

OLLI-UA GV  
Class  
Signup  
Pg 13 & 16

Amado Chili  
Cook-Off  
March 7  
Pg 33

# Community Quarterly

35,245 Delivered by US Mail

**Pullout Schedule of GVR Events & Entertainment ~ Pages 19-22**

Winter 2026

Serving Green Valley, Sahuarita, & Tubac  
E-Edition at [KGVY1080.com](http://KGVY1080.com)

Volume 17, Issue 1

## Santa Rita Fire Corps: Helping to Keep Your Family Safe

Written by Kevin McNichols, Volunteer Coordinator, Santa Rita Fire District

The Mission of the Santa Rita Fire Corps is to provide Prevention and Safety Services to our Community that result in Superior Customer Satisfaction and Enhance the Effectiveness of the Santa Rita Fire District.

Fire Corps started in 2006 to help the Fire District with day-to-day, non-emergent calls, such as desert pests and chirping smoke alarms. Today, the Santa Rita Fire Corps serves Green Valley and the Town of Sahuarita. It has five-day-per-week coverage for our Smoke Alarm Battery and Replacement Program, monitoring and replacing batteries in residential smoke alarms, installing new A/C powered, battery back-up smoke alarms, and installing residential lock boxes. In year 2025, Fire Corps installed 5000

new smoke alarms, 600 lock boxes with over 1100 key changes in existing lock boxes and replaced over 10,000 smoke alarm batteries.

The White Elephant Country Fair grants have been instrumental to helping the Santa Rita Fire Corps and our volunteers accomplish our mission. In 2024, the donation of \$21,000 assisted towards the purchase of a new 2025 Chevrolet Silverado pickup truck. This truck is utilized 5 days a week to help with our lockbox program where volunteers will install an emergency access lockbox, change keys as needed, and periodically come and check lockboxes installed in previous years to ensure they are properly functioning. Since 2006 the White Elephant has assisted us with three grants towards purchasing vehicles. All three vehicles remain in service today.

Our fire corps volunteers

have been assisting with our Kinder Lessons in local schools as well as our Mini Muster events in our community education programs in the local schools. They will often be found manning a table at local events like the KGVY Boomer Fair, a local health fair, or community event. Our volunteers in 2025 will save the Santa Rita Fire District over \$400,000.00 in manpower hours and keep our first responders available for the next medical or fire emergency.

The Santa Rita Fire Corps remains committed to protecting our community through prevention, education, and hands-on support. With the continued generosity of our donors and volunteers, we

can ensure safer homes and peace of mind for all residents. We are always looking for volunteers who are excited to make a positive



Maureen Raso is near the Fire Engine with a group of kids during their Kinder Lesson graduation.



Our volunteers working with SRFD staff Danielle Yslas, Brenda Black, Kevin McNichols and Fire Corps Member Joanne Bacon during Kinder Lessons in April 2025.



Joanne Bacon is helping at one of the local Mini Musters for 2nd grade students

continued on page 4

## Fight Fraud Day

February 12, 2026  
9AM-11AM

Educate yourself on scams  
Free & open to the public  
See page 18

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# THERE'S SOMETHING FOR EVERYONE



## Leisure Education Classes

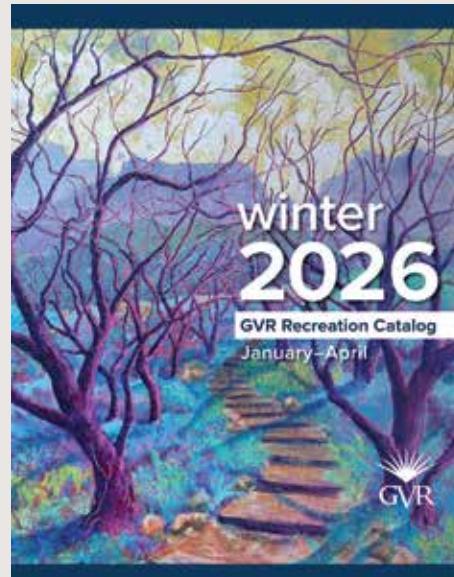
*Explore classes in art, cooking, fitness, sports, spirituality, and more. This winter, we've added plenty of new options to enjoy.*

### New for Winter 2026

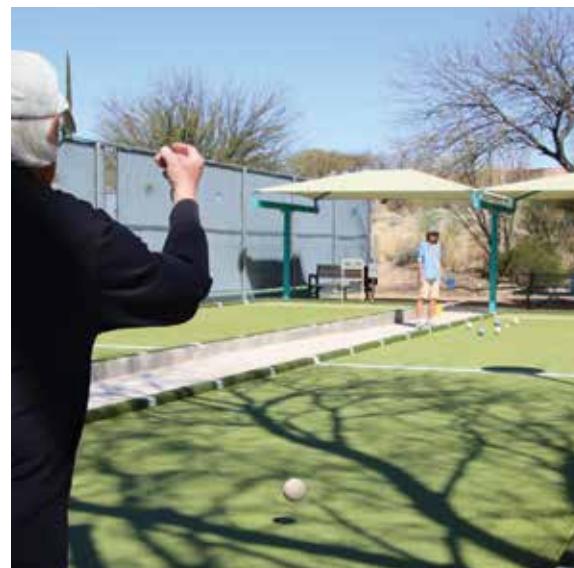
- Acting
- Aquatics for Arthritis
- Beautiful Posture, Breath, Balance Thoughts
- Create Great Watercolor Paintings Using Photos
- Digital Photo Albums/Scrapbooking
- Eat Well, Age Well: Nutrition Basics
- French Cooking: Coq au Vin and Crème Brûlée
- French Cooking: Macarons
- Fur & Feathers: Pet Portraits in Pencil
- Greek Cooking: Baklava
- Greek Cooking: Hummus Gyros
- Law 101
- Life, Stories, and Last Words
- Marketing
- Pilates for Health, Back, and Joints
- Sign Language 1
- Yoga with Weights

**Want to try a class before you commit?** Many of our offerings include a drop-in option!

**Need something outside of work hours?** GVR has plenty of evening and weekend classes to fit your schedule.



Most classes are open to the general public.



## Stay Active with GVR Fitness

### For GVR members only

At GVR, you'll find a variety of fitness options to support your health and wellness goals. Whether you prefer independent workouts using weights and machines, group fitness classes, or personalized training sessions, our six fitness centers are equipped to meet your needs.

## Head into Fun: No Reservation Needed

### For GVR members only

Enjoy drop-in activities anytime without reservations or extra fees. Most GVR rooms and outdoor spaces are open for drop-in use between scheduled reservations—just check the calendar online or posted outside the door.

## Relax, Play, and Hang Out at Del Sol Clubhouse

### For GVR members only

Del Sol Clubhouse is your drop-in spot to unwind, meet friends, and enjoy a little light-hearted competition. Upstairs you'll find big-screen TVs, billiards, board games, darts, foosball, and a tabletop arcade. Downstairs offers a spacious game room with more billiard tables and snooker for casual or competitive play.

3355 S. Camino del Sol  
Open daily, 6am–9pm

Pick up a GVR winter catalog at any center or browse the flipbook at [GVRec.org](http://GVRec.org).  
Questions? Call customer service at 520-625-3440.

# The Historic Canoa Ranch Top 5 Highlights

Written by Sydney Watts



Just south of Green Valley lies a piece of history dating back to 1821; The Historic Canoa Ranch. Over the years, ranch life slowed, people came and went, and the property fell into disrepair. But the property was a piece of this region's heritage, one that was worth saving. Today the ranch's legacy is preserved through carefully restored buildings and informational displays that bring the Canoa Ranch story to life.

In 2013, extensive renovations began on what was once known by ranchers as "The Canoa". Today the ranch is growing into one of the area's top tourist attractions. It's rich with tradition, scenery, culture and imprinted with over 200 years of stories and memories. I recently wandered around the ranch and took in all that it had to offer. I explored the buildings, the living spaces and imagined the life of those who worked and lived on this once bustling ranch. If you haven't explored the ranch (or want to explore again), here are my Top 5 must-see highlights.

## The Lake

The Canoa Ranch Lake once served as a watering vessel for the ranch. Back in the ranching days, it was a natural Cienega that collected rainwater which was pumped to the ranch's crops. Over time, it dried up and sat empty for over a decade. In 2017, renovation work began and today, the 2.5-acre Canoa Lake is a hidden treasure. A walking trail surrounds the lake, along with various wildlife, plants and plaques that delve into the lake's history. It's become a place where friends gather, residents enjoy walks with their dogs and photographers capture its beauty.

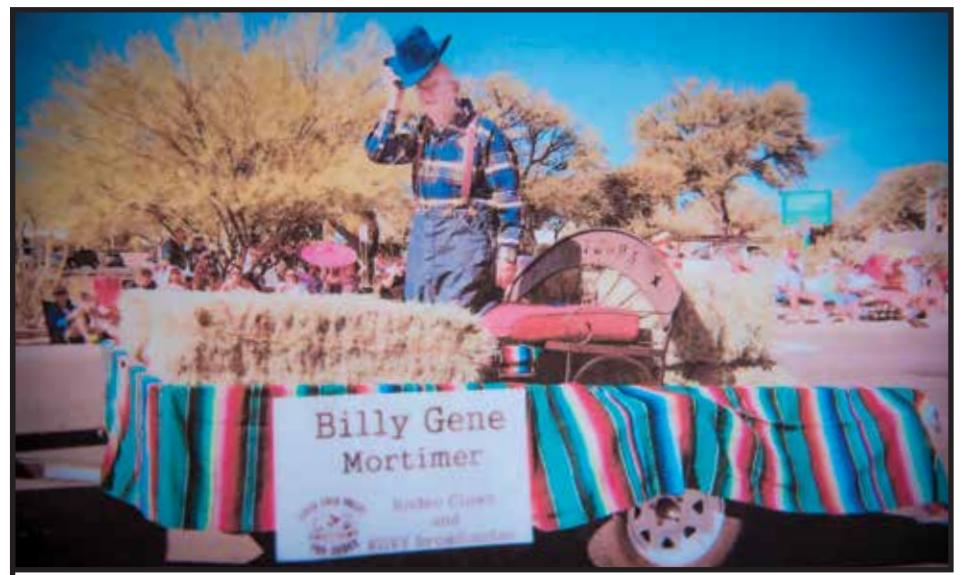
Once barren, the lake is now thriving with life; from grasslands and wildflowers to insects, waterfowl, and even visiting desert animals.

## Visitors Center

The Tradesman House, built in the 1940's now operates as the ranch's Visitor Center. Inside you will find the walls of the house packed with history. You will learn about life on the ranch, decline of the ranch, conservation efforts and the musical Oklahoma! If not found wandering the ranch, here you will find knowledgeable volunteers ready to answer your questions. On my visit, I met Judy Burgard. Judy has been volunteering at the ranch since the renovation projects began in 2013 and had a wealth of information to share.

## Manning Jr.-Schnaufer Residence

Stepping inside this home feels



Bill G. 'Billy Gene' Mortimer

like traveling back in time. The fireplace, kitchen, and other living spaces showcase the charm of historic architecture. As someone who loves to sit outside, I was especially drawn to the enclosed porch attached to the house, a perfect spot to sit and imagine ranch life. Before you leave, be sure to sign the guestbook and add your name to

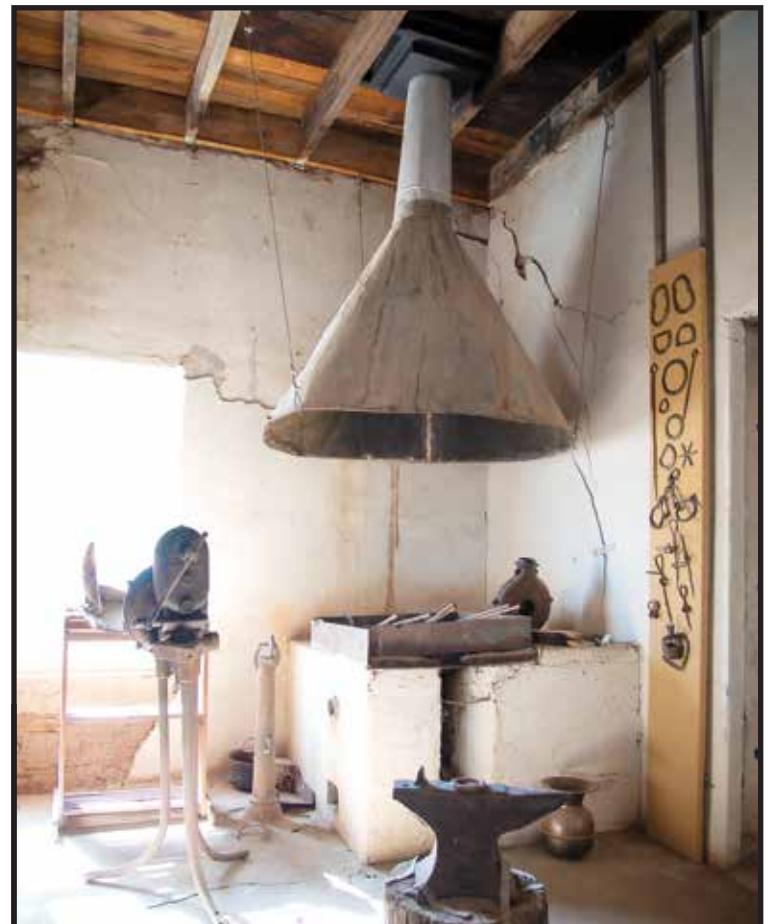
the long list of visitors and be a part of the ranch's history for years to come.

## The Workshop

The grain room, blacksmith's shop, and tack room are sure to be a favorite stop for many visitors, especially those fascinated by ranch life.



Inside the wardrobe closet in the Manning Jr.-Schnaufer residence



Blacksmith Forge

continued on page 4

## Canoa Ranch

continued from page 3

Inside the workshop, you'll find the blacksmith's forge, where you can imagine the handcrafted tools and horseshoes once made here. Many of these tools are on display, along with supplies that were not only used on the ranch but crafted right on-site. Take a closer look at

the antique saddles, the different riding styles they represent, and the wagon setup that shows how cowboys cooked and ate while traveling.

### The Foreman's House

Visiting the Fore-



The corrals



Judy Burgard-Volunteer

## Fire Corps

continued from page 1

difference in our community by serving others. If you have an interest in climbing ladders and installing new smoke alarms or changing batteries, please reach out to our Volunteer Coordinator, Kevin McNichols at 520.393.7505. To learn more about Fire Corps visit our website at [srfdaz.gov/fire-corps/](http://srfdaz.gov/fire-corps/)

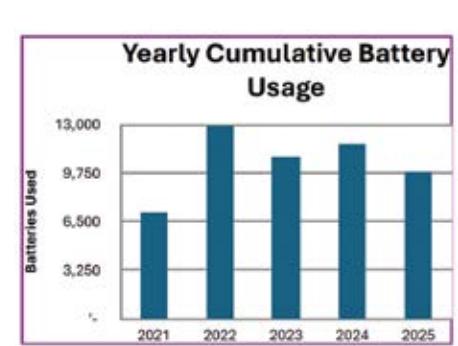
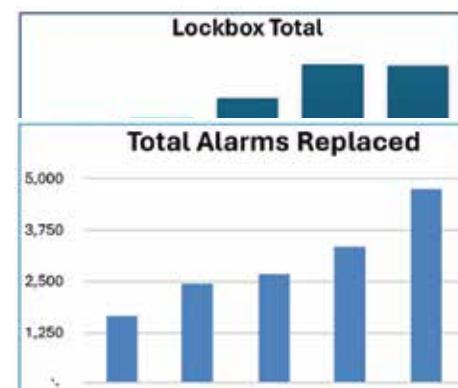
### Here are important Smoke Alarm Safety Tips:

- Smoke alarms should be installed on every level of your home, inside each bedroom, and outside sleeping areas.
- The homeowner should test smoke alarms monthly to ensure they are functioning properly.
- Hard-wired smoke alarms should display a constant green LED light, indicating they are powered by your home's electricity. Homeowners should periodically verify this.
- Replace smoke alarms every 10 years.
- There are two types of smoke alarms: **ionization** and **photoelectric**. Both provide ade-

quate safety.

- **Interconnected hard-wired smoke alarms**, required in our communities since the early 1990s, offer added safety: when one alarm sounds, all alarms in the home are activated, providing early warning for everyone.

The following Santa Rita Fire Corps stats do not include the numbers for December of 2025:



Kay Mertes is reading to a group of students at a local reading event while one of the students sits on her lap.



David de Vita is teaching Kindergartners a pledge.

6, 1939, and lived there with his grandparents, Ted and Emma Mortimer. He last lived on the ranch as a caretaker in 2009. From the stories on the wall, I gather Bill was a large personality, whether at the rodeo, racetrack or on the radio. Before passing, Bill's final on-air role was at KGVY, connecting him once more to the community where his story began.

### That's Not All

Beyond Canoa Lake, the Visitors Center, the Manning Jr.-Schnaufer Residence, the Workshop, and the

Foreman's House, The Historic Canoa Ranch offers even more to explore. You can reserve a lake-side ramada for a party, host a large event in the main house, or enjoy a family gathering in the scenic outdoor spaces. The ranch also hosts various events for visitors to enjoy such as Canoa Hills Trail Park Volunteer Days, guided tours and gardening. If you're a history buff, the ranch has you covered. Whether you come for the history, the scenery, or the events, the Historic Canoa Ranch is a destination worth returning to again and again.

HERE ARE OLSON'S  
TOP TIPS FOR  
AVOIDING THE MANY  
SCAMS OUT THERE:

**1- MAKE SURE  
THERE IS A PLAN**

Most timeshare exit companies will try to cancel a timeshare as there are no buyers. The only guaranteed way out is to find someone else willing to become the new owner.

**2- THERE IS NO  
RESALE MARKET**

Accept that there are thousands of timeshares not selling for one penny. Timeshare is outdated and there is no market for resale. Do not pay timeshare listing companies to advertise something that will never sell.



## ENDING YOUR TIMESHARE JUST GOT EASIER, THE REAL DEAL HAS ARRIVED.

By Laura Kelly

Thousands of timeshare owners have successfully ended their timeshares through a proven resource, We Want Your Timeshare.

The company has a unique model which is centered around a transaction with a major bonus, every client receives a 10-year membership to a travel club! In essence, your timeshare is traded into a travel club that will be able to use it. The previous owner is then able to enjoy a couple years of unrestricted travel without the hassle of timesharing systems.

Offering education and resources for avoiding timeshare exit scams is a passion for their CEO Alexandra Olson.

**"In an industry riddled with deceit and fraud, we give our knowledge freely and hope, if nothing else, that we can help the masses avoid being the victim of a scam."**

Olson will be presenting her popular seminar again at the Quail Creek Country Club on Thursday Feb. 5<sup>th</sup> and Friday Feb. 6<sup>th</sup>, at 10 am. To secure a space (limited) interested timeshare owners can call 602-734-5590.

As a 15-year veteran of the timeshare industry, Olson has catapulted into the spotlight as the leading industry expert on timeshare and exit scams.

It even landed her on FOX 10 Phoenix, ABC 15, The Arizona Republic and the Phoenix Business Journal.



Whether estate planning, sick of the never-ending cycle of rising maintenance fees, or just tired of dealing with the archaic, expensive exchange system, there are plenty of reasons folks are looking to dump their timeshare.

When asked about We Want Your Timeshare, Olson shares "our mission is to revolutionize the timeshare exit industry by providing a zero-risk option for timeshare owners that want out! We're very transparent about it. No risk, an amazing replacement product and a legal timeshare exit so you can be done with your timeshare forever. We're very proud of that!"

## We Want Your Timeshare

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for Selling



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Alternatives to  
Exchange  
Companies



How the  
Timeshare  
Industry Has  
Changed



Question and  
Answers

**Whatever your goals are  
with your timeshare, we  
offer answers and solutions.**

**RSVP required please  
call 602-734-5590**



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**OR**

**FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 6<sup>TH</sup>, 10 AM**

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Green Valley, AZ 85614

This column is  
provided by  
Hughes Federal  
Credit Union

# money matters

## COOL TRIPS AND SMART SAVINGS FOR YOUR 2026 ADVENTURES

By Valerie Fanelli, VP of Marketing, Hughes Federal Credit Union

**S**easoned travelers continue to change how people explore the world, especially in 2026. They aren't looking for simple, quick trips anymore. Instead, they seek deep, comfortable, and exciting adventures that allow them to connect with new places and cultures.

### Slow Down and Settle In

The biggest new trend is slow travel. Instead of rushing through many cities, travelers stay in one place longer, sometimes a whole month! This helps you live like a local and save on costly quick transfers. Imagine renting an apartment in Italy for three weeks instead of moving every two days. This shift saves money on constant transportation and lets you cook your own meals, which is much cheaper than eating out. Other immersion travel experiences include:

- **Epic Train Rides.** Train travel across continents is very popular. It's a comfortable and relaxing way to see amazing views without the stress of airport travel. Train travel can also be a more environmentally friendly option. Think of it as a relaxing adventure where the journey itself is a vacation.

- **Learning and Community.** Trips focus on doing things, not just seeing. This includes taking a cooking class, joining a group to hike trails or taking a class on local history or art. It's about finding connections and building new friendships while exploring. These local activities are often less expensive than large, formal tours.

### Smart Shopping for Comfort and Quality

Seasoned travelers are savvy with their money, choosing to invest in meaningful comforts and higher-quality experiences that make travel more enjoyable.

- **Comfort is Key.** Choose high-quality hotels and safe, easy-to-manage trips. Spending extra on a direct flight, for instance, avoids the worry of missed con-



nections. Get good travel insurance, too—that's money well spent for peace of mind.

- **Avoiding Crowds Saves Money.** To save money and avoid huge crowds, many people travel during the "hidden season." This is the time just before or after summer, like in the beautiful fall or spring. You can get much lower prices on hotels and flights, plus fewer people are around, so you'll enjoy more authentic local experiences and better weather.

- **Non-Touristy Destinations.** Travelers are looking for places that are not famous on social media. Exploring less crowded spots often means finding lower prices on everything from food to souvenirs and enjoying a more authentic experience. Ask around for smaller towns near famous cities—they often offer the same beauty for half the price.

### Using Technology Wisely

Many people use apps and websites to find deals and plan trips. They can help find affordable flights or plan walking tours. When using these, double-check cancellation policies and remember it's important to ensure your money is safe before you hand over your card number, so only use trusted online sources to book your trip.

### Choose a Financial Partner Focused on You

With the right financial institution, you'll feel secure when booking your dream vacation. Many find the best support with local credit unions. Credit unions are owned by their members and are not-for-profit, so they focus on providing benefits and better rates to their members. To support your travel dreams, you'll find:

- **Travel Discounts.** A key benefit is access to exclusive travel-savings opportunities, including discounts on hotels, airfare, and cruises. Members can explore and redeem these offers whenever they choose.
- **Extra Protection.** Another benefit is customer protection services, such as an Identity Theft Restoration Service or an Extended Repair Warranty on items you purchase. This provides an added layer of protection for your finances and purchases while you're away from home.

For 74 years, Hughes Federal Credit Union has been the trusted hometown financial partner in Tucson. With special programs like **Checking PLUS**, Hughes members get 3-5% cash back on hotels, air travel, cruises and more. You can safely book your trip online or even work with a travel concierge to ensure your trip is planned to perfection.

As a member of Hughes, you partner with a credit union that has been committed to the Tucson community for decades, understanding the unique needs of its members – including those who love to travel. By choosing a smart, member-focused partner that offers travel benefits like Checking PLUS, you ensure your money is working hard to help fund and protect all your wonderful 2026 adventures.



# Stop dreaming. Start planning.

## Plan your vacation with Checking PLUS

Save on airfare, hotels, cruises and tickets to your favorite Broadway shows. You can even work with a travel concierge to make that trip on your bucket list both affordable and unforgettable. Dream up your next destination with Checking PLUS. Get started today at [HughesFCU.org/PLUS](https://HughesFCU.org/PLUS)

**We take you further.**



Forbes  
2025  
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Insured by NCUA. Certain restrictions apply. A \$4.95 monthly fee applies once enrolled. You may cancel any time by contacting the credit union.

## Winter/Spring Seminars

No entry fee ~ Open to the public  
9:30 to 10:30 am ~ Social at 9 am

Date	Topic	Speaker	Location
Feb 5	Fireflies Xerces Society	Christine Robie AZ Naturalist	GVR West Ctr
Feb 12	Growing Citrus in GV UofA Coop Ext Yuma	Glenn Wright Assoc Ext Specialist	GVR East Ctr
Mar 5	50 Years at Tucson Botanical Gardens	Michelle Conklin Executive Director	GVR West Ctr
Mar 12	Borderlands Restoration Nursery & Seed	Francesca Claverie Cantu Plant Prg Dir	GVR West Ctr
Apr 2	Growing Garlic Forever Yong Farm	John Rueb Owner	GVR West Ctr
Apr 9	Cactus Rescue Prg TCSS	Steve Watts Crew Field Ops	GVR East Ctr

Master Gardener's table prior to  
and following the seminar



[www.greenvalleygardeners.com](http://www.greenvalleygardeners.com)

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# Green Valley Gardeners & Historic Canoa Ranch – A Blooming Partnership

Article by Carol Lambert, GVG Member. Photos by Debbie Gillian, GVG Member

The Green Valley Gardeners (GVG) have teamed up with staff from Pima County Conservation Lands & Resources on a unique and highly successful cooperative project at Historic Canoa Ranch. The goal is to regenerate the historic landscape and gardens to be as similar as possible to the ranch in its heyday: 1908 – late 1960's. Old photos and the recollections of remaining family members and people who worked at the Ranch have been used for reference.

The Canoa Ranch Master Plan was developed with community input in 2007. The gardens were started in late fall 2012, with the GVG removing weeds & dead soil from flower beds and planning an irrigation system. Typically the Gardeners submit a detailed garden plan to the County who approves the plan and purchases the plants from the Pima County Native Plant Nursery.

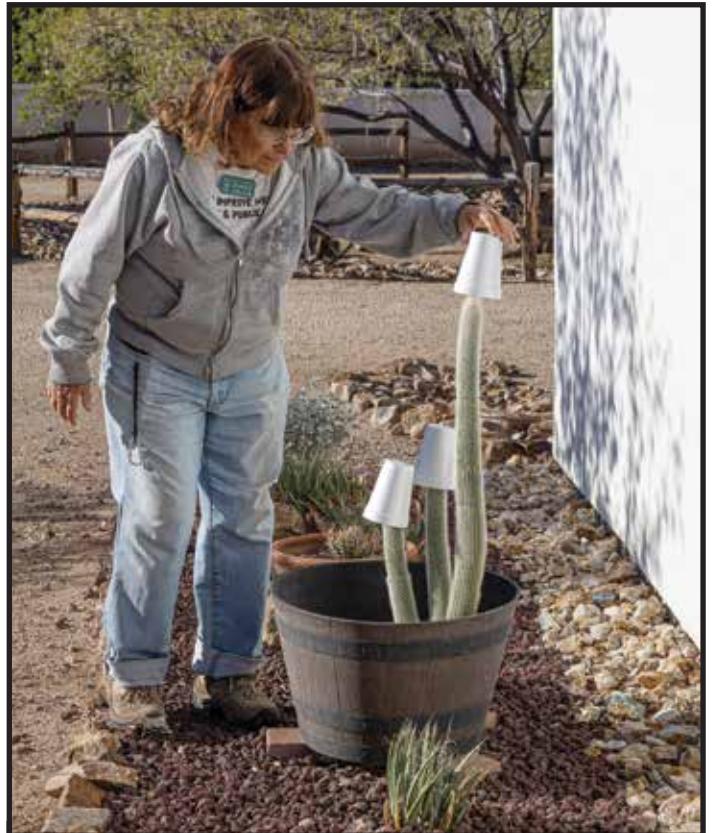
Of the seven major structures at the Ranch, each has at least one garden associated with it. Typical GVG projects include: a xeriscape garden, an herb

& vegetable garden, several raised flower beds, a variety of indoor plants, a cactus garden, and a heritage orchard. GVG docents lead a tour the first Friday of each month at 9am.

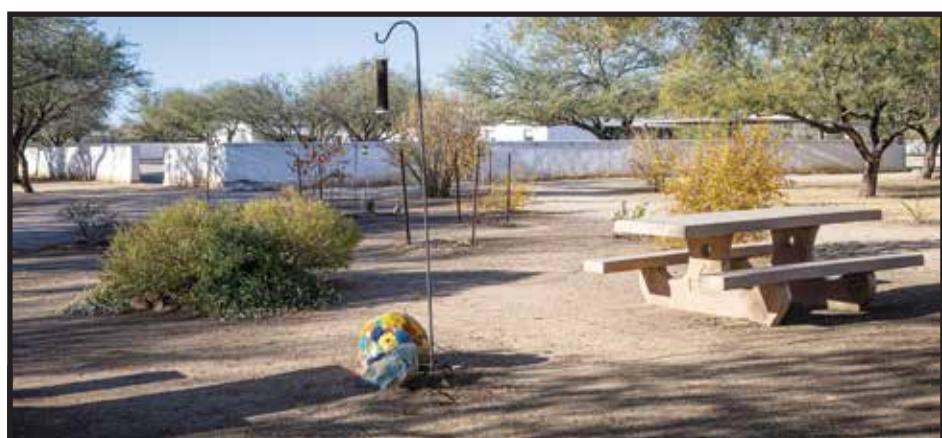
The Historic Canoa Ranch is located less than 10 miles south of Green Valley on the east frontage road. If you are interested in volunteering with the Green Valley Gardeners at the Ranch, contact us at [info@greenvalleygardeners.com](mailto:info@greenvalleygardeners.com).



Garden club volunteers maintain both indoor and outdoor plants at Junior's House. Seasonal plants are included when appropriate.



Come winter one of the tasks the volunteers perform is to protect frost sensitive plants. Temperatures at the Ranch typically get 7-degrees lower than in Green Valley. In this photo Jeannie Greven is placing styrofoam cups on the embryonic tips of columnar cacti. These plants are in the gardens at the Visitor Center.



Within the compound of the working Ranch there was an orchard. Volunteers have been working on the restoration of the orchard. Currently you can find Chiltepin pepper plants too. This Sonoran Desert native plant produces tiny, fiery, chilies. Known as the "mother of all peppers," valued for intense heat that fades quickly, and used fresh, dried, or pickled in Southwestern cuisine.

Green Valley Gardeners create and maintain three additional gardens in Green Valley that are open to the public:

- The 1-acre Arid garden on Camino del Arrendajo
- Desert Meadows Park located on the historic Anza Trail, featuring a self-serve nursery
- The Allen J. Ogden Community Garden located in Sahuarita

All have signage to learn more about Native and adapted plants.

The GVG spring plant sale is scheduled March 20 - 21 from 9am - 2pm at Desert Meadows Park.



Each Tuesday morning Green Valley Gardeners' volunteers work within the compound of Historic Canoa Ranch. Left to right: Raydine Taber (volunteer coordinator), Larry Bennett, Mary Gonzalez, Mary Grgich, Jeannie Greven, Barbara Martin.



The Senior's House was one of the most recent renovations at the Ranch. Corten steel planters were installed around the outdoor patios. Garden club volunteers have planted these with succulents and native perennials.



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La Posada at Green Valley is an award-winning, nationally accredited Life Plan Community. Learn more at [LaPosadaGreenValley.org](http://LaPosadaGreenValley.org), or call (520) 648-8131



# It's Time to Start an Affair with Pre-loved Clothing

Article by Regina Ford

“I’m wearing second hand hats, second hand clothes, that’s why they call me second hand Rose.”

Those lyrics, sung by Barbara Streisand in the 1964 Broadway musical “Funny Girl” was the singer’s portrayal of comedian Fanny Brice lamenting “I never get a thing that ain’t been used.”

Fast forward nearly 62 years and boasting a wardrobe of gently used garments is currently the latest fashion statement. In fact, second-hand clothing sales skyrocketed this past year with the market experiencing significant growth driven by changes in consumer preferences, increasing environmental awareness, and the rising popularity of sustainable fashion. As consumers seek affordable and eco-friendly alternatives to fast fashion, second-hand clothing presents an attractive solution.

People are buying used clothes for a mix of economic, environmental, and style reasons, driven heavily by Gen Z (born 1997-2012) and Millennials (born 1981-1996) seeking unique, affordable, and sustainable fashion.

In other words, one person’s trash can be another’s treasure, as the old saying goes. For many, buying second-hand clothes used to have a stigma attached: you shopped in charity shops and thrift stores when you had little money, no alternative and



A vintage floor-length beaded gown sold minutes after this photo was taken in the Unique Boutique at the Country Fair White Elephant. Photo courtesy of Regina Ford.



A customer looks at racks of gently used shoes looking for bargain footwear. Photo courtesy of Regina Ford.

department store clothing was unaffordable. Times have certainly changed. Second-hand clothing has definitely come out of the closet.

The negative associations around buying used garments have disappeared, as sustainability, cost concerns and the boom in online shopping make embracing ‘pre-loved’ clothing something to shout about.

The resale market for secondhand fashion is a runaway success and it seems everyone is getting in on the act and enjoying the thrill of hunting for unique vintage items and a desire to reduce fashion’s environmental impact. Second-hand shopping keeps textiles out of landfills, contributing to a circular economy where products are reused rather than discarded.

In a 2024 report conducted by ThredUp Inc., a leading online consignment and thrift store, used clothing sales grew 15 times faster than the broader retail clothing sector in 2023 and is predicted to more than double by 2028. Approximately one-third of clothing and apparel items purchased in the US over the past year were secondhand.

Madison, Wisconsin resident Alyssa Williams was visiting her relatives in Sahuarita over Thanksgiving when she decided to drop into the Country Fair White Elephant in Green Valley to “check out” the thrift store she’d heard so much about from her family.

“I found a vintage plaid mohair coat from the 1970s and had to have it,”

Williams said. “It’s cold back home and I love it. It’s \$15 and I’m now looking for boots to go with it.”

Williams said that she believes vintage and pre-owned clothes offer unique styles not found in mass-produced trendy fashion.

“I bought some new clothes recently but realized that after a few weeks and several washes, they lose their shape and fade,” Williams said. “The material used in this clothing feels slick and unreal. It has no life and screams artificial. Wool, linen and cotton I can understand, but polyester and acrylic feel cheap.”

Name-brand items like Talbots, Chico’s, Anne Klein, Michael Kors, Nike, Ralph Lauren, Coach, Sundance and other higher end apparel as well as clothes with logos and streetwear are particularly popular with thrift store shoppers.

Green Valley resident, Irene Miller, frequents DaZee’s, another local clothing resale shop whose proceeds benefit a local women’s shelter.

“I’m small, petite and rather short and sometimes have a difficult time finding clothes that fit me,” Miller said. “I always find something at DaZee’s where there are good, more expensive brands that look good on me and last longer.”

Other thrift shoppers find clothing bargains at The Attic, the resale shop located adjacent to The Animal League of Green Valley, and whose proceeds go to help dogs and cats in the Animal League’s shelter as they wait to be adopted.

The White Elephant, DaZee’s, The Attic, and St. Vincent de Paul Thrift Store in Green Valley, as well as Goodwill in Sahuarita accept donated clothing and shoes for resale while other local shops like Trendz Consignment Boutique in Green Valley stock new and gently used clothing on consignment, allowing consignors the opportunity to collect a percentage from the sale of their used items, many that originally pricey when they were purchased new.

Jose Martinez, a Rio Rico resident, explained that he shops for jeans and “broken in” cowboy boots in thrift stores.

“Boots are expensive, so I look for boots that are in good condition but have already been used because



Many shoppers buying used clothing look at labels to learn the fabric and origin of the piece. Photo courtesy of Maky Orel, Wikimedia Commons



Vintage fur coats are popular with some customers in secondhand clothing stores. Photo courtesy of Maky Orel, Wikimedia Commons

continued on page 12

# Why Continued RTA Funding Matters to Our Region

Written by Tom Murphy, Mayor of Sahuarita

Over the past 20 years, the Regional Transportation Authority (RTA) has played a critical role in shaping transportation across Pima County with an investment of \$1.6 billion in regional transportation improvements. This progress has been made possible by a half-cent sales tax approved by Pima County voters in 2006.

Since then, the RTA has completed more than 1,050 transportation improvements. Looking ahead, the RTA has proposed a 20-year, \$2.67 billion plan—RTA Next, which voters will consider in March 2026. Full details are available at RTAnext.com. If approved, the plan is expected to generate more than 48,000 additional jobs and over \$3.7 billion in economic gains over the next 20-plus years.

## No New Tax, Continued Progress

It's important to note that approval of RTA Next would result in **no change to your tax rate**. The existing half-cent sales tax would simply be renewed—meaning zero tax increase for voters. Because the funding comes from a sales tax, everyone contributes—residents,



Sahuarita Road before RTA voter approval



Sahuarita Road after passage of RTA vote

visitors, tourists, and businesses—allowing dollars to be reinvested locally to improve quality of life.

## Transportation Improvements That Benefit Everyone

Long-term investments from the original RTA plan have improved regional mobility, expanded transit offerings, and enhanced bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure. These upgrades increase safety, efficiency, and reliability for drivers, riders, cyclists, and pedestrians throughout the region.

## What RTA Next Means for Sahuarita

The proposed plan includes 31 new corridor improvements. In the Sahuarita area, this includes a new interchange at Sahuarita Road and I-19, La Villita Road from Sahuarita Road to Nogales Highway, and Pima Mine Road, along with opportunities for regional arterial repaving and expanded bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure.

I encourage residents to stay engaged in this important conversation at RTAnext.com. The decisions we make

today will shape our region's mobility, economy, and quality of life for decades to come.

**VOTE YES**

All Mailed Ballot Election

**Ballots mailed:** February 11, 2026

**Last Day to Vote:** March 10, 2026

**Deadline:** Ballots must be received no later than 7PM March 10, 2026

## 5 things to know about the RTA Next plan and tax, if both are approved next March:

The Regional Transportation Authority will present a \$2.67 billion plan on March 10, 2026, (mail-in ballot only) for voter consideration to improve the region's transportation network reliability, efficiency and safety.

### • No tax increase

If the RTA Next plan and half-cent sales tax are approved, the tax rate remains the same.



### • RTA funds nearly 2/3 of regional transportation needs

\$125 million annually to stretch limited federal and state resources (\$54 million annually combined).



### • RTA funded-transit service expansions to continue

Covering dial-a-ride/paratransit services critical to those who rely on it most.



### • 48,000 additional jobs will be created across Pima County over 20 years

Plus short-term construction jobs.



### • \$3.7 billion economic benefits will be realized over 20+ years

Supported by public and private sector investments on improved transportation corridors; expands the tax base to help keep property taxes down.



**RTA *next***

Investing in transportation to meet your needs

Join us for a virtual Q&A session on Jan. 7 and Feb. 3 - sign up at [RTAnext.com](http://RTAnext.com)



Learn more at [RTAnext.com](http://RTAnext.com)

**Title VI and Translation:** The RTA operates its programs without regard to race, color and national origin in compliance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act. For translation assistance, please call (520) 792-1093 and ask for Zonia Kelley. Si necesita ayuda con traducción, llame por favor al (520) 792-1093 y comuníquese con Zonia Kelley.

**RTA**  
Regional Transportation Authority  
[RTAmobility.com](http://RTAmobility.com)

Thriftng  
continued from page 10

they are less stiff and easier to wear," Martinez said. "I never buy new jeans anymore. Even used jeans last a long time."

The global secondhand clothes market is projected to reach hundreds of billions by 2025-2029, growing much faster than traditional retail, according to Capital One resale statistics.

For those who want to stay home



Lesley Morresey tries on a vintage coat in the Unique Boutique, a new addition to the Country Fair White Elephant thrift store. Photo courtesy of Regina Ford.

and shop, the online market is the way to go. Top online second-hand clothing platforms include: Poshmark, Depop, ThredUp, eBay, and The RealReal, catering to different styles, from trendy/vintage (Depop, Poshmark) to everyday wear (ThredUp, eBay) and luxury designer items (The RealReal, Vestaire Collective).

The Capital One resale statistics report indicates that a major driver for people buying used clothing is the desire to "combat fashion waste and reduce environmental impact." Consumers want Eco-friendly options, and resale helps keep clothes out of landfills.

They also want access to quality, well-made and designer items costing a fraction of the original cost at



Beaded handbags, especially vintage evening bags, are a great find for some collectors. Photo courtesy of Joe Haupt, Wikimedia Commons.

thrift stores.

### Threadup Thrift Store Statistics Report 2024

National Thrift Store Day is celebrated annually on August 17. Used clothing isn't just a trend; it's a fundamental shift in fashion consumption.

The top four reasons people buy secondhand

- To get better deals
- The thrill of the hunt
- It's better for the planet
- To find one-of-a-kind looks

• In 2023, the US secondhand market generated an es-

timated \$53 billion in revenue.

- Every year, 16 to 18 percent of consumers in the US shop at thrift stores.
- 33.4 percent of thrift stores in the US are non-profit organizations.
- There are more than 25,000 resale, consignment, and not-for-profit resale shops in the US.
- Thrift store shoppers save an average of more than \$2,000 per year by purchasing secondhand.
- Approximately one-third of clothing and apparel items purchased in the US over the past year were secondhand.



A straw hat with a band made of traditional Guatemalan worry dolls is a unique find in a secondhand store. Photo courtesy of Regina Ford.



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This is a dollar-for-dollar tax credit for donations to qualified charitable organizations, meaning that your support costs you nothing... except our appreciation!

You can make your donation until April 15, 2026, and get the credit on your 2025 taxes.

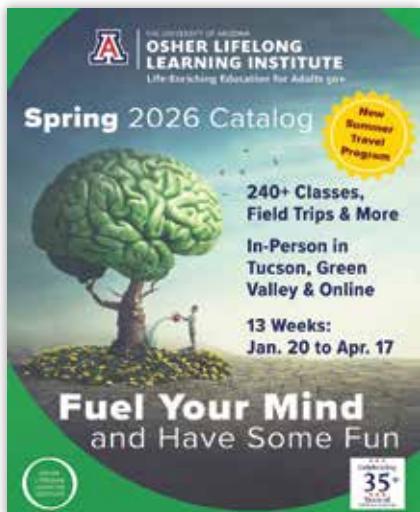
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## Discover OLLI-UA Green Valley - Join Today!

Classes Start Jan. 20 - One Membership Unlocks Unlimited Classes

Green Valley Spring Planner - Tuesdays & Wednesdays: 10 Weeks, Jan. 20 to Mar. 27 - Classes Run 90 Minutes in Length

Tues.	Class Title	Time	Weeks	Wed.	Class Title (Continued)	Time	Weeks
01/20	American History and Government From a British Perspective	9 AM	10	01/21	Understanding U.S. Tariffs and Trade Policy	11 AM	3
01/20	The Nature of Madera Canyon	9 AM	4	01/21	Analyzing Multiple Causations of the American Civil War	1 PM	6
01/20	American Governments 1774 to 1789: Crafting our Constitution	11 AM	10	01/21	Learn the Basics of Mah Jongg	1 PM	8
01/20	Cutting the TV Cord: Pros and Cons, and Best Options	11 AM	2	01/21	Wacky Hollywood Extended Version	1 PM	3
01/20	Funny Folk Songs in Traditional Music	1 PM	5	01/21	Age with Vitality	3 PM	5
01/20	United States Border Patrol Citizens Academy	1 PM	6	01/21	Become a Nature Detective	3 PM	9
01/20	Understanding Dementia from the Inside	3 PM	8	02/11	A Special Kind of Mystery	9 AM	7
01/20	We're a Republic. It's Under Assault	3 PM	6	02/11	Assessing 20th Century American Presidents	11 AM	2
02/03	Do we Have a Climate Crisis? What Does the Data Say?	9 AM	8	02/11	Mammals of the Santa Catalina Mountains	11 AM	4
02/03	Tanzania, a Beautiful Country: Its People and Challenges	11 AM	2	02/11	Intro to Aviation: Aircraft and our Aviation System	1 PM	1
02/10	Let's Talk About Natural Organic Reduction aka Human Composting	3 PM	1	02/18	Global Supply Chains and the History and Effect of Tariffs	9 AM	4
02/17	CASA of Pima County (Court Appointed Special Advocate)	9 AM	2	02/18	EAA AirVenture - The World's Largest Aviation Event	1 PM	1
02/17	Cut the Cord, Save Money	11 AM	2	02/25	Conspiracy Theories: The Good, The Bad, The Ugly	1 PM	3
02/17	The Tao Te Ching, an Introduction	11 AM	3	02/25	Election 2026: What Surprises are in Store?	3 PM	3
02/17	The Story of You: Turning Life's Moments into Legacy	1 PM	4	03/04	Propaganda in the Ancient Middle East	11 AM	4
02/24	Amazing Astronomy (Without any Math!)	1 PM	5	03/04	Self-Publishing 101: How To Get Your Book on Amazon	1 PM	3
03/03	Marriage (or Remarriage) in Later Life: Preparing for Success	9 AM	1	03/11	Airshows: Behind the Main Show	11 AM	1
03/03	An Interactive and Fun Basic Introduction to the Enneagram	1 PM	4	03/18	How Have I Arranged My Financial/Investment Affairs, ...	9 AM	2
03/10	Nuclear Power: Where are We Headed?	11 AM	1	03/18	Psychology for Next Day Application	9 AM	2
03/17	WhereAZ: Where to Go, What to See in Southern Arizona	9 AM	2	03/18	From Farm to Your Kitchen: Salmonella	11 AM	1
03/17	Emergency Info Binder: Avoiding the Scavenger Hunt ...	11 AM	1	Thurs.	Class Title (Special Event Day)	Time	Weeks
03/17	Artificial Intelligence Art: What, How, Why, and Is it for Me?	3 PM	1	01/22	Birdwatchers Watching LISTERNS: Glimpse Into Extreme Birdwatching	1 PM	1
Wed.	Class Title	Time	Weeks	Fri.	Class Title (Special Event CPAC Theatre)	Time	Weeks
01/21	Controlling The Power of Our Governments	9 AM	8	02/06	OLLI Talks: AI and the Battle for Global Dominance	1 PM	1
01/21	Fourteen Days of Fear: The Cuban Missile Crisis-1962	9 AM	4	Travel with OLLI-UA This Summer: Two Trip Options			
01/21	Mental Wellness and Aging: A Narrative Thought Perspective	11 AM	6	Canadian Maritimes & Coastal Wonders: 11 Days - Aug 6 to 16			
01/21	The Changing Face of Local Journalism	11 AM	3	Shades of Ireland (Featuring Northern Ireland): 13 Days - Sept 4 to 16			

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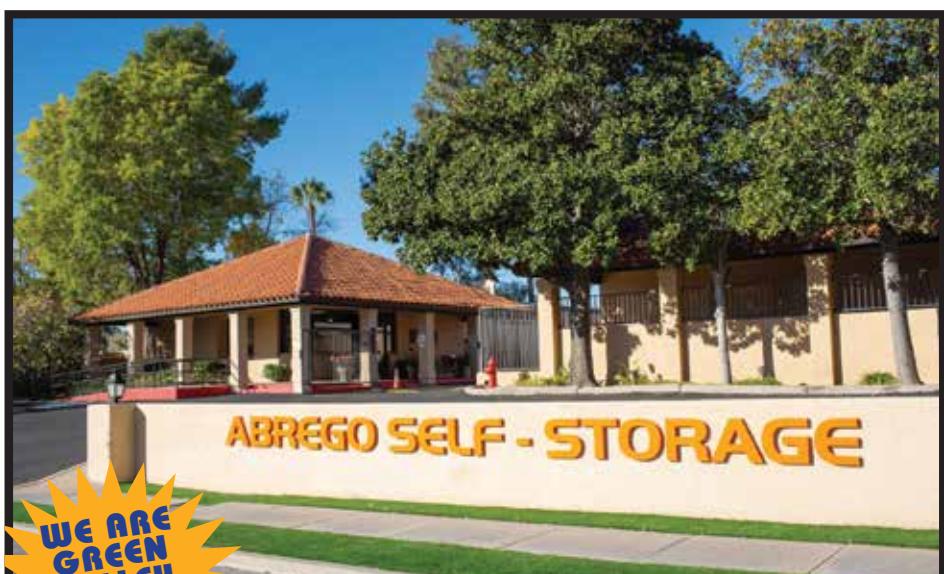
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# Carnuts Keeps On Giving: Tradition Rolls Into Its 31st Year

Written by KGVY Staff



For more than three decades, the Sahuarita Classics Car Show has been a proud tradition in Green Valley, and 2025 is set to be no different. The Carnuts Car Club—known for its unwavering commitment to education and community—continues to drive forward its mission of giving back. In fact, one of the club's proudest milestones came in April 2024, when SCVCNs donated a record-breaking \$40,000 to the Sahuarita Unified School District.

This generous contribution directly supports Automotive Technologies Pima and the Pima First Sahuarita Wins Scholarship Program, assisting graduates pursuing automotive technology studies at Pima Community College. For a club built on passion, volunteerism, and local pride, this moment stands tall in its 30-year history.

Now, the Carnuts are gearing up for another spectacular celebration of classic vehicles and community spirit. The **31st Annual Sahuarita Classics Car Show** will take place on **Saturday, January 31st**, at the scenic **Quail Creek Veterans Municipal Park** in Green Valley, AZ. Gates open to the public at **10:00 a.m.**, with general admission of just **\$5.00** and **free entry for children under 12**—making it an affordable outing for families and car lovers alike. Guests can enjoy a wide range of food vendors, stroll among beautifully restored vehicles, and celebrate the passion and craftsmanship that make the classic car

community so unique. Best of all, **every dollar raised goes directly to supporting the Town of Sahuarita Automotive Technology Programs.**

This beloved annual event would not be possible without the remarkable support of the local community. A heartfelt **shout-out goes to the 50 platinum sponsors**, neighboring businesses, loyal spectators, and the **100+ volunteers** whose dedication has powered the show's success for 31 years. Their continued commitment ensures that the event not only thrives but continues to fuel educational opportunities for future automotive professionals.

As engines rev and classics shine, the Carnuts Car Club invites everyone to join the celebration, honor a long-standing tradition, and help support the next generation of automotive talent.

For more information about the car club or upcoming events, visit [www.Carnuts.org](http://www.Carnuts.org)



## VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

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Green Valley, AZ

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

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

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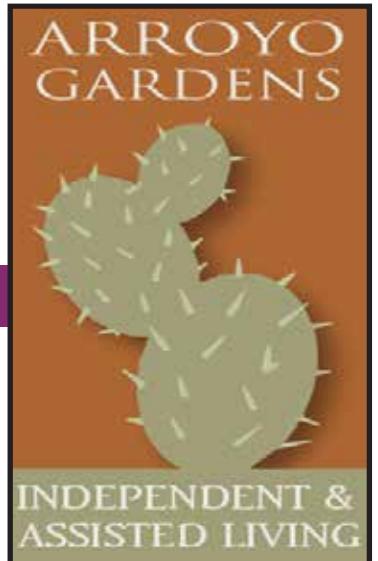
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We do not offer every plan available in your area. Currently we represent 14 organizations which offer 74 plan products in your area. Please contact Medicare.gov, 1-800-Medicare, or your local State Health Insurance Program (SHIP) to get information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

# OLLI-UA offers Green Valley a Community United by Lifelong Learning

Written by Betsy Labiner, Program Coordinator, Osher Lifelong Learning Institute at the University of Arizona (OLLI-UA)

Are you looking to delve into new experiences in the new year? Or perhaps your resolution is to meet new people, or to explore your community. Whatever your hopes for 2026, you can fuel your mind and have some fun with the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute at the University of Arizona (OLLI-UA) in Green Valley! OLLI-UA is excited to invite you to join their friendly community of excited, engaged members. Their educational programming lets you experience all the best parts of school with none of the stress. Pick and choose your favorite subjects, make friends, go on field trips, dine out at local restaurants – and never worry about exams or homework!

Curiosity can lead participants anywhere! This spring in Green Valley, OLLI will offer over 40 in-person classes and over 60 online classes, each of which can range from



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## White Elephant Thrift Store

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**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)

**Customer Pickup:** Mon.-Sat. 8AM - 2PM  
Volunteer Opportunities Available

**CLOTHING, JEWELRY, FURNITURE & MORE**

single sessions to 10-week courses. The spring curriculum includes classes on folk music, the plants and animals of Madera Canyon, mystery novels, local journalism, mahjong, political science and international relations, and history, and much more! 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.

Green Valley's spring 2026 term will run for 10 weeks, from January 20 to March 25, with in-person classes two days per week on Tuesday and Wednesday. Online classes, field trips, and social events take place throughout the week.

OLLI-UA has been offering learning opportunities for adults aged 50 and up for over 35 years. They offer an enormous array of classes in academic fields of all kinds, as well as social events and special interest groups. The program is focused on learning for the joy of learning, with no tests or grades. Crucially, OLLI is a membership program that is shaped and led by the members themselves. OLLI-UA currently serves over

1,200 members. Members are encouraged not only to take classes and attend social events, but also to teach classes in their areas of interest and expertise and volunteer on the many committees that keep the organization humming.

OLLI-UA classes are offered in person in Tucson and Green Valley, as well as online. OLLI-UA Green Valley campus programs are held at the Community Learning Center, a former community college campus located adjacent to the Community Performance and Art Center (CPAC) at 1250 W. Continental Road. One affordable membership gives you access to as many classes as you like—choose what interests you and fits your schedule. For example, a spring Green Valley and Online Membership for \$155 includes unlimited access to hundreds of hours of in-person classes in Green Valley, all online offerings, including some from peer OLLI campuses across the nation, as well as field trips and dining out social events.

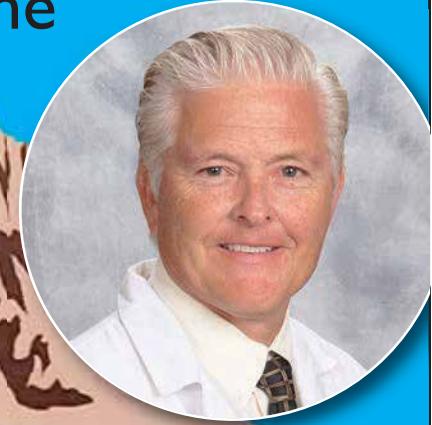
OLLI-UA approaches learning and socialization as key parts of healthy aging; the breadth of programs support mental acuity and holistic wellness for participants, while still being accommodating to differing abilities. OLLI invites Green Valley to join the fun and find their community among fellow lifelong learners! Visit [olli.arizona.edu](http://olli.arizona.edu) for more information.

The Osher Lifelong Learning Institute at the University of Arizona (OLLI-UA) in Green Valley invites adults age 50 and better to join its vibrant learning community this spring. It's more than classes—it's a place to fuel your mind, have some fun, and connect with others. This spring, OLLI-UA Green Valley offers more than 40 in-person classes and over 60 online options. Courses feature lively discussion enriched by members' diverse life experiences, with no exams, grades, or homework. In-person classes begin January 20 and are held at the Community Learning Center, home of CPAC, at 1250 W. Continental Road. Learn more at [olli.arizona.edu](http://olli.arizona.edu).

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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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# GVR 2026 EVENTS AND ENTERTAINMENT LINEUP



Most GVR events and day trips are open to the general public.

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## JANUARY

### 6 The Laugh Lounge at West Center

Join us for this special night of laughter and entertainment as the West Center transforms into a comedy night club. 7pm; GVR Member/Guest \$20; General Public \$40

### 20 The Ultimate Elvis

Jay Dupuis brings Elvis's energy, vocals, and unforgettable showmanship alive. This show carries an exclusive endorsement by Elvis Presley Enterprises. 7pm; GVR Members/Guest \$35; General Public \$55



### 24 The Neil Diamond Story

William Florian celebrates Neil Diamond's legendary career and classic hits with soulful vocals, engaging stories, and a dynamic band. 7pm; GVR Members/Guest \$35; General Public \$55

## FEBRUARY

### 3 The Beatles Experience

Relive all the Beatles classics as Britain's Finest captures iconic harmonies, vintage instruments, and irresistible high-energy charm. 7pm; GVR Members/Guest \$30; General Public \$50

### 14 My Funny Valentine: An Evening of Timeless Love Songs

Craig T. Olson and his quartet deliver timeless love songs with charm, warmth, nostalgia, and swoon-worthy melodies for Valentine's Day. 7:30pm; GVR Members/Guest \$30; General Public \$50

### 17 Celebrate the Sounds of Three Dog Night

Mike Yarema returns with a high-energy tribute packed with powerhouse vocals, top-tier musicianship, and iconic '70s hits. 7pm; GVR Members/Guest \$30; General Public \$50

### 20 An Evening with the R. Carlos Nakai Trio

This acclaimed trio starring R. Carlos Nakai blends Native flute, jazz, classical, and world music into a transcendent performance, powered by over 20 Grammy nominations. 7pm; GVR Members/Guest \$35; General Public \$55

### 24 Dancing with the Stars—GV Edition!

GVR's stars compete with pro partners as the audience votes; while ballots are tallied, the audience is treated to a spectacular Utah Ballroom Dance Company performance. 7pm; GVR Members/Guest \$25; General Public \$45

### 28 Eagle Eyes: The Ultimate Eagles Experience

*By popular demand: two shows—afternoon & evening!* Eagle Eyes returns after a sold-out debut in 2025, delivering iconic Eagles harmonies and classic rock hits that capture the band's spirit. 2pm matinee and a 7pm evening show. GVR Members/Guest \$35; General Public \$55



# GVR 2026 EVENTS AND ENTERTAINMENT

## MARCH

### 3 The New Christy Minstrels—LIVE IN CONCERT

William Florian returns to GVR and joins his original bandmates for an evening of authentic classic folk, rich harmonies, and timeless songs. This is the real deal, not a tribute. 7pm; GVR Members/Guest \$35; General Public \$55



### 5 George Strait Tribute

John Eric and the Troubadour Band deliver the tribute you've been waiting for—over 60 chart-topping hits, top-tier musicians, and the unmistakable sound and spirit of Strait live. 7pm; GVR Members/Guest \$35; General Public \$55

### 10 The Laugh Lounge at West Center

Join us for this special night of laughter and entertainment as the West Center transforms into a comedy night club. 7pm; GVR Members/Guest \$20; General Public \$40



*Sentimental Journey to Que Sera, Sera.* 7pm; GVR Members/Guest \$30; General Public \$50

### 19 Simply the Best, a Tribute to Tina Turner

Jenn Cristy channels the diva with powerhouse vocals, dynamic choreography, and iconic hits, delivering the energy and spirit of the Queen of Rock 'n' Roll. 7pm; GVR Members/Guest \$35; General Public \$55



and award-winning charm. 7pm; GVR Members/Guest \$35; General Public \$55

### 12 Doris Day Tribute

Kristi King revives the golden age with radiant vocals, Doris Day warmth, and heartfelt performances of timeless classics from

*Sentimental Journey to Que Sera, Sera.* 7pm; GVR Members/Guest \$30; General Public \$50

### 26 Two Canadian Cowboys—Kenny Hess & George Canyon

Kenny Hess and George Canyon deliver Canadian country legends with songs, stories, laughs, 20+ hits, Hall of Fame credibility, and award-winning charm. 7pm; GVR Members/Guest \$35; General Public \$55

## APRIL

### 7 Forever Everly: The Everly Brothers Rockumentary

Forever Everly blends live performance with immersive multimedia storytelling as Jared Mancuso and Nick Gallardo bring Everly Brothers classics and their influence to life. 7pm; GVR Members/Guest \$35; General Public \$55



### 10 Valens to Valli

Nick Gallardo delivers a high-energy tribute to Ritchie Valens and Frankie Valli, blending powerhouse vocals, nostalgia, humor, and golden-era rock 'n' roll classics. 7pm; GVR Members/Guest \$35; General Public \$55

### 14 The Music of Motown

Joe Bourne and his nine-piece band ignite Motown's golden era with soulful vocals, high-energy hits, infectious rhythms, and timeless classics live. 7pm; GVR Members/Guest \$35; General Public \$55



### 25 Civic Orchestra of Tucson: Memories of Concerts Past

Enjoy an uplifting symphonic afternoon featuring Brahms, Grieg, Still, Piazzolla, and beloved film and Broadway favorites in a beautifully curated concert experience. 3pm; GVR Members/Guest \$15; General Public \$35

### 28 Back to Back: Tom Jones & Engelbert Humperdinck

Armen Dertadian and David Fanning deliver Tom Jones and Engelbert Humperdinck hits with powerful vocals, classic favorites, and irresistible back-to-back charm. 7pm; GVR Members/Guest \$30; General Public \$50



**PLEASE NOTE: Events listed after April 2026 are not a complete lineup. Stay tuned — there's plenty more to look forward to in the coming months.**

## JUNE

### 13 Beyond Broadway

Catherine Ricafort, eight-time Broadway star, joins vocalist Zach Wetzel for a high-energy cabaret of Broadway hits, jazz twists, and pop surprises, backed by musicians for a night of pure entertainment. 7pm; GVR Members/Guest \$30; General Public \$50

## AUGUST

### 18 Return to Woodstock

The Tributaries revive Woodstock's spirit with riveting performances, authentic sounds, and Summer-of-Love energy in a hit-filled celebration of 1969. 7pm; GVR Members/Guest \$30; General Public \$50



# ENTERTAINMENT LINEUP

## SEPTEMBER

### 17 The Chicago Experience

This tribute delivers Chicago's iconic horn-driven sound, rich harmonies, and timeless hits in a nostalgic night of standout musicianship. 7pm; GVR Members/Guest \$35; General Public \$55

### 22 You Make My Dreams Come True: A Tribute to Hall & Oates

Matthew Holter and Jeremy Vega deliver a high-energy Hall & Oates tribute packed with iconic hits, smooth harmonies, and pure feel-good nostalgia. 7pm; GVR Members/Guest \$35; General Public \$55



### 25 Fred Klett's Comedy Tour

Fred Klett—cruise-ship comedy royalty—hosts a night of sharp observational humor, quick wit, big laughs, and unforgettable fun for all. 7pm; GVR Members/Guest \$30; General Public \$50

## OCTOBER

### DAVID K'S TRIBUTE WEEKEND

**Save by purchasing all three tributes as a bundle:  
GVR Member/Guest \$75; General Public \$125**

Individual prices:

GVR Members/Guest \$30 each; General Public \$50 each

**2 Elton John:** soaring vocals, masterful piano, show-stopping flair, and all the hits you love. 7pm

**3 Roy Orbison:** soulful vocals, rich arrangements, and timeless hits that capture the Big O's emotion and iconic sound. 7pm

**4 Buddy Holly:** energetic vocals, crisp guitar, vintage flair, and rock 'n' roll classics in a fun, high-energy, nostalgia-filled tribute. 2pm

### 20 Power of Love: The Best of Huey Lewis & The News

This high-energy tribute brings punchy brass, feel-good '80s hits, and nonstop fun that keeps everyone singing along. 7pm; GVR Members/Guest \$30; General Public \$50

### 23 A Magical Evening with John Shryock

Brace for mind-bending magic as John Shryock delivers illusions, laughs, and moments that flip reality on its head. 7pm; GVR Members/Guest \$25; General Public \$45



## NOVEMBER

### 3 Almost Folsom: A Tribute to JOHNNY CASH

Don't miss the iconic grit, heart, and rebellious spirit of The Man in Black enhanced by the timeless charm and influence of June Carter Cash. 7pm; GVR Members/Guest \$35; General Public \$55

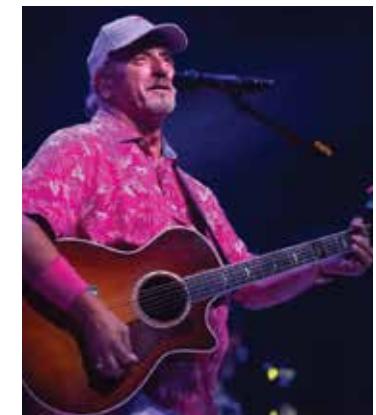


### 5 Disco Inferno: The Best of the Disco Era

This tribute lets you step into a glittering disco time machine filled with '70s hits, dazzling energy, and a dance-floor party that never quits. 7pm; GVR Members/Guest \$35; General Public \$55

### 7 Margaritas in Paradise: A Tribute to Jimmy Buffett

Margaritas in Paradise brings true Jimmy Buffett vibes with island energy, sing-along hits, and Corey Spector's official tribute magic—honored as the Official Band for Jimmy Buffett Days in Key West, Florida. 7pm; GVR Members/Guest \$30; General Public \$50



### 11 Salute to America

A patriotic salute featuring Armen Dirdadian and The Manhattan Dolls, honoring service members with timeless American classics and uplifting, flag-waving favorites. 2pm; GVR Members/Guest \$30; General Public \$50

## DECEMBER



### 5 A Very Vintage Christmas

This festive holiday show brings timeless classics to life with Heather Stricker, live musicians, gorgeous vocals, and warm, nostalgic charm. 7pm; GVR Members/Guest \$30; General Public \$50

### 15 A Joyful Holiday Evening with Joe Bourne

Joe Bourne brings velvety vocals, classic holiday favorites, and festive charm together for a heartfelt Christmas concert full of joy and seasonal magic. 7pm; GVR Members/Guest \$30; General Public \$50

# GVR DAY TRIPS



## Borderlandia's Nogales Taco Tour

Borderlandia leads a cross-border taco adventure through Nogales, Sonora—shrimp tacos, chimis, pan dulce, culture, history, and stories—all guided by expert Alex La Pierre. A flavorful 1.5-mile foodie journey. Passport Required. The tour starts in Nogales, AZ. GVR Members/Guest \$100; General Public \$120. Choose from [January 11; February 22; March 29](#).

## Discover Magdalena de Kino with Borderlandia

Explore vibrant plazas, murals, culture, and Padre Kino's legacy on this guided Borderlandia day trip with Alex LaPierre.

Breakfast, lunch, and adventure included. Passport required. The tour starts in Nogales, AZ. GVR Members/Guest \$195; General Public \$215. Choose from [February 11; April 16](#).



## JANUARY 22

### Barrett-Jackson Car Auction Scottsdale

Head out for Barrett-Jackson's legendary collector car event with luxury vehicles, live auctions, and high-energy entertainment on this exclusive GVR day tour. GVR Members/Guest \$89; General Public \$109

## FEBRUARY 21

### Basketball Phoenix Suns vs. Orlando Magic

Catch the Phoenix Suns battle the Orlando Magic live—high-energy NBA action, great seats, and a hassle-free day trip adventure. GVR Members/Guest \$89; General Public \$109



## MARCH 21

### Barleens Lunch & Show

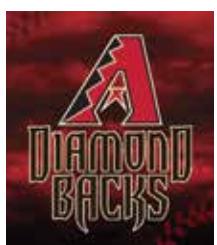
Be sure to get tickets early for this variety show with music, comedy, dessert-first fun, and round-trip GVR transportation. GVR Members/Guest \$119; General Public \$139



## MARCH 22

### Golf Cologuard Classic FINAL ROUND SHOWDOWN

Be part of championship Sunday as golf legends compete in the Cologuard Classic's final round. Easy round-trip transportation. GVR Members/Guest \$79; General Public \$99



## VIP BASEBALL EXPERIENCE

Enjoy Diamondbacks' baseball with club-level seats, all-you-can-eat hotdogs, popcorn, peanuts, soft drinks, and round-trip transportation to Phoenix game days. GVR Members/Guest \$129; General Public \$149

[April 1 AZ Diamondbacks vs. Detroit Tigers](#)

[May 20 AZ Diamondbacks vs. San Francisco](#)

[August 26 AZ Diamondbacks vs. Chicago Cubs](#)

[September 2 AZ Diamondbacks vs. Phillies](#)



## VIP Wine Tour: The Grape Escape to Sonoita Wineries

Spend a delightful day exploring three different wineries where you'll indulge in three to five tastings at each stop. Round-trip transportation is included, so all you have to do is sit back, relax, and enjoy the ride. GVR Members/Guest \$139; General Public \$159. Choose from [June 25; July 23; August 20](#).

## OCTOBER 18

### VIP NASCAR EXPERIENCE — Phoenix Raceway

Grab your tickets for a full-throttle NASCAR race-day adventure with reserved seats, Victory Lane access, garage views, and special driver Q&As. GVR Members/Guest \$149; General Public \$169

## NOVEMBER 20

### Mesa Market Place

Discover Mesa Market Place with stress-free transportation, snacks, and hours to shop hundreds of vendors: perfect for gifts, great food, and a fun, easy day out. GVR Members/Guest \$45; General Public \$65



## PAINT & SIPS

Sip, swirl, and paint with step-by-step guidance from a professional artist. Bring your own beverage, enjoy light snacks for a playful, laughter-filled afternoon of creativity and fun. GVR Members/Guest \$40; General Public \$60. All paint & sips start at 1pm. Choose from [February 2; April 6; June 1; August 3; October 5; December 7](#).

## MOVIES

Are you interested in attending movies in 2026? GVR members, please go to the GVRec.org and click on the homepage calendar for movie dates and times. Alternatively, you may head to the website events page, look on center bulletin boards, or ask customer service at 520-625-3440, West Center Box Office.



## HOW TO BUY TICKETS

### Monday to Friday, 8am–4pm:

Visit the West Center Box Office at 1111 S. GVR Drive  
Call customer service at 520-625-3440

### Any time:

Purchase tickets online at GVRec.org

(Sorry, event and day-trip tickets are non-refundable.)



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## Community Performance and Art Center

**JANUARY 15-16** THE MUSIC OF JOHN MELLENCAMP  
3PM & 7PM



**JANUARY 22-FEBRUARY 1** THE FANTASTICKS By Tom Jones & Harvey Schmidt  
SANTA CRUZ SHOESTRING PLAYERS



**FEBRUARY 2 7PM** MATT AND REBEKAH ROLLAND FEATURING BASSIST THOGER LUND



**FEBRUARY 16 7PM** LOS LLANEROS FOLK MUSIC OF SOUTH AMERICA



**FEBRUARY 17 7PM** JAMES FERNANDO JAZZ TRIO



**FEBRUARY 21 3PM & 7PM** JIGJAM: IRISH BLUEGRASS



**FEBRUARY 25 7PM** AZ OPERA STARS OF TOMORROW



**FEBRUARY 28 3PM** THE ART OF VARIATION PRESENTED BY THE ARIZONA EARLY MUSIC SOCIETY



**MARCH 2 3PM & 7PM** DALLAS BRASS



**MARCH 3 7PM** BRENN HILL AND ANDY NELSON



**MARCH 4 3PM & 7PM** PIANO HEIST



**MARCH 11 7PM** RYANHOOD



**MARCH 21 7PM** THE STORYTELLERS BLUEGRASS AND AMERICANA



Buy Tickets Online at [www.performingartscenter.org](http://www.performingartscenter.org)



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[gvsav.org](http://gvsav.org)

# “The Fantasticks” Comes to CPAC January 22 through February 1

“Try to remember the kind of September, when life was slow and oh, so mellow.”

**S**o begins *The Fantasticks* – famously the world’s longest running musical, coming to Green Valley’s Community Performance and Art Center (CPAC) January 22 – February 1, 2026 as part of the Santa Cruz Shoestring Players’ 2025-2026 season.

After holding open auditions which attracted some of southern Arizona’s finest talent, the Shoestring Players’ production team ultimately cast the show with a combination of familiar faces along with individuals who are stepping onto the CPAC stage for the very first time. Audiences may recognize Neil Crapo (El Gallo), Kara Reynolds (Bell, the girl’s mother) and Murry Holmstrom (Huck, the boy’s father). Playing the roles of Luisa and Matt are University of Arizona students Natalie Dunnivant and Stephen Norton. Rounding out the cast are Scott Berg (Henry, The Old Actor), Ryan Reynolds (Mortimer, The Man Who Dies), and Adam Gillespie (The Mute).

## A Piece of Musical Theater History

Considered one of the most successful stage shows of all time, audiences have flocked to this piece of musical theater history for over 60 years. Our narrator, El Gallo, introduces us to Matt and Luisa, a pair of young lovers who (with a bit of help from their meddling, but well-intended parents) experience the magical, moonlit phase of falling in love. However, when romantic moonlight turns into the harsh light of day, complications arise. But never fear – a wildly entertaining cast of characters conspire to guide them through a journey filled with comedy, romance and adventure.

Authors Tom Jones (book and lyrics) and Harvey Schmidt (music) created a new musical with its own language – a combination of romantic poetry, sophisticated jazz, and vaudevillian “schtick”. And they wrapped it all in timeless melodies including “Try To Remember”, “Soon It’s Gonna Rain” and “They Were You” – songs ultimately recorded by the likes of Frank Sinatra, Barbra Streisand, Harry Belafonte and Josh Groban.

“My love for this show goes back decades, having first brought it to

the stage in Minneapolis back in the early 1990’s,” says Kevin Hansen, director of *The Fantasticks*. “Who doesn’t remember both the joy and the pain of first love? Everyone can relate to the antics of these characters, and we can’t help but be moved as we view their adventures through the lens of our own memories and experiences. In fact, this sentiment is wonderfully expressed in the final lyric of the show: *Deep in December our hearts should remember, and follow.*”

## The World’s Longest-Running Musical

Often referred to as the “Miracle on Sullivan Street” (in honor of its original NYC theater location), *The Fantasticks* smashed all preconceived ideas of what a musical can be, creating something fresh and new. That original production opened in 1960 and ran an astonishing 42 years (over 17,000 performances), and was closely followed by a New York revival which ran another 11 years. Today, *The Fantasticks* is performed in multiple languages all over the globe.

The show distinguished itself as a celebration of the magic of theater, filled with color and light. A place where a few simple props and



“The Fantasticks” (Ryan Reynolds, Scott Berg)

minimal set pieces – combined with the imagination of the audience – can bring an exciting new world to life. This novel approach to storytelling opened the doors for theaters of all sizes to create something unique to their own vision and resources.

Productions large and small – from lavish professional stagings to high school and college presentations – are mounted year after year. And for actors, appearing in *The Fantasticks* is almost a ‘rite of passage.’ In fact, some of the most famous names in Hollywood and Broadway have been associated with this show. The role of El Gallo, for example, has been played by such luminaries as Jerry Orbach, Ricardo Montalban, Richard Chamberlain and Robert Goulet. Glenn Close and Kristen Chenoweth both assumed the role of Luisa, and Bert Lahr – famously the Cowardly Lion in ‘The Wizard of Oz’ – played one of the parents in a 1964 *Hallmark Hall of Fame* television adaptation.



The cast of “The Fantasticks”



“The Fantasticks” (Ryan Reynolds, Neil Crapo, Scott Berg, Stephen Norton)

## CPAC’s ‘Theater in Residence’

For the Santa Cruz Shoestring Players – the ‘Theater in Residence’ at CPAC – *The Fantasticks* is just the latest in an impressive string of comedies, musicals and dramas enjoyed by local audiences. Founded in 2008, this completely volunteer organization has staged over 60 productions, and – in addition to its mainstage events – now offers Kids Summer Theater Camp and Readers Theater opportunities. The Shoestring Players prides itself on providing high-quality theatrical experiences in an effort to foster, promote and increase public knowledge and appreciation of the theater arts in the Santa Cruz Valley.

## The Fantasticks Performance Details

Performances of *The Fantasticks* are Thursday & Friday evenings (7:00 p.m.) and Saturday & Sunday matinees (3:00 p.m.) January 22 – February 1, 2026 at the Community Performance and Art Center (CPAC) in Green Valley (1250 W Continental Road). Tickets (\$30) can be purchased by phone at 520-339-1750, online at [www.performingartscenter.org](http://www.performingartscenter.org), or in person at the CPAC Box Office.



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# The GVC Foundation Your Community Partner

Written by Mari Nelson, President, GVC Foundation

The **FRIENDS OF THE CANOAS** is a volunteer membership interest group of the GVC Foundation that champions careful guardianship of the over 5,000 acres of Pima County Conservation Land & Resources parkland housed in the Green Valley community, most notable of which are the Historic Canoa Ranch (located at 5375 East I-19 Frontage Road) and the Canoa Hills Trails Park (off Camino del Sol).

The **FRIENDS OF THE CANOAS** promote and preserve these natural community resources through outreach, education, fundraising, and good old-fashioned effort. If you enjoy visiting Historic Canoa Ranch and the beloved lake or if you venture along the 5.5 miles of walking paths through the 130 acres open space Trails Park, consider joining the **FRIENDS OF THE CANOAS**. Your membership helps sustain these important parks and you will receive meaningful benefits in return.

If interested in joining, go the [gvc-foundation.org](http://gvc-foundation.org) website to complete the membership form. Your donation comes with a Thank -you gift. In addition, members are welcome to attend the monthly meeting of the Friends of the Canoa Parks for updated information from Pima County.

**SAVE THE DATE.... SATURDAY, MARCH 14 for The 4<sup>th</sup> ANNUAL FIRST RESPONDERS FAIR at the Historic Canoa Ranch. Gates open at 9 am to 2 pm.**

Join us for a day to Honor and Thank all those who serve and protect our community. See Robot Demonstrations, Kids Zone, Food Trucks, Career Info, the Working Patrol Service Dogs Exhibition and more. Public welcome.



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# Green Valley Artisans' Shop: A Dream Becomes Reality

Written by Nan Clarke. Photos by Barbara Manis.

**A**sk any member of the GVR Artisans' Shop about what's new and exciting this fall, and the answer you'll most likely hear is something like "Our new expanded space!"

Merely a dream and on the drawing board for several years, the expanded shop is now a reality thanks to an amazing team of visionaries who were able to transform the previous smaller shop and a portion of the former Billiards Club space into an artist's mecca and a shopper's paradise. The team, consisting of the shop's Board of Directors, the GVR Board and staff, the con-

struction crew, and members of the Woodworking Club brought what at times seemed like a complex project to fruition with ease and grace. Although there were a few bumps in the road, many heads and hands made it manageable.

More than doubling in size to 1000 square feet, there is now a designated gallery that features upscale inventory including meticulously crafted gourd art, spectacular paintings and photographs, amazing fused glass creations, and custom sterling silver and gemstone jewelry. An intricately quilled koi fish, handwoven scarves and shawls,

and a handcrafted pottery totem add to the unique offerings in the gallery space.

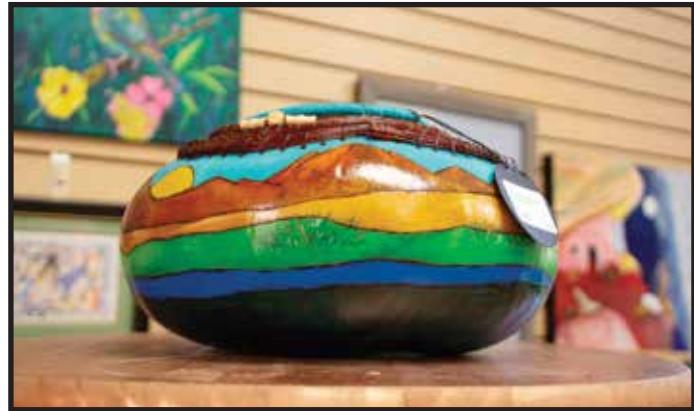
More space brings additional areas in which to display the many hand-crafted items by local artisans. The more than sixty members of the

shop display their incredible talent and mastery in a variety of media: paintings, photography, handmade hand and tote bags, thundergourds, fused glass items, unique greeting cards, stained glass spinners, pottery, and a wide range of textile and hand-knitted or crocheted items, along with hand-painted rock art.

Long time and new members alike are extreme-

ly proud of this accomplishment and the opportunity to serve as a retail outlet for their work and the work of members of other GVR clubs. Winter hours are Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. and Saturdays from 10 a.m. to

2 p.m. The shop, always open to the public, is located in the inner courtyard of the West Center at 1111 S. GVR Drive, Green Valley. Upcoming events include our Spring Fling scheduled for March 2026. Check for final dates on our website at [gvrartisansshop.com](http://gvrartisansshop.com).



## 2026: The Year of Aspirations Thinking Bigger and Better

Written by Katie Laws, AZ Family Restaurant

**I** love the beginning of the year, I love the built in opportunity to think about my goals and where I want to lead my life. This year I've been thinking about the aspirations I have, instead of goals. I'm making this little shift to support bigger ideas. Instead of setting a goal to lose 10 pounds, I'm thinking bigger, and broader. What do I want to achieve this year? What can I start this year that can lead me to great things in 10 years? Well, as I was researching goals I found some really interesting things about Baby Boomers!

An article from CottonwoodPsychology.com says, "One thing many Boom-

ers do very well is simply show up when they say they will. They join a club and they keep going. They promise to help a friend move and

they are there on time, often with snacks or tools. A lot of this comes from how they were raised. Workplaces and families often expected long term effort, not quick exits when things got boring. That kind of environment can build strong habits around loyalty and follow-through."

It sounds like if you're a boomer you have a leg up on this whole goal setting process. If you're looking for community support in your goals and aspirations this year we would love to join in your efforts!

If you have health goals Arizona Family Restaurant has lots of options to support high pro-

tein, low fat, or sugar free diets. Do you have a goal to be more social? Book our group space and invite ALL your friends! We can host up to 40 people in our back room. Are you wanting to try a new hobby? We offer paint and pie classes and karaoke every Tuesday and Thursday!

We are proud to be a hub for Green Valley whether it's for breakfast all day, enjoying our seasonal decorations, or a neighborly smile. You can see all our upcoming events at [ArizonaFamilyRestaurant.com](http://ArizonaFamilyRestaurant.com). We're proud to be a truly family owned and operated business.

Happy New Year!

*Katie and Brad*



Katie Laws and children working together on Thanksgiving Day.



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

# medicalnews

## JOINT REGENERATION IS ADVANCING RAPIDLY: WHY “LET’S WAIT” IS THE WORST ADVICE IN ORTHOPEDICS

**B**reakthrough research is reshaping joint care — *but timing still determines whether surgery becomes unavoidable.*

Joint care (and repair) is changing faster than most people realize. Regenerative Medicine is redefining what will be possible for damaged cartilage, aging joints, and degenerative arthritis.

Yet despite this progress, the advice most patients still hear remains dangerously outdated: “*Let’s wait.*”

Wait until the pain is worse. Wait until imaging looks bad enough. Wait until surgery is the only option left.

In orthopedics, waiting often feels reasonable — even responsible. But biologically, it’s anything but a neutral decision. Joint degeneration is a progressive process, and every year spent waiting quietly reduces the number of options available later. By the time many patients are told they “need” joint replacement, but often don’t want it, the window of opportunity for joint preservation has already passed.

### The Science Is Moving Forward — Quickly

In 2024, researchers reported a remarkable discovery: injectable biomaterials — nicknamed “*dancing molecules*” — that stimulated cartilage regeneration in human knee cells *within hours*. The faster these molecules moved, the stronger the regenerative response.

Motion itself triggered healing. Something I’ve been preaching for years! When we keep moving, we keep moving. Our bodies are wonderfully designed to move, and that continued motion is critical to maintain joint health as we age.

The implications of this research is profound. If cartilage regeneration can be biologically (re)activated rather than merely supported, the future of arthritis care could shift from symptom management to true tissue restoration.

But here’s the critical reality: this research is still early-stage. Promising? Absolutely. Available to patients today? No. The pathway from laboratory discovery to FDA-approved treatment often takes 10–15 years — far longer than most patients with arthritic joints can afford to wait.

While the science pushes forward, osteoarthritis continues its steady pro-

gression — downward.

### Degeneration Is a Process — Not a Sudden Event

More than 530 million people worldwide live with osteoarthritis. And here’s the kicker. It doesn’t arrive overnight.

It develops quietly — cartilage thinning millimeter by millimeter, joint mechanics subtly changing, inflammation slowly reshaping the environment inside the joint.

Early on, pain may come and go. Function is adjusted rather than lost. People compensate. They adapt. And they’re often told to “manage it” until it’s severe enough to justify surgery.

But cartilage loss is not reversible once it reaches a certain threshold. When degeneration progresses to “bone-on-bone,” conventional orthopedics has one definitive solution: joint replacement surgery. This is life-changing for the right patient at the right time — but it is invasive, permanent, and also *irreversible*.

What’s often overlooked is how many patients arrive at that point not because surgery was inevitable, but because *intervention came too late*.

### The Missed Window for Joint Preservation

The non-surgical orthopedic treatments I deploy daily in my practice are most effective **earlier in the degenerative cycle** — when biology can still be influenced and joint structure preserved.

For more than a decade I’ve used orthobiologic treatments such as PRP (platelet-rich plasma) and stem cell procedures to reduce pain, improve function, and slow the progression of arthritis. These treatments work with the body’s natural healing mechanisms rather than simply suppressing inflammation.

They are not miracle cures. They do not regrow severely depleted cartilage. But when applied at the right time, in the window of opportunity, they can meaningfully change a patient’s trajectory — preserving mobility, delaying or avoiding surgery, and maintaining independence.

Today, as the understanding and science continues to compound at a dizzying pace, these treatments are more

### Conditions That Can Be Treated with Non-Surgical Knee Pain Treatment

- Arthritis
- Bursitis
- Tendinitis
- Ligament or meniscus injuries
- Knee osteoarthritis
- Knee cartilage damage
- Runner’s knee



effective than ever.

### Augmenting Biology, Not Replacing It

Modern non-surgical orthopedics has evolved beyond single-solution thinking. By integrating orthobiologic injections with advanced technologies like Extracorporeal Shockwave Therapy (ESWT) and Class IV medical-grade laser therapy, we can amplify and accelerate healing responses.

Shockwave therapy stimulates blood flow and cellular repair through targeted sound wave energy. High-intensity laser therapy enhances mitochondrial function, growth factor release, and tissue regeneration at the cellular level.

Used together, these tools don’t replace biology — they **enhance it**. In clinical practice, this translates to deeper tissue healing, longer-lasting pain relief, and better functional outcomes than any single treatment alone.

This integrative approach *preserves future options* rather than exhausting them.

### The Cost of Waiting

“*Let’s wait*” sounds harmless. But biologically, waiting allows cartilage loss to advance, inflammation to entrench

itself, and joint mechanics and motion to deteriorate further.

By the time pain becomes constant, stiffness unavoidable, and imaging “bad enough,” the opportunity for meaningful non-surgical intervention may already be gone.

Joint replacement then feels inevitable — not because there were no alternatives, but because time quietly removed them.

### A Decision Point as We Enter 2026

As we launch into 2026, patients with joint pain face an important decision. Continue waiting and reacting — or intervene while biology is still responsive and on your side.

The future of non-surgical joint repair is undeniably exciting. Regenerative science is advancing rapidly. The decisions you make today determine whether you’ll be able to benefit from tomorrow’s breakthroughs — or whether replacement becomes the only remaining path.

**If you’ve been told to wait, manage, or accept surgery as inevitable, it may be time to ask a better question: What options do I still have right now?**

👉 Learn more about advanced, non-surgical orthopedic care and whether joint preservation is still possible for you.

Visit [www.origenortho.com](http://www.origenortho.com) to take the first step — while you still can.

### 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](http://www.origenortho.com).

To learn more visit [www.origenortho.com](http://www.origenortho.com), and [@DrJohnTait](https://www.youtube.com/@DrJohnTait) on YouTube

# Championing Business, Elevating Community: The Green Valley Sahuarita Chamber of Commerce

Written by Sydney Watts, KGVY Radio Account Executive

Originally formed in 1979 as the Green Valley Chamber of Commerce, the Chamber has grown alongside the community. With Sahuarita's incorporation in 1994 and the area's growth, it has evolved into today's Green Valley Sahuarita Chamber of Commerce and Visitor Center (GVS Chamber), a reflection of the region it represents. When Randy Graf stepped into the role of President & CEO in August 2019, he recognized that the chamber world was changing and that it was time to lead the organization into a new era of growth.

Randy Graf, a Green Bay, Wisconsin native, moved to Green Valley in 1984 and made it his home. He worked as a golf pro at Canoa Hills Golf Course and then at Desert Hills Golf Club before leaving the golf industry in 1995. From there, Randy explored a variety of career paths from real estate and sales to community relations and politics. He also served on the Continental School Board and spent four years in the Arizona House of Representatives.

Randy became involved with the GVS Chamber in 2007 as a member of the Board of Directors during the leadership of Jim Di Giacomo. Drawing on his experience in community relations and politics, he led the establishment of a government relations committee and served as its chair for ten years. In 2019, when the Chamber was seeking a new CEO, Randy's deep knowledge of the region and extensive experience made him the ideal candidate.

Reflecting on his vision for the Chamber, Randy recalls that things in the chamber world were changing. "There were some things we had to do here, technology-wise. So, my priority was to try and get some of those things in place so that we could move forward," Randy says. The technology updates were expected to take six to ten months, after which the focus would shift to growing Chamber membership. But just as that effort was about to begin, COVID-19 hit, forcing the Chamber to pivot.

The GVS Chamber shifted focused on helping current members survive the pandemic and its impacts on the business community. For the next year and a half, it became the Chamber's top priority. "The ramifications of the whole COVID experience with the shutdowns and closing things up really impacted

the business community and still have some impacts," Randy says. "From a Chamber standpoint, our community survived pretty well; we didn't lose many businesses here like other communities did," he adds.

During that time, the Chamber's Board of Directors also passed a resolution urging the legislature to allow businesses to do what they do best: serve their customers. They were the only Chamber in the state to take that official stance to the legislature, proudly supporting members in navigating challenges and staying afloat. As Randy puts it, "We're an advocate for the business community, and we're an advocate for our members."

Under Randy's leadership, Chamber membership has grown from roughly 360 members to 408, with numbers expected to rise as the community continues to expand. "Chambers have changed over the years. In the past, Chambers in small towns probably put on the 4th of July parade. I like to say it's parties, parades, and pageants, Chambers were always involved in." In 2017-2018, the Chamber went through a strategic planning process. As part of that effort, 60 local businesses were interviewed and asked, "If you need help with your business, where would you go?" Only four of the 60 said they would go to the Chamber. "It was sort of eye-opening for me," Randy says. That realization shifted the Chamber's direction toward becoming more of a resource for its members. While continuing to offer its signature events and networking opportunities, the Chamber sharpened its focus on its mission: To Champion Opportunities for Business and our Community to Prosper.

A Chamber membership provides more than just connections and events; it offers advocacy, resources to start and operate a business, and valuable marketing opportunities. "I like to say a membership to the Chamber is your first best use of your marketing dollars," Randy explains. Over the past few years, the Chamber has modernized how it serves members. Much of its communication is now electronic, with newsletters available to members and the public. A newly redesigned website offers up-to-date information



From left to right: PJ Gomez, Mea Brown, Cathy Chrismar, Randy Graf, and Un-Joo Johnson

about local happenings, businesses, and a member directory. The Visitor Center continues to thrive, welcoming tourists and sharing details about local businesses. The staff has grown from three to five, and social media has become an increasingly powerful tool for outreach. As Randy puts it, "We're in a great place right now and ready for whatever comes our way."

Two years ago, the Chamber launched an Executive Round Table, bringing together upper-level members to discuss leadership styles and community issues. That effort led to the creation of the Elevate Sahuarita Green Valley Leadership Program, which kicked off in late August. The program's goal is to develop community leaders and inspire them to get involved locally, with a focus on key areas such as leadership, local government, education systems, industrial community, healthcare, non-profits, and the small business community. As Randy explains, "They will learn the different facets that make the community work as a whole and hopefully encourage some of the participants to maybe be interested in running for the school board, or town council/committees, non-profits in the area and really improve the community."

The next major initiative for the Chamber is the ElevateEDAZ program, a workforce development effort created by the Greater Phoenix Chamber Foundation in 2000. The program partners high schools with the business community, encouraging junior and senior students to explore high-demand fields and participate in career and technical education programs. "From the business side, we will be providing job internships and shadowing opportunities for students, getting the teachers into the businesses to learn about what businesses need. We will be getting business leaders into the schools talking to students

about demands and various career fields," Randy explains.

The program is being expanded statewide. Sahuarita is the first community to implement it outside of the Phoenix area. The Greater Phoenix Chamber Foundation has hired a District Director, College and Career Coaches for both Sahuarita High School and Walden Grove

High School. The GVS Chamber has brought on a Business Partnership Coordinator. "It's a huge program and a huge undertaking for the Chamber. It's a four-way partnership between the Phoenix Chamber Foundation, Sahuarita Unified School District, GVS Chamber Foundation, and the GVS Chamber of Commerce. Freeport McMoRan has awarded the GVS Chamber a \$103,000 grant to support the program. "It's really going to be a game changer for the community," Randy says.

Looking ahead, the Chamber plans to continue, maintain, and enhance both the Elevate Sahuarita Green Valley Leadership Program and ElevateEDAZ. Over the next couple of years, the Chamber will develop another strategic plan to explore new initiatives and growth opportunities. "We are at full capacity right now with our current programs, so our focus is on improving them and ensuring they operate optimally," explains Randy. The Chamber continues to collaborate with community partners, strengthening relationships and supporting local growth, all while staying true to its mission: "Champion opportunities for business and our community to prosper."

Visit the NEW chamber website [www.greenvalleysahuarita.com](http://www.greenvalleysahuarita.com)

## Staff

**Randy Graf** - President & CEO

**Mea Brown** - VP of Operations

**Cathy Chrismar** - Communications & Events Coordinator

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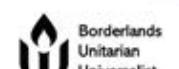
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# gardening tips

By Charlene Westgate, Permaculture Landscape Designer

## NIGHTTIME MAGIC IN THE GARDEN

Imagine relaxing outdoors on a pleasant evening, with the soft white glow of the moon overhead. Notice the pale flowers shimmer in the light of the moon and the gentle fragrances of their blooms on the evening breeze. As you look above, see the flutter of wings of night pollinators as they pass overhead. This is the wonder of a moon garden, which has ancient roots as a place of aesthetic beauty, spiritual reflection, and observance.

A moon garden is not only lovely, but is an important part of the local ecosystem. Consider the flowers designed to open at night to welcome important pollinators such as bats and moths. These nocturnal heroes play a vital ecological role. Bats act as Nature's pest control, eating thousands of insects—including mosquitoes and moths—in an hour, reducing the need for pesticides. Bats provide pollination of saguaros, organ pipe cacti, and numerous agave species. And, since moths outnumber butterflies 10-to-1, they, too, have a starring role in pollination, as well as being food for bats.

Unfortunately, loss of habitat threatens nighttime pollinators, making a moon garden a win-win. You get a peaceful evening outdoor space filled with glowing flowers and a flutter of activity after dark, and wildlife gets a reliable food source. Best of all, a moon garden requires only a few simple elements to enjoy Nature's enchantment in your yard. Simply, add night-blooming plants, evoke senses beyond sight, and turn out the lights.

### Illuminate the Garden with Night-bloomers

A moon garden is designed to shine after dark. Group plants with large, pale flowers (white and yellow) and silvery foliage together in the garden. These plants reflect the moonlight, making them stand out in the darkness, creating beauty and attracting night pollinators. Consider plants with light-colored flowers such as Sacred Datura, Yucca species, Desert Cotton, Senita, Saguaro and Organ Pipe cactus, Tufted Evening Primrose, Night-blooming Cereus, Night-blooming Hesperaloe, and Parry's, Palmer, and Golden-flow-



The moon illuminates white flowers in a moon garden.

ered Agave. Favorite plants with silvery leaves include Western Mugwort (*Artemisia ludoviciana*), Woolly Butterfly Bush, Brittle Bush, Palmer Mallow, and Silverleaf Texas Ranger.

### Awaken the Senses

Sight is stimulated by the glow of the light-colored plants of a moon garden. A night garden can also include light-colored hardscapes and accessories, making visibility easier for a night stroll. But at night, when visibility is limited, fragrant and tactile plants make a welcome addition to a night garden.

Strolling through the garden, feel the soft, fuzzy leaves of the Western Mugwort, Woolly Butterfly Bush, Silverleaf Texas Ranger, and Palmer Mallow. Then, inhale the evening fragrance released by the Western Mugwort, Sacred Datura, Night-blooming Hesperaloe, and Tufted Evening Primrose.

The fragrances these plants release also attract moths and other nocturnal insects, which, in turn, provide food

for bats that rely on insects as well as nectar for food.

### Embrace the Darkness

A true moon garden omits artificial light. According to Fine Gardening, "When lighting is limited, certain colors and fragrances become more pronounced, impactful, and memorable." Yet, modern society has lived with light pollution for so long, we forget the pleasures of experiencing darkness. When man-made light is removed or limited, a night garden allows us to re-learn how to heighten our senses. Beyond the perfumes and shimmering beauty of nighttime blossoms, a moon garden draws our attention upward to the magnificence of billions of stars overhead.

Reducing light pollution is of vital importance to wildlife as well. Artificial light in nighttime landscapes has disrupted the natural cycle for nocturnal species, disrupting the balance between predator and prey. In addition, light pollution disrupts birds' migratory cycles, and harms nighttime pollinators by interrupting their circadian rhythms, mating rituals, and ability to detect seasons.

Most critically, nocturnal insects have a fatal attraction to light, becoming disoriented, they fly to their death. This phenomenon is a leading cause of rapidly declining

insect populations, which negatively impacts all species that rely on insects for food or pollination. Charlie Moore of the U.S. National Park Service likens the damage to wildlife of light pollution to bulldozing the ground of delicate habitat.

To enjoy your night garden and protect nocturnal creatures, practice DarkSky International's Five Lighting Principles for Responsible Outdoor Lighting (DarkSky.org).

1. Use light only if it is needed. All light should have a purpose. When in doubt, turn it out.
2. Targeted light so it falls only where needed. Shield the bulb so it points downward, not out or up.
3. Light should be no brighter than necessary. Use the lowest level of light needed to be effective.
4. Control light using motion sensors and timers to provide light when needed. Turn off lights between 11 pm and 6 am to protect wildlife.
5. Use warm-colored bulbs. Avoid bright bulbs on the blue end of the light spectrum in favor of warmer, yellow bulbs.

Ready to transform your outdoor space into a serene sanctuary under the stars? Start your moon garden journey today and experience the magic of the night—shimmering nighttime blooms, wafting fragrance on the breeze, and the flutter of nature's nocturnal wonders. Share your moon garden creations and stories with us—let's inspire each other to restore the night, one garden at a time.



Bright flowers, like the Parry's agave, attract pollinators night and day.

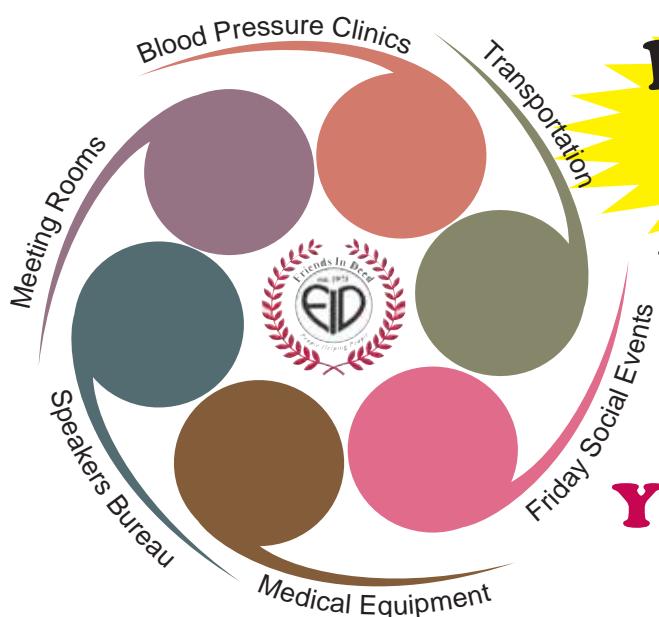


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# The Science and Art of Great Steak: Lessons from Dr. Sam Garcia of Lomo Premium Meats



Article and Photos by Guy Atchley

When it comes to steak, everyone has an opinion. Some people swear by charcoal grilling, others prefer a cast-iron skillet, and nearly everyone debates how “done” a cut of beef should be cooked. But if you ask Dr. Sam Garcia, owner of Lomo Premium Meats, he’ll tell you this: great steak isn’t just about preference—it’s about science, tradition, and respect for the cut itself.

Garcia, who grew up in a Mexican Ranch family where beef was a staple, blends decades of food science knowledge with hands-on butchery experience. His Tucson-based butcher shop has earned a loyal following not only for its premium beef but also for the wealth of knowledge he shares with customers. In our conversation, Garcia explained the most common mistakes people make when cooking steak, the science behind meat’s flavor and texture, and why service and memory are as important as the meal itself.

## Lighting the Fire: Getting Charcoal Right

One of the simplest yet most overlooked mistakes in grilling begins before the meat ever hits the grill.

“If you don’t let charcoal burn properly—especially mesquite—you risk transferring off flavors to your meat,” Garcia says. “You want that charcoal fully lit and glowing before you cook. If you rush it, your steak can end up with a strange taste that has nothing to do with the beef itself.”

This patience at the fire sets the stage for everything else. The right heat creates the Maillard reaction—a chemical process that develops the rich, savory crust people love on a steak. Rushing the process leaves you with bitter smoke instead of flavor.

## Not Every Steak Is Created Equal

Another big mistake, Garcia warns, is assuming that all steaks should be cooked the same way.

“For example, I like a New York strip medium-rare. I wouldn’t go past medium with that cut,” he explains. “A ribeye, on the other hand, can handle medium-well and still taste great because it has more fat. Fat forgives a lot.”

Then there’s chuck steak, a cut many Americans overlook. In Garcia’s Mexican household, chuck was an everyday item. But unlike a ribeye or filet, chuck needs to be cooked



to at least medium-well. Why? The connective tissues in the meat don’t break down until the internal temperature reaches about 145–160°F. Cooked rare, chuck can be chewy and unpleasant. Cooked properly, it transforms into something tender and flavorful.

“Not every steak should be eaten the same way,” Garcia says firmly. “That’s one of the biggest misconceptions I see.”

## The Filet Mignon Controversy

Perhaps no steak sparks more debate than the filet mignon. Its buttery tenderness makes it highly prized, but Garcia cautions against overcooking it.

“I once ordered a filet mignon well-done in Alaska, and the server refused,” he recalls with a laugh. “They told me flat-out they couldn’t serve it that way. And honestly, they weren’t wrong. A well-done filet is going to be dry, while a well-done ribeye still has some juiciness from its fat.”

Cooking transforms both flavor and texture. The more a steak cooks, the tougher it becomes. Rare steaks, by comparison, retain more tenderness. But many diners avoid them because they believe they’re “bloody.”

“That’s a misconception,” Garcia explains. “Blood is removed at the slaughter plant. What you see is actually water mixed with a protein called myoglobin. It’s not blood—it’s simply the natural juice of the muscle. People who say they don’t like their steak ‘bloody’ don’t realize they’re just looking at water and protein.”

## Science on the Plate: Myoglobin and Color

Garcia’s background in meat science comes through when he explains meat color. Hemoglobin in blood carries oxygen from lungs to

tissue, but once blood is removed, what remains in muscle is myoglobin.

“When myoglobin binds with oxygen, the meat looks bright red. That’s why fresh meat in the case looks so appealing,” Garcia says. “When cooked, the myoglobin changes structure and color, which is why a medium steak looks pink and a well-done one looks grayish brown.”

This isn’t trivia—it’s central to why people perceive doneness the way they do. What looks like “blood” is simply a harmless natural process of oxygen and proteins.

## The Top Five Cuts of Meat

Asked which cuts his customers buy most, Garcia doesn’t hesitate.

“Ribeye is number one, hands down. Then New York strip and filet mignon,” he says. “Those three dominate in steaks. But I also sell a lot of ground beef. Americans love ground beef—it’s versatile and part of our food culture.”

Ground beef may not sound glamorous, but it carries as much science as steaks. Blends of fat and lean muscle create the balance that determines juiciness, flavor, and how well a burger holds together.

## Cooking Steak on the Stove

Not everyone has a grill, and Garcia is quick to point out that the stove can produce equally excellent results.

“The key is high heat. Your skillet has to be really hot so you get a good sear,” he advises. “Never cover a ribeye while cooking on the stove. If you cover it, you’re steaming or boiling it instead of searing.”

One of Garcia’s favorite techniques involves using the steak’s own fat.

“Cut off some of the fat trimmings, melt them in the skillet, and cook

the steak in its own grease. Then season it, sear both sides, and toward the end, add butter, garlic, and rosemary. Baste the steak with a spoon, and it soaks up incredible flavor.”

For Garcia, dry-aged steaks are especially rewarding in a skillet. “Dry aging concentrates flavor, and I think it shows better on a stovetop sear than on a grill sometimes.”

## Food, Memory, and Nostalgia

Beyond science, Garcia emphasizes the psychological role food plays.

“My mother used to cook T-bone steaks on a skillet with lots of pepper,” he recalls. “That memory makes me enjoy them more, even if it’s not technically the ‘best’ way to cook them. Food connects us to our past.”

This is why Garcia believes service matters as much as the steak itself. “When you walk into a restaurant, the experience creates a memory. Even if the food isn’t perfect, if the service is excellent, you’ll come back because of how it made you feel.”

## Meat, Health, and Morality

As a butcher and a meat scientist, Garcia sometimes faces criticism from non-meat-eaters.

“There are health arguments, but the science actually shows meat is very healthy,” he says. “Twenty years ago, people demonized animal fat. Now we know it plays an important role in nutrition.”

The hardest conversations, Garcia admits, are with those who view meat consumption as immoral. “You can give them all the science in the world, but if it’s about morality, they won’t change their minds.”

# From Horse Stall to the Heart of Amado: Volunteers Powering the Resource Center

Written by Chris Firmage, Public Relations Manager, Community Food Bank of Southern Arizona

When Arturo began volunteering at the Community Food Bank of Southern Arizona's Amado Resource Center (ARC) in 1989, the building was little more than "a horse stall." But that didn't stop him from showing up—and staying. For over three decades, Arturo has been a steady, welcoming presence for neighbors along the I-19 corridor and as far west as Arivaca.

Why do some travel so far? "They feel comfortable with us," he says. "That's why."

"Helping the people" is what keeps Arturo coming back. "Seeing their faces when they're getting food, especially when you know the need is there," is his favorite part of checking in people in.

Arturo's impact goes beyond his friendly demeanor. Raised on a nearby ranch, he's brought his ag-

ricultural know-how to the ARC, transforming its grounds into a small orchard. "We have a guava plant, lemons, oranges, apples, grapes," he says. "We tell people to go out there and pick everything they want."

The story of the Amado Food Bank began in 1988 when three dedicated residents started distributing salvaged food and produce out of the "horse stall", a pre-1900s era building. In 1997, the Amado Food Bank joined forces with the Community Food Bank of Southern Arizona as a branch bank to ensure a more stable supply of food to the community.



On May 5, 2002, Cinco de Mayo, the Amado Community Food Bank celebrated the grand opening of its new, and current facility at 28720 S. Nogales Highway.

Arturo is not the only familiar face to the ARC's monthly visitors. Karen began volunteering about 15 years ago and loves what she does. "I feel like I'm doing something useful, and the people are so nice," she says.

While she's talking about the visitors, her words apply just as well to the staff and volunteers who make the ARC feel like home. "When

we've done questionnaires, People always say they come here, even if they don't live here, because the people that work here are so friendly, and everybody is," she smiles.

Food distribution takes place every Thursday between 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. Currently, the ARC serves between 1200 and 1500 individuals a month with emergency food.

Due to rising food costs and an overall increase in cost of living, Karen feels that more people are coming in for the first time. "They're apprehensive when they first come," she says. "But they usually leave smiling."



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Lomo Meats  
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He also points out the socioeconomic aspect. "In the U.S., it's easier to choose vegetarian or vegan diets. But try telling someone in Mexico earning \$100 a month to do the same. Meat often provides the cheapest, most efficient protein source available."

### The Customer Connection

One thing that sets Lomo Premium Meats apart is Garcia's accessibility. He shares both his personal and store phone numbers with customers—something most business owners would avoid.

"I've given out my cell phone number to thousands of people, even when I was teaching university classes of 300 students," he says. "But people respect it. They call me for special requests or to tell me they enjoyed a cut I recommended. That feedback validates what we're doing."

And if a customer has a bad experience with a cut of meat? Garcia stands by his product.

"If they're honest about it, I'll replace it or give them their money back. If they can save the meat, I like to see it and figure out what went wrong. Sometimes connective

tissue or old scar tissue in the muscle makes a steak tough. It's rare, but it happens. Science can measure toughness, but experience usually tells me what happened."

### Why Prices Keep Rising

No conversation about beef in 2025 is complete without discussing prices. Garcia breaks it down with clarity.

"Drought is the number one factor. Fewer cattle mean tighter supply. Grain costs more, so fattening cattle costs more. Initially, when ranchers sell off animals, prices dip. But once supply shrinks, prices climb higher."

International trade also plays a role. Tariffs have reduced imports of lean beef that U.S. processors normally blend with domestic fat to make ground beef. On top of that, a screwworm outbreak in southern Mexico recently halted imports of over a million head of cattle annually.

"All of that reduces supply," Garcia explains. "Last year, I could buy prime ribeye wholesale for \$12–14 a pound. Now it's \$18–19. By the

time I cut, package, and sell it, the retail price can reach \$25. Soon, you'll see ribeyes selling for \$30–35 per pound."

It's a sobering reality, but Garcia's transparency helps customers understand why their steak costs more.

spends time in both his Wilmot and Green Valley stores, talking directly with customers.

"If you find me there, just ask for Sam. I'll gladly answer your questions. Or call me—I'll always get back to you," he says.

This openness reflects his philosophy: steak is more than food. It's culture, memory, science, and hospitality all on a plate.

### Conclusion: Steak as Science, Tradition, and Connection

From the chemistry of myoglobin to the nostalgia of a mother's skillet, Dr. Sam Garcia, PhD in Animal Science with an emphasis in meat shows that steak is far more than muscle and fat. Cooking it well requires patience, understanding of the cut, and respect for tradition. Eating it well requires good service and good company.

Whether grilled over mesquite or basted in butter on the stove, a steak cooked with



### A Butcher Who Loves People as Much as Meat

Despite rising costs and the challenges of running a small business, Garcia remains passionate. He

knowledge and care becomes more than a meal—it becomes an experience. And at Lomo Premium Meats, Garcia's mission is to make sure that experience is unforgettable.



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