’m happy I took this chance to do something new this year and to make lots of new memories,” Jasmine shared. She values her experience as a cashier, bagger, sorter and floater during her shifts on Monday, Wednesday Friday and Saturday.

Art and culinary are Jasmine’s favorite subjects at school and she also enjoys music, videos and cosmetology.

White Elephant Truckers: The Team That Keeps Our Mission Moving

Written by Daniel Esquivel, CFWE Executive Director

Behind every piece of furniture on the White Elephant sales floor is a dedicated team of truckers and movers who work hard to serve our donors and support our mission. It’s demanding work year-round, but especially during the summer, when temperatures can reach 105 degrees and the inside of a truck can soar well above 150 degrees.

Despite the extreme heat, our crews are on the road every day, picking up donations and making deliveries throughout our community. Moving heavy furniture in and out of hot trucks takes strength and determination, yet our team continues to work with professionalism and a positive attitude.

When the trucks return, the work continues. Crews unload each truck and move donated items onto the sales floor, giving them the opportunity for a new life with a new owner.

Many people may not realize that White Elephant offers free pickup service for heavy furniture, appliances, interior and exterior patio furniture, cabinets, and bedroom sets. (Mattresses are excluded.)

This convenient service makes donating

easier while helping White Elephant continue its mission of serving our community.

A huge shout-out goes to our outstanding volunteer truckers and movers Ruben, Keith, Brad, and Scott. Your hard work, dedication, and commitment do not go unnoticed.

A special note of appreciation also goes to George, our volunteer Truck Manager, who works behind the scenes to ensure our trucks are safe, maintained, and ready for the road. Thanks to his efforts, we can continue providing valuable services and opportunities to our community.

At White Elephant, every donation tells a story. Our truckers help start that story by collecting donated items, our teams prepare them for sale, shoppers find treasures they love, and the proceeds are returned to support local organizations and programs. That is the beauty of the White Elephant mission: it is always full circle.

To all of our truckers, movers, and volunteers, thank you for keeping the wheels turning and helping make a difference every single day. Your hard work truly drives our success.

White Elephant Facility Report 2026

Written by Manny Jacques, CFWE Facility Manager

This monsoon season was marked by an above average precipitation outlook across much of Arizona. Tucson and surrounding areas are tracking above average by late-season, kick-started in mid-June by record-setting early moisture and sustained by warm Gulf of California sea surface temperatures and developing El Niño tropical moisture surges. The usual conversation of what the summer month’s monsoon season will bring was on everyone’s mind. The hot days brought wishes of clouds and rain to cool us down. Thankfully, with the weather we did receive, our building continued to hold up to the elements.

We have engaged in the conversation of having our roof either resurfaced or replaced. Having a few companies come out to inspect and give their professional opinions on how to tackle this massive 37,000sq.ft. roof top has yet to be decided. The goal is to find that happy medium to keep this building operational, as well as safe for all our volunteers and customers, with-

out taking too big of a bite from our overall goal to give back as much as we can to our community.

One large expense needed was the replacement of one of our nine A/C units. A very old unit that was well past its prime was finally switched out this past April. Hopefully we won’t see another unit fail anytime soon.

Speaking of systems we keep eyes on, the White Elephants “power plant” of 420 Photo Voltaic panels continue to generate impressive energy savings based on our TEP energy usage breakdown. Reports show our quarterly figures at 40,000+ kWh (Kilowatt-hour). A manual inspection verifies our unit and hardware is fully operational. A rough estimate of what our panels could have reported, was performed by plugging in the weather patterns for the summer months. What was shown is that our panels potentially generated between 45,500 kWh – 50,000 kWh. This system is definitely a wonderful investment for the White Elephant.

On behalf of all of us here at the White Elephant, a big thank you goes out to all of you in the community who continually help us drive this organization forward in our mission to give back to the community. To those who receive our support for their organization’s mission, we all are definitely partners in the ever growing family of individuals who come together to help strengthen the foundational premise of giving back to the community, and helping where it’s needed.



Manny Jacques, CFWE Facility Manager

Thrift Store Located At: 601 N. La Cañada
Shopping Hours: Mon-Sat 9AM - 12 NOON
Donation Drop Off: Tues, Wed, Thurs, & Sat 8AM - NOON
(Donation drop off is not available during rainy weather)

Join us November 3rd for our 25th Annual KGVY Sr./Boomer Info Fair

9AM-1PM • Desert Hills Lutheran Church
2150 S. Camino Del Sol, Green Valley



Looking to Volunteer?
November 10 to 12
GVR West Center
Join us at our annual event! Browse more than 50 non-profits that can use your skills!
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We help Non-Profits find VOLUNTEERS, & Volunteers find Non-Profits



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Unique Boutique is a Shopper's Favorite

Secondhand shopping has evolved from a budget necessity into a major cultural movement. Driven by Gen Z (people born from 1997 to 2012), resale fashion trends are seeing massive growth, with younger shoppers increasingly choosing secondhand apparel to fill their closets.

The US secondhand clothing market is expected to reach \$74 billion by 2029, vintage according to Threadup's 2025 Resale Report. Thrifting uniquely combines style, sustainability, and affordability while keeping textiles out of landfills.



The White Elephant stocks a variety of costume jewelry that complements almost any ensemble for sale in the store.

At the Country Fair White Elephant (CFWE), thousands of monthly shoppers support this movement seeking affordable secondhand clothing, housewares, furniture, tools, collectibles, and more.

Our Unique Boutique celebrated its first anniversary in July, with boutique sales alone exceeding \$110,000 over the past 14 months. Every purchase directly impacts our local area—in 2025, the White Elephant awarded \$1,762,500 to local nonprofits, schools, food banks, and emergency services.

It's no secret that there are enough garments in the world to clothe the human race for generations. Today's fast fashion creates massive amounts of textile waste and carbon emissions. Synthetic fibers like nylon and spandex can take over 200 years to de-

compose. Buying used clothes keeps garments out of landfills and lowers the demand for newly manufactured items while saving money.

Part of what makes shopping for clothes in the White Elephant so special isn't just the thrill of finding something good; it is the reminder that the proceeds from every piece of clothing sold goes right back into the community.

Unlike brand-new clothing pulled straight from a warehouse, secondhand items carry history and small traces of the people who owned them first. An altered hem stitched by hand, or receipts found in the pockets of old handbags often tell a story. Initials sewn onto the lining of a vintage fur coat meant something special to the original owner.

Regina Ford heads up the CFWE boutique and spends more than 15 hours-a-week on the hunt for well-loved, gently used clothes, shoes and handbags to stock the boutique racks.

"The quality of some of the clothing made decades ago is remarkable," Ford says. "Clothing was once made of durable natural materials like pure cotton, wool, linen, and silk rather than synthetic blends like polyester and acrylic that prevails today. Textiles such as denim, cotton t-shirts, and wool had dense, heavyweight weaves that resisted thinning and held their shape over years of wear."

Sorting through dozens of bins of donated clothing is a treasure hunt for White Elephant volunteers who price and hang the clothing six-days-a-week.

"The boutique does include newer clothing, not deemed vintage but better made," Ford says. "We do sell polyester blends and clothing with synthetic materials, but as long as there's a market for it and it doesn't end up in a landfill, we've helped."

Since 1964, the White Elephant has been



Many shoppers at the White Elephant make the boutique their first place to look for deals on higher-end clothing and shoes.

popular not only with shoppers, but also with the more than 500 volunteers who keep the store running and stocked.

"If you walk into the White Elephant on any morning, Monday through Saturday, the energy of the people pouring through the door is almost competitive," Ford adds.

"Shoppers, many of whom wait outside the store for an hour or more before the store opens at 9 a.m., rush to the various departments as fast as they can."

Some head straight for the boutique and search for items like all-leather handbags, belts and cowboy boots, while others make a beeline for the dresses. Every-

one is searching for something, even if they are not exactly sure what it is yet.

That sense of excitement is an emotion traditional retail stores lack, unless it's the pre-holiday sales on Black Friday. In most stores, shoppers know exactly what they're looking for before they even walk in. In a thrift store, like the White Elephant, the best finds are the ones no one expects. You must search and shoppers rarely leave empty-handed.

Shoppers at the White Elephant enjoy the thrill of the hunt for high-quality, durable, and vintage items. Our top-wanted clothing categories include:

- Unique Finds: Vintage, one-of-a-kind pieces.
- Sustainability & Value: Designer brands and high-end materials at a fraction of retail prices.
- Vintage Denim: 100% cotton Levi's, structured jeans, jackets, and skirts.
- Natural Fibers: Wool, cashmere, and high-quality cotton sweaters.
- Outerwear & Blazers: Tailored wool blazers, leather jackets, and trench coats.
- Linen, Cotton & Silk: Timeless, breathable dresses, pants, and silk blouses.



White Elephant Executive Director Daniel Esquivel is decked out in a faux fur vest and teal-colored shoes, both for sale in the boutique.

Why Donate?

Written by Daniel Esquivel, CFWE Executive Director

The White Elephant Thrift Store stands as one of Green Valley’s most enduring symbols of community strength, environmental responsibility, and charitable impact. For decades, the store has operated on a simple but powerful model: when the community gives, the community grows. Today, that model continues to thrive, thanks to the steady support of donors, shoppers, and volunteers who make the White Elephant a true full-circle force for good.

Donations That Make a Difference and Stay Out of Landfills

Every year, residents of Green Valley and surrounding communities donate thousands of items to the White Elephant. Clothing, furniture, household goods, tools, décor, and countless other items arrive at the store instead of ending up in landfills. These donations are carefully sorted, repurposed, and made available to the public at extremely low prices.



This environmentally responsible cycle ensures that usable goods are given a second life. It also provides affordable access to essential items for families, seniors, and individuals who rely on the store’s pricing to stretch their budgets. What begins as a simple donation becomes a meaningful resource for someone else.

Affordable Goods That Strengthen the Community

The White Elephant’s commitment to low pricing is one of its most impactful contributions. Shoppers can find quality items at a fraction

of retail cost, making the store a vital resource for those furnishing homes, replacing necessities, or simply looking for everyday items without financial strain.

This affordability is not just a convenience it is a community service. By keeping prices low, the White Elephant ensures that everyone, regardless of income, has access to the goods they need.

A Full Circle Model of Giving Back

What truly sets the White Elephant apart is what happens after the donations are sold. The funds generated through thrift store sales are reinvested directly into the community through grants, scholarships, and financial support for local and regional organizations.

Schools, nonprofits, service groups, and community programs all benefit from the White Elephant’s charitable giving. This fullcircle model means that every donation, every purchase, and every volunteer hour contributes to a larger purpose

strengthening the community and expanding opportunities for those who need them most.

**Join us Tuesday,
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Sr./Boomer Info Fair**

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Desert Hills
Lutheran Church
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**Enjoy FREE Food
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OLLI-UA Offers More Than Classes. It's a Place to Find Your Community In Green Valley

Written by Betsy Labiner, OLLI-UA

Whether you've braved the heat all summer in southern Arizona or are just making your way back after spending time in cooler climes, the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute at the University of Arizona (OLLI-UA) is ready to welcome you into our fall classes! Our exceptional lifelong learning program in Green Valley will run for 8 weeks, from October 13 through December 9, with in-person classes running two days per week on Tuesday and Wednesday, and online classes running Monday through Friday. Field trips and social events also occur Monday through Friday.

While some refer to OLLI-UA as the area's "best kept secret," we want to make it a household name! OLLI-UA has been offering learning opportunities tailored for adults aged 50 and up for over 35 years. We offer an enormous array of classes in academic fields of all kinds, as well as practical workshops, a variety of field trips, social events, and special interest groups. The program is focused on learning for the joy of learning, with no tests or grades. Our motto is: "Curiosity Never Retires."

That curiosity can lead participants anywhere! This fall in Green Valley, OLLI-UA will offer over 40 in-person classes and over 70 online classes, each of which can range from single sessions to 8-week courses, plus field trips all over southern Arizona. The fall curriculum includes classes on American history, astronomy, immigration law and policy, radio broadcasting history, Formula One racing, global trade policies, Mayan archaeology and history, and much more! There are also workshops on topics such as making your home more energy efficient or compiling an emergency information binder. Instructors include active and retired academics, representatives from local organizations, and members from a variety of backgrounds through which they've developed particular knowledge and passions. Classes bring together adults with richly diverse life experiences and shared interests, creating spaces of engaged learning and lively discussion.

OLLI-UA field trips include visits to multiple art museums around Tucson, the astronomy observatory at Kitt Peak, the Fox Theatre, archaeological sites, the Pima County elections office, birding outings, and even a group bus trip up to the

Phoenix Art Museum! These events are a wonderful way to get to know our region and enhance your connection to it, even if you've already lived here for many years.

Social outings to restaurants around Green Valley and Tucson not only provide a fun justification to skip the cooking and cleanup, but are also an opportunity to forge and deepen connections within our community that grow well beyond the OLLI-UA program. Members find kindred spirits at OLLI-UA, people alongside whom they can explore ideas, expand their horizons, and find exciting new interests.

OLLI-UA is an educational program that approaches learning and socialization as key parts of healthy aging; our breadth of programs supports mental acuity and holistic



THE UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA

**OSHER LIFELONG
LEARNING INSTITUTE**

Life-Enriching Education for Adults 50+

wellness for participants, while still accommodating differing abilities. Our classes, field trips, and social outings will keep you active, introduce you to new friends, and enrich your connection to the community.

When asked about their favorite part of OLLI-UA, many members just say, "Everything!" The program's many facets have something for everyone, but the core elements serve everyone: mental stimulation through learning and socialization, practical workshops on useful topics, not to mention the novelty of new things to learn and experiences to try!

Membership to OLLI-UA's Green Valley program is just \$199 for a whole year! An annual Green Valley membership includes access to all in-person classes in Green Valley and online offerings, as well as field trips and social events such as dining out. Our in-person classes are scheduled with seasonal residents in mind: fall courses begin in October and end in December, and spring courses begin in February and end in March. For both seasonal and year-round Green Valley residents, our online classes are a way to supplement our in-person programming in fall and spring, and stay connected to the program throughout the year. In-person OLLI Green Valley programs operate out of the Community Learn-



ing Center, a former community college campus located at 1250 W. Continental Road. Memberships can also be purchased for six-month increments (either July through December or January through June) – though we hope you'll love your OLLI experience enough to want to

continue on all year, year after year.

When you think about healthy aging, you might not think about going back to school – but we think you should! OLLI-UA supports physical, psychological, and emotional health with our many classes and warm community, making Green Valley an even better place to spend your retirement years.

For more information and to join as a member, please visit OLLI's website at olli.arizona.edu.



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This column is provided by Hughes Federal Credit Union

money
matters

HOW LOAN RATES WORK AND HOW TO GET YOUR BEST ONE

By Valerie Fanelli

If you have shopped for an auto loan, a personal loan or a credit card recently, you may have noticed that advertised rates often appear as a range rather than a single number. That range exists because every borrower’s financial situation is unique and understanding how your rate is determined can help you become a smarter borrower and possibly save money over the life of a loan.

How Lenders Determine Your Rate

When you apply for a loan, the lender considers a variety of factors, such as credit history, payment record, income stability and existing debt, to determine the rate that fits your situation. Borrowers with strong credit histories generally qualify for lower rates, while borrowers who are still building or rebuilding credit may pay somewhat more. The rate is matched to the borrower, not the other way around.

At first glance, that might sound like a system that only benefits people with excellent credit. In practice, personalized rates work in every borrower’s favor, and here is why.

How It Works in Your Favor

First, personalized rates reward responsible financial habits. When every borrower receives the same rate, someone who has spent years paying bills on time and managing debt carefully receives no recognition for that effort. When rates are tailored to the individual, that discipline translates directly into lower borrowing costs. Your track record works for you.

Second, personalized lending can create more opportunities. Every borrower’s financial situation is unique. By evaluating each application on its own merits, lenders can make decisions that reflect an individual’s circumstances rather than fitting everyone into the same narrow criteria. That flexibility can expand access to financing for people who are building credit, establishing themselves in a new community, or recovering from a temporary setback. Access to fair,



regulated credit provides a safer and more sustainable alternative to higher-cost borrowing options.

Third, personalized lending recognizes that financial journeys change over time. A borrower’s credit profile today may look very different a few years from now. As credit improves, borrowers may become eligible for more favorable loan terms and refinancing opportunities. While qualification depends on individual circumstances, personalized lending creates a framework that can recognize and reward financial progress.

Five Ways to Earn Your Best Rate

- **Pay on time, every time.** Payment history is the single largest factor in most credit scoring models. Setting up automatic payments or calendar reminders is a simple way to protect your score.
- **Keep balances manageable.** Credit scoring models look at how much of your available credit you are using. Keeping credit card balances well below their limits, ideally under 30 percent, signals that you are not overextended.
- **Check your credit report.** You are entitled to free copies of your credit report from each of the three major credit reporting agencies

at AnnualCreditReport.com. Reviewing them for errors and disputing anything inaccurate can improve your standing at no cost.

- **Build history patiently.** The length of your credit history matters, so keeping older accounts open and in good standing helps. If you are just starting out, a secured credit card or a small credit-builder loan can establish a record of on-time payments.
- **Ask questions before you borrow.** A good lender will explain how your rate was determined and what you can do to qualify for a better one next time. That conversation is one of the most valuable free services in personal finance.

Where You Borrow Matters

Your choice of financial institution matters. Credit unions are especially well-positioned to offer rates that fit each member because of how they are structured. As not-for-profit cooperatives, credit unions are owned by the members they serve, so earnings are returned to members through rates, lower fees and expanded services rather than paid out to outside shareholders. Just as importantly, credit unions are built around the philosophy of people helping people, often pairing lending services with financial educa-

tion, guidance and a genuine interest in seeing members succeed.

For example, Hughes Federal Credit Union, which has served the Tucson community for nearly 75 years and today serves more than 190,000 members, offers a variety of lending solutions to help more members move forward. Hughes does more than provide a loan, pairing its lending programs with free financial education and one-on-one guidance to help members understand their options and strengthen their financial position over time. Members who begin borrowing at one rate are encouraged to check back as their credit improves, because better credit should mean better rates.

Your financial journey doesn’t stand still, and your borrowing options may change over time as your credit profile evolves. Personalized lending can recognize the habits you build, account for changing circumstances and create new opportunities as you strengthen your credit. If it has been a while since you explored your options, take another look.

Valerie Fanelli is Vice President of Marketing at Hughes Federal Credit Union. For more information, visit HughesFCU.org.



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Building with Purpose: Why Your Community Projects Matter

Written by Mayor Tom Murphy, Town of Sahuarita

I love taking every opportunity to connect with our residents about where our community is heading. Whenever our team talks about local projects, we spend a lot of time on the *what*, such as the new pavement going down, the pathways being built, or the facility upgrades underway. However, what matters most to me, and what I really want to share with you today, is the *why*. Whether we are improving public safety on our roads,

connecting our neighborhoods, or stretching your tax dollars further, every decision we make comes back to our number one goal: making daily life safer, smoother, and more enjoyable right here in the town we all love.

Improved Public Safety and Mobility

Let’s start with the “why” behind our major road projects. Take the

Campbell Avenue extension, made possible with federal funding secured through Congressman Juan Ciscomani, along with the La Villita Road extension funded by voter-approved RTA Next plans. Beyond relieving traffic congestion, these extensions serve a vital community purpose. For residents living in Madera Highlands, the Campbell Avenue extension provides a crucial secondary access road. That is a major public safety upgrade, ensuring our local police, fire, and emergency responders have faster, more reliable routes into and out of your neighborhood in situations when every single second counts.

Connected Neighborhoods and Outdoor Spaces

We are also actively expanding our multi-modal pathways with 2.5 miles of new paths along El Toro Road and La Villita Road. Why? Because connectivity is personal. Whether you are stepping out for an early morning walk, teaching a grandchild to ride a bike, or going for an evening jog, our residents

deserve dedicated and safe active spaces. It is about creating accessible opportunities to enjoy our beautiful desert landscape right outside our front doors.

Maximized Innovation and Taxpayer Value

Doing right by our community also means being responsible stewards of your hard-earned tax dollars. Over at our Water Reclamation Facility, our utility team has achieved remarkable results by focusing on continuous operational improvements. By deploying a new chemical-free soil biofilter system, we enhanced local air quality control while cutting operational costs by thousands of dollars every single month. That is real money saved through smarter operations, dollars that go right back into serving you better.

At the end of the day, all of these efforts come back to creating a connected, safe, and vibrant town. Thank you for staying involved, staying informed, and partnering with us as we build a brighter future, with purpose, for Sahuarita.



Every sunrise in Sahuarita brings a new opportunity to build with purpose.



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The GVC Foundation Proudly Presents...

Written by Mari Nelson, GVC Foundation Board President

*** Wednesday, November 11** – Flags out on **VETERANS DAY** with their community partners, The McDonalds Hikers to post nearly 100 US Flags along La Canada Drive.

*** Monday, December 7** – Flags out on **PEARL HARBOR REMEMBRANCE DAY** with members of the Desert Hills Lutheran Church and the Optimists Club to post the US Flags.

Volunteers carry out this tradition as a moving tribute to the ideals of freedom, service and unity that define our country.

Help keep the Flags waving by a donation to “The Flags” entirely for the maintenance of flags, poles and storage tubes. This requires ongoing support, so the display remains respectful and dignified. **Send your donations for “The Flags” to The GVC Foundation, 555 N. La Canada, Green Valley, AZ 86514 or bring your gift to the GV Council office there.**



The SAV provides the safety patrols at sunrise and sunset to these organizations





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

medicalnews

CAN WE INTERCEPT ARTHRITIS BEFORE IT IS TOO LATE?

A patient sat down in my exam room this week, folded his hands, and said the sentence I hear more than any other.

“Doc, I’ve been putting this off.”

Sometimes it is a knee. Sometimes a hip. Sometimes a shoulder acting up for six years. The part changes. The regret does not.

Here is what I say to that patient, and want to say to you. We have all been there. Even me.

Underneath the sentence is usually one of a few stories. A doctor said, “you’re too young, rest and take ibuprofen.” A surgeon said, “come back when it gets worse.” Life got busy. Nobody identified the moment as important, so a year quietly became a decade. None of that deserves a scolding.

Because when I said “even me,” I meant it. In 2012, I re-herniated a disc for the third time in twelve years. Right leg numb. My partner said I was headed for a spinal fusion at 36. ORIGEN is the practice I wish I had at that moment, that would have given me different options. All of the options.

If you have been putting something off, you are not behind. You don’t need to feel ashamed about it. You are living inside a healthcare system that has largely trained people to wait. Until it gets bad. Not to be proactive.

But the window when we can be proactive. When a small, non-surgical, less invasive intervention could have rewritten the story is real. That window has a name.

What I now call this with my patients is the Intercept Point.

The window when a musculoskeletal problem is still small, still local, still oftentimes reversible, and still on the table for the regenerative tools I use in my practice daily.

Before the six-month problem knee becomes the twenty-year compensation pattern. Before the partial tendon tear becomes a full rupture. Before the early-grade arthritis becomes a bone-on-bone joint where the only remaining option is to do a replacement.

The Intercept Point is a window of time. Some of you are still standing inside it right now. And today I’m going to further support my statement above with evidence.

For years, the professional societies lagged what we already knew in practice. The results we were seeing in our patients. The push to be more proactive while we could.

In 2026, that changed. Two key publications show that things are slowly changing. For the better.

In May 2026, the American Academy of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation released its first formal guidance statement on platelet rich plasma for knee osteoarthritis. Its physician panel concluded that PRP should be considered for patients with mild to moderate knee arthritis who remain symptomatic after conservative care, and that earlier intervention may lead to better outcomes.

In August 2026, ESSKA and ICRS, the two leading international knee-and-cartilage bodies, issued a joint consensus on cellular therapy for knee osteoarthritis. Their panel concluded that autologous cellular therapy from your own bone marrow or adipose tissue, prepared and delivered the same day, can be appropriate for the right patient, particularly people with mild to moderate arthritis not yet at the end-stage.

One important note. This is guidance for patient selection, not a blanket endorsement. Suitability is decided one patient at a time. In a consultation. With someone who has practiced in the specialty for years.

Translation. What they published this year was clearly stated. Treating the joint earlier with the body’s own biology is a reasonable and appropriate option that should be offered to patients.

Inside of that recommendation, earlier intervention is the better version of healthcare that we need to shift towards. To provide proactive options, not simply “management” when it is too far past the intercept point.

As much as I believe in what we can do for the right patient with

Regenerative medicine, it will not replace joint replacement. In the right hands, joint replacement is one of the most successful interventions modern medicine has developed.

Both are the right approach for the right person at the right time. What I’m writing about today is knowing your timing. Knowing enough about your situation. Knowing enough to be proactive about it while you still have a shot.

Because time is tissue. Reversing arthritis isn’t entirely possible - yet. Someday we will solve that puzzle. However, professional societies this year are aligning the future of Orthopedics towards less invasive, early interventions that may keep many people from needing more invasive procedures.

So the future is bright. For the fields of Regenerative Medicine and Orthopedic Medicine. Working together to give patients all of the options, at the right time.

With that I’ll leave you with a question to ponder as you approach the end of another year. Is there something in your body you have been putting off?

A knee. A hip. A shoulder.

Something you have been calling “just getting older.” Something you have been quietly, or not so quietly, trying to work around.

If you’re doing a slow nod yes while reading this, you may still be standing inside your Intercept Point right now.

Don’t manage this until you can’t. Until there are no other options left than the one you probably want to avoid.

Intercept the problem.

Treat it while you still can.

If you have an Orthopedic problem you have been putting off, call our office at 520-777-9385. We would be happy to review your case to determine if our approach is a match for your issue.

Dr. Tait is a non-surgical Orthopedic specialist and the founder of ORIGEN Orthopedics + Optimal Health in Tucson, AZ. The only dedicated Orthopedic clinic in the region exclusively focused on non-surgical treatments. Learn more at www.origenortho.com, and on his YouTube channel @DrJohnTait

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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

There’s a New Show in Town!

Written by Ellen March
Photos by Denny Schreffler

Introducing SAZShowcase featuring the amazing talent in southern Arizona. The 2026 debut show included musical acts, instrumentals and humor from a wide variety of performers and ages.

Included were saxophonist Alex Blue, soprano Betsy Carter, clarinetist and maestro John Snavelly, 14 year old vocalist Devin Peterson, director and choreographer Claire Corlett Brown and Gabriel Brown, and pianist Will Foraker.

They played to a sold-out CPAC theater in February 2026.

The Board of Directors of the newly formed 501©3 non-profit includes Regina Ford, Donna Dailey, Bill Foraker, Ellen March, Rada Neal and Michael Cory.

The Board’s mission is to showcase the extraordinary abilities of our peers and neighbors, uniting the community for an evening of inspiration, entertainment, and shared appreciation for local talent.

To that end, we’ve scheduled two



shows for 2027, January 11 and March 1. Shows are held at the Community Performance & Arts Center from 6:00 pm to 8:00 pm with a brief intermission.

For information on upcoming show dates and talent line-up, visit our website: SAZShowcase.com You may also sign up for our email list on the site as well as purchase tickets(\$20 each) to the shows.

Consider tickets as holiday gifts for friends and family!

For more information: email : sazshowcase@gmail.com

What Did You Do for Your Birthday? *We Need Your Help!*

Written by Arizona Family Restaurant

Arizona Family Restaurant is celebrating our 50th birthday and we need help! We want to celebrate every single month throughout 2027 with fun menus, themed parties, and new events. The problem is that neither myself (Katie) or my husband (Brad) have turned 50 yet!

So what we need help with is for you to write in or leave a note with your server about what you did for either your 50th birthday or 50th wedding anniversary. Did you throw a fun surprise party for a friend? We want to know all the details. We’ll be sharing some of our favorite stories and we’ll be using some of your ideas to celebrate here at the restaurant.

Brad and I are so proud to be part of this southern Arizona community and plan to continue giving back to youth programs and community organizations throughout the region. We hope you’ll join us in 2027 to celebrate 50 years at Arizona Family Restaurant and 5 years with our family as the owners.



Please mail us your fun 50th party ideas to 80 W Esperanza Blvd. Green Valley, AZ 85614. And don’t forget to join us for Thanksgiving. We’ll be open and serving our roasted turkey special with all the fixings starting at 11am until 7pm on November 26th, Thanksgiving Day. Please call for reservations of groups of 6 or more, reservations will receive a 1 hour time slot and must be punctual, reservations cannot be held past 15 minutes. It’s our busiest day of the year and we want everyone to join us!

Best wishes,
Katie and Brad



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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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Shine Forward Southern Arizona: A New Light on Local Giving

Written by Michelle Phillips, Executive Director Greater Green Valley Community Foundation



The Greater Green Valley Community Foundation is proud to introduce **Shine Forward Southern Arizona (SFSAz)** — a bold new initiative designed to transform how our region gives, connects, and cares for the causes that hold our communities together.

Shine Forward launches now as a year-round regional initiative, beginning with a special giving campaign that runs through November 30 — one that unites individual donors, corporations, and philanthropists with the nonprofit organizations working every day to meet urgent local needs. From food security and housing to education, health, animal care, environment and the arts, Southern Arizona's nonprofits are the often the unseen backbone of our community. SFSAz is here to make sure they're seen, supported, and sustained.

Why now?

Too many people who call Southern Arizona home don't fully know the breadth of services nonprofits provide — or how easy it can be to get involved. At the same time, nonprofits often struggle to build the kind of long-term donor relationships that keep their programs alive year after year. SFSAz was created to close that gap.

This isn't just a fundraising event. It's a movement to build lasting bridges between the people who give and the organizations that serve. By coordinating a year-round, region-wide giving initiative, SFSAz will demonstrate the extraordinary power of collective action — showing what's possible when thousands of donors and dozens of nonprofits move together, toward the same goal, at the same time.

What makes this different?

Online giving has changed the way people support the causes they love — but its full potential is still largely untapped in Southern Arizona. SFSAz will spotlight how a coordinated digital campaign can mobilize an entire region, making it simple, transparent, and inspiring for donors of every kind to give — whether that's a first-time \$20 gift or a significant corporate or philanthropic investment.

An invitation to everyone

To our **nonprofit partners:** SFSAz is your opportunity to reach new donors, strengthen relationships with existing supporters, and be part of a coordinated regional effort bigger than any single campaign could achieve alone.

Early reaction from local nonprofits:

- We love what GGVCF and Shine Forward is doing, being a part of this movement will help us and the community around us. **Boys and Girls Club of Santa Cruz County**
- Where do we see this Shine Forward program going? *The impact of helping to relieve the stress and pressure of finances for our organization, I don't think can even be measured. Just having that peace of mind knowing that we have a continual stream of funds to keep that going will enable us to focus on more lasting solutions.* Arivaca Human Resources
- This Shine Forward strategy will allow us to reach a new donor demographic, one who has yet to learn about our organization. This fundraising strategy allows donors to learn about and select organizations that best fit their donation needs, which, in the long run, may create the sustainability for which the strategy is designed.
- Sahuarita Food Bank – Saguaro Skills Center

To our **donors** — individuals, families, businesses, and foundations alike: this is your invitation to discover the causes shaping our community. Whether you've given before or are looking for your first way to get involved, SFSAz will make it easy to find a cause that matches your values.

Giving is not just about making a donation. It is about making a difference.

Collective giving isn't just a strategy — it's a survival tool for the programs our neighbors depend on. SFSAz will light the way forward.

Get ready to Shine Forward - first steps:

Visit the website, discover participating nonprofits, choose a cause you care about, and give.

Donate \$100 on SFSAz's website before November 11th and receive two event tickets to our **4th Annual Sip, Swirl, Shop & Shine Forward** on November 14, at Historic Canoa Ranch, Green Valley. Website www.shineforwardsaz.org

Shine Forward Southern Arizona is a project of the Greater Green Valley Community Foundation.



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