

Currents

SULPHUR SPRINGS VALLEY ELECTRIC CO-OP

IT'S COOL TO BE A
COWBOY



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cool hats, cute guys,
and big trucks."

Cowboy Poetry Gathering Promises a Great Time!

**INSIDE: Everything You Need to Know
About the 2020 Census** PAGE 10

2020

JANUARY & FEBRUARY



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Electric Cooperative, Inc.**

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COWBOY POETS

BE COOL... BE A COWBOY!

A nationally-renown musical act will highlight the 28th annual Cochise Cowboy Poetry and Music Gathering in Sierra Vista Feb. 7 and 8.

Get ready for a night of foot-stomping music, gut-busting laughter and good ol' fashion fun at the Klein Center for the Performing Arts. Riders in the Sky, the classic cowboy quartet, will bring their two-time Grammy music award performance to Sierra Vista! Read all about it in this edition of Currents!



Cover by
Larry Scott



COMING IN THE MARCH/APRIL EDITION: We'll have the inside scoop on the fourth annual Where They Buck bull riding rodeo in Sierra Vista, scheduled for May 15-16 in Sierra Vista. The event features an impressive list of well-known bull-riding cowboys who promise to be the highlight of an entertaining weekend of fun and live music.

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A RESOLUTION TO SERVE OUR MEMBERS

In the spirit of the New Year, our resolutions for 2020 focus on continuing to grow member equity, diversifying our energy mix and investing in our infrastructure.

Thanks to the commitment and wisdom of those who have served the cooperative for the past 80 years, current members have the highest level of service reliability in Arizona, at the lowest cost, with the most equity in our collective history.

What is equity?

Unlike other forms of ownership, Sulphur Springs Valley Electric Cooperative (SSVEC) is owned by those we serve. An investor-owned utility, like Arizona Public Service (APS), is a business organization that is managed as a private enterprise and returns profits to its shareholders. A municipal utility district, such as the one that operates in Safford, is function of government which owns and maintains the electric service.

Members are the key to cooperative

ownership. It is the members who elect their representation on the Board of Directors and govern the operation of the utility. Members share the risk of long-term investments and earn the reward of capital credits when the utility achieves a profit margin.

Equity is the measure of member ownership in our cooperative. In 2018 SSVEC achieved the highest percentage of member equity in its history at more than 43 percent. In real terms that means our members – some 39,000 strong – are the owners of all the assets needed to provide electric service to more than 59,000 meters throughout our four-county service area. That equity is eventually returned to you when the Board of Directors determines SSVEC is in a sound financial position. In December 2019, the Cooperative returned a record amount of \$2,670,466.94 to our members owners!

The financial strength of the Cooperative has afforded significant investments in our infrastructure, without the need to borrow money. Members today enjoy reliable service at affordable prices thanks to the continuing investment of our members since the Cooperative was formed in 1938.

In 2019, SSVEC added to that investment

by completing several significant projects. Erecting new lines and poles along Buffalo Soldier Trail, starting work on the Cochise Reliability Project and purchasing a new, more-powerful, mobile transformer unit have improved our reliability and the financial value of the Cooperative.

We're looking forward to similar investments in 2020, adding to that legacy and improving on the investment of our members.

Our membership has also inspired dramatic changes in our energy mixture during the past several years. Four years ago, more than 80 percent of the electricity consumed by SSVEC members was generated from coal. Today, that percentage has dropped to about 25 percent thanks to greater contributions from clean-burning natural gas, hydro and solar power. For 2020, SSVEC and Arizona G&T Cooperatives are looking at the possibility of adding wind-generated power to continue expanding the percentage of renewable resources in our energy mixture.

Employees at SSVEC, myself included, are proud to be associated with a long history of success that is the result of the visionary leadership, dedication and investment by



CREDEN W. HUBER

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER
SULPHUR SPRINGS VALLEY
ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

our members. At the outset of this new year, we renew our collective commitment to an organization that is owned by those it serves.

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There are currently ten members elected to the SSVEC Board of Directors. SSVEC is currently divided into ten different Districts with each board member elected by the members of SSVEC who reside in that District.

A board member serves a three-year term. An election is held every year for the board members whose terms have expired. Whenever there is an election to select one of these board members, all the members receive an official ballot listing the people who are running for that seat. Members vote in the district in which they reside. A business member, whether sole proprietor, corporation, association, partnership, LLC or other business entity, votes in the District which they designated when they became a member of SSVEC.

Each member is entitled to one vote. You will be sent notice that the election is occurring and the date of the election, no later than 75 days prior to the election date. Voting is currently done by mail and votes are counted by members whose district is not up for election.

Progress continues on Cochise Reliability project



A project more than 10 years in the making that has coordinated the efforts of three electricity providers and will cost more than \$30 million to complete reached a key milestone in December.

Nathan Hodges, Director of Operations at SSVEC, says the project will provide members more reliable service by adding power lines and improving substations.

Last month, SSVEC line crews worked in the Palominas area installing power poles, erecting new power lines and tying into a substation as part of the project.

When the massive project is completed over the next two

years, the "Cochise County Reliability Project" will provide both Sulphur Springs Valley Electric Cooperative (SSVEC) members and Arizona Public Service (APS) customers in Cochise County with supplemental back up service when outages occur, Daniel Wilson, SSVEC Director of Engineering, said.

The project is being completed by SSVEC, Arizona G&T (SSVEC's primary power supplier) and the states largest investor-owned electric utility, Arizona Public Service.

"The overall project will utilize one existing tie and add two more ties between the three systems that together provide electric service to southern Cochise County," Wilson said. "Most of the modifications will be in the Tombstone area, with smaller projects in the McNeal and Palominas areas."

SSVEC crews completed construction of a line to a new sub-transmission station along Highway 92, just west of the San Pedro River, in December.

This year Arizona G&T will start construction of a new substation west of Tombstone while APS begins major modifications to their existing substation east of Tombstone.

These two substations will be connected by adding a second circuit to existing sub-transmission lines in the area. All three companies will also be completing several smaller independent projects intended to help maintain voltage levels under contingency configurations.

The combination of all of these projects are designed to provide full-capacity backup capability for all three systems for the next 20 years. Wilson said.



Cooperative members from director districts not holding elections counted the return ballots for four contested director races in April 2018. Those members from lower left and moving clockwise are Albert Fernandez of Benson, Kathy Klump of Willcox, Fred Smith of Willcox and Joanna Flores of Willcox

Foster, left, a foreman, and Corey Dannels, on, worked on stringing new line in the the Cochise Reliability Project.



SSVEC line workers Buster Foster, left, a foreman, and Corey Dannels, right, an apprentice lineman, worked on stringing new line in the Palominas area as part of the Cochise Reliability Project.

A man with white hair and glasses, wearing a tan jacket over a dark shirt and blue jeans, stands next to a large, decorated Christmas tree. The tree is adorned with red and white ornaments, garlands, and a white picket fence in front of it. The background shows a building with a green sign that says "al".

The 20th Annual Festival of Trees was held November 16 to December 3, 2019 with an award celebration and raffle at The Gala night at The Mall at Sierra Vista on the final day. It is a tradition that has heralded the start of the holiday season for 20 years in Sierra Vista and has become a highly-anticipated and popular event. Brought to you by the Sierra Vista Area Chamber of Commerce and The Mall at Sierra Vista, a portion of the proceeds raised were donated to the Boys and Girls Club of Sierra Vista.



Pictured are Coco Kerley, left and Paula Jackson, right, who were part of a team of SSVCE employees who decorated a tree as part of the event. The SSVCE tree was selected for the Mayor's Choice award, and were recognized for that achievement by Sierra Vista Mayor Rick Mueller, pictured next to the winning entry.

A line of ATVs is parked at night, decorated with various lights. The lead ATV is wrapped in a continuous string of white lights. Other ATVs in the line are decorated with blue, green, and red lights. In the background, a building with large windows and a sign that reads "COCHISE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL" is visible, along with other festive light displays.

SSVEC employees joined with their respective communities in staging annual Christmas parades, all held on Dec. 7. Pictured are the team of volunteers who decorated an SSVEC truck with lights, while a lighted gathering of ATVs pulled a sleigh in Willcox, and in Benson it was Santa Claus joining the Christmas Off Main Street celebration.



JANUARY 2020 • CURRENTS



From the left, Dr. Tim Kirk, director of the Warrior Healing Center; Creden Huber, Chief Executive Officer at Sulphur Springs Valley Electric Cooperative; and Drew Dix, Medal of Honor recipient. Dix was the featured speaker Nov. 10 at the Medal of Honor Legacy Dinner for the Boys and Girls Scouts.

Credren Huber, Chief Operating Officer at Sulphur Springs Valley Electric Cooperative, welcomed Medal of Honor Recipient Drew Dix to Sierra Vista just before Veterans Day on Nov. 11, sponsoring his appearance at a local Boy and Girl Scouts Legacy Dinner.

Dix, who received the nation's highest military honor from President Lyndon Johnson in 1969, was the special guest of the Warrior Healing Center in Sierra Vista. He highlighted a weekend of events that included the Scouts' dinner program Sunday night, Nov. 10, 2019 at the United Methodist Church.

"Really, the best age to reach kids is when they are 10, 11 and 12," Dix said. "They get it and understand the real value of Veterans Day."

Dr. Tim Kirk, founder and director of the Warrior Healing Center, said Dix epitomizes what's important about Veterans Day. He said the inaugural Veterans Day Medal of Honor Legacy Dinner focused on conveying those values.

"It's important that our kids to know that Veterans Day is more than just getting a free plate of pancakes at the restaurant because you served in the military, or marching in a parade," Kirk said. "This weekend is all about creating an awareness and enshrining the values that our military instills in those who serve and have served."

Speaking to a room full of scouts, their parents and scout leaders, Dix emphasized the importance of recognizing the sacrifice of others and "...doing good to help others."

"When you're on the battlefield, it's all about doing the best you can to help those around you and protecting people," he said.

Dix earned his Medal of Honor for "...conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity in action" during a more than 50-hour battle with two heavily-armed Viet Cong battle battalions that attacked the Province capital city of Chau Phu in Vietnam beginning on January 31, 1968. During the fight, Dix led a small group of soldiers into the occupied city and rescued endangered civilians, including Maggie O'Brien, a 24-year-old volunteer nurse in the Peace Corps.

He was awarded the honor some 11 months later at President Johnson's last Medal of Honor ceremony before he left office. Dix is one of 71 still-living medal recipients in the United States.

Huber, Chief Executive Officer at Sulphur Springs Valley Electric Cooperative, was honored at the dinner for sponsorship of the event.



Medal of Honor Recipient Drew Dix, left, talks with Creden Huber, Chief Executive Officer at Sulphur Springs Valley Electric Cooperative.



Homeschool student Thor Gavin, left, was one of two grand prize winners at the annual Youth Engineering and Science Fair in 2019. The award was presented by SSVEC Chief Executive Officer Creden Huber.

2020 YES Fair registration underway

The annual Youth Engineering and Science (YES) Fair is scheduled from February 25 to February 27 at the Windemere Hotel and Conference Center in Sierra Vista.

Students in grades five through 12 in SSVEC's service area and from other communities in southeast Arizona are eligible to compete at the fair. First place projects in each category of the 7-8 grades division receive a \$300 cash prize; first place projects in each category of the 5-6 grades division receive \$200. Prizes are also awarded to second place, third place and honorable mention projects in each of the five categories.

Projects in the 9-12 division are based on one of the 21 categories defined by the International Science and Engineering Fair. Judges select three first place, three second place, two grand prize, three third place and three honorable mention projects.

Second place, third place and honorable mention projects in each of these three categories earn cash prizes ranging from \$100 to \$500. The advisers of students whose projects received award recognition at all grade levels also earned cash awards.

The annual fair also features Special Awards. Participating organizations and local sponsors recognized 72 students and their projects, representing 13 area schools and home-schooled students.

Online registration for the event is available at www.yesfair.com. The deadline for registration is February 3, 2020.

The YES Fair presents over \$22,000 worth of awards to local students and teachers. These include trips for the Grand Prize winners in the 9-12 division and their advisors to compete at the Intel International Science and Engineering Fair this spring, as well as cash prizes in all divisions. Numerous special awards are provided through our affiliation with the Regeneron International Science and Engineering Fair. In years past awards have been made by the U.S. Army, U.S. Navy/Marine Corps, U.S. Air Force, Eastman Kodak Company, Arizona Electric Power Cooperative, the Huachuca Audubon Society, Health Partners, American Meteorological Society, U.S. Metric Association, Yale Science and Engineering, National Council of Teachers of Mathematics and other generous supporters including partial Cochise College scholarships sponsored by the Cochise College Foundation and cash grants by the University of Arizona South Foundation. SSVEC is continually expanding the awards for the YES Fair.

Anonymous donor aids local families

A generous donation by a SSVEC member who asked to remain anonymous kept the lights on and the heat flowing during the holiday season. On Monday, December 30, an \$8,500 donation was received at the Sulphur Springs Valley Electric Cooperative office in Willcox from a member who asked that the funds be applied to residential accounts facing disconnection of service.

The donation helped 66 fellow members and their families in the Willcox and Benson areas.

SSVEC to host Solar Classes

David Bane, Manager of Key Accounts, Agribusiness and Energy Management at Sulphur Springs Valley Electric Cooperative, is planning three classes to offer insights and information on utilizing solar power.

The "Lunch Learning Sessions" will offer registered participants sandwiches, drinks and cookies. Seating is limited and registration to reserve a classroom seat is required. Send an email to Michele McCollum, SSVEC Member Services Assistant at mmcollum@ssvec.com to sign up!

Classes are planned January 21, 2020 in Benson, January 23 in Sierra Vista and January 24 in Willcox.

Here are a few questions that will be addressed during the sessions.

Is installing a PV system beneficial?

There is no longer a simple answer to that question. From 2009 to 2017 the Arizona Corporation Commission (ACC) had a rate for members using Photovoltaic (PV) systems called "Net Metering." With Net Metering the Cooperative acted as an efficient battery and any excess electricity your PV system produced, that you could not use the instant it was made, was "stored" by SSVEC for you to use later. Our meter keeps track of the energy in both directions and measures energy coming from SSVEC to the home as well as energy that comes from the home to SSVEC.

Under the Net Metering rules, your Cooperative gives full retail credit for the energy that came from the home to SSVEC. Members who installed PV systems between 2009 and 2017 are



"grandfathered" into this rate design for 20 years from the date of the PV system installation.

In 2017 the ACC changed the rules so today, when you install PV, the rate used is called Distributed Generation or DG. Today, all energy that SSVEC delivers to you is at one rate (8.026 cents per kWh) and all energy that comes from your PV system back to the grid is purchased at an export rate set by the ACC (the current export rate is at 5.7644 cents) and that export rate is "locked" for 10 years from the date of installation.

Wow, that seems complicated. So how do I determine if PV is worth it to me?

Because SSVEC sells energy on a per kWh basis, to really compare or determine the value of PV you must determine what is the per kWh cost for solar energy. This takes a little math and you need to ask your solar sales representative a question. The question to ask is "how many kWh will this system realistically produce over a 20-year period?" then you can compare energy costs on an "apples to apples" basis by this simple calculation.

Initial system cost less tax credits plus future maintenance = base cost
Base cost divided by total kWh produced = cost per kWh.
If this cost is more than 8 cents,

CONTINUED ON PAGE 11



BGCSV Talent Show

Talent was on display Nov. 22 at the Boys and Girls Club of Sierra Vista Talent Show. The night featured singing and dancing by club members, with a panel of judges deciding the top performers. Pictured are Boys and Girls Club Lead Youth Development Specialist Anthony Villas escorting one of the talent show winners, Mya Orozco, after she had her picture taken. Youth who participated in the talent show practiced with Club Staff and mentors until the day of the show. The youth gain confidence through the preparation process to display their singing & dancing talents on stage.



Willcox Bearcat Winners

Plaques and the traveling trophy were presented to some of the members of the Willcox "Rage Against The Machine" teams that earned awards at the annual Bearcat Pull fundraising event for Special Olympics. The event is organized by Chapter 28 of the Fraternal Order of Police and held at Veterans' Park in Sierra Vista. It was the second year in a row the teams from Willcox captured top honors. That achievement earned SSVEC employees at the Willcox office breakfast, and a brief ceremony where the traveling trophy was presented. Pictured are, from the left, John Vandermeulen, Werner Neubauer, Jorge Garcia, Daniel Wilson and Adrian Fuentes. Awards earned by Willcox teams included first place in the Co-Ed division, second place in the Men's division, second place in the Iron Man division and third place in the Women's division.

Willcox Water Project

Sulphur Springs Valley Community Water Seminars
Open to Everyone Free of Charge

Feb 12 Sunsites Community Center 12:30 to 4:00pm
Willcox Community Center 5:00pm to 8:30pm
Topics: What is an Aquifer? Private Well Ownership Difference between private & commercial wells

Mar 11 Sunsites Community Center 12:30 to 4:00pm
Willcox Community Center 5:00pm to 8:30pm
Topics: ADWR Research/ Water Availability & Use models Private and Agriculture Water Conservation Recharge projects on Upper San Pedro

Apr 8 Sunsites Community Center 12:30 to 4:00pm
Willcox Community Center 5:00pm to 8:30pm
Topics: Water Legislation over the years Advocating for effective change in water policy

Please contact Willcox Water Project Manager, Christine O'Hara at willcoxwaterproject@gmail.com or (520) 230-0981 if you have questions.



Area FFA chapters tour Curry Farms

Students representing Future Farmers of America chapters from all over Arizona toured Curry Farms on Nov. 8, 2019, learning more about the processes of growing world-class chilies.

Founded in 1986, the Curry Seed and Chili Company, located in Pearce, is a 1,200-acre farming operation that sells its yield all over the work world. President Ed Curry grew up in the business, working with his parents who planted their first chili crop in 1957. For more than 25 years, Curry has worked closely with his partner, Phil Villa, in developing unique and improved

hybrids that are consistent in quality, flavor and heat.

FFA students learned about farming operations, soil, the processes of collecting chili seeds and the variety of uses for chilies, including as colorant for everything from food to cosmetics.

Curry Farms is one of the few "seed-to-shelf" farms, which utilizes genetics, grows crops, processes and cans chilies, all at the same location.

The tour was led by Ed Curry's son, Tyler, and assisted by office manager Rossana Zuniga and long-time farm hand David Carme.



Apache Powder Company turns 100

CONTRIBUTED BY LARRY SCOTT

The first yellowed page in the red leather-bound book is entitled 'Certificate of Incorporation, Apache Powder Company.' The date: May 19, 1920. Ornate, fountain-penned signatures witness the birth of a new company.

Almost immediately, construction began seven miles South of Benson, near the little farming town of St. David. Just two years later, on April 28, Apache's first stick of nitroglycerine dynamite was packed. The desert hillsides had been converted into a working dynamite factory — buildings tanks, and miles of roads, pipelines and railroads.

By 1925, Apache was flying high, providing explosives to scores of mines in the Southwestern U.S. and Northern Mexico. In a press release to the Southwestern Record in Tucson, a company official declared:

We are one of the very few successful independent powder factories in existence on the American Continent. Our plant covers 700 acres of land with 141 buildings. We sell enough powder in one year that if the sticks were laid end to end, they would reach from San Francisco to New York — and back again.

As a former senior manager noted, a powder plant has a unique culture, mind

set and management style. The philosophy of business seemed to be, "If it works, don't fix it. In a place like this, the price tag for being too innovative could well be written in blood."

The amazing thing was how well it worked. Workers in the nitroglycerine area methodically did their jobs exactly the same way, day after day, careful to avoid any deviation or undue haste.

Yet, somehow, during the heyday of dynamite, these workers in this back-side-of-the-desert location produced up to 3,000 cases of dynamite a day - surpassing all other plants on earth!

In time, dynamite was replaced by the safer and less costly ammonium nitrate-based blasting agents. The Company responded quickly, re-tooling up to meet new demands. Apache Powder Company changed its name, becoming Apache Nitrogen Products. Gradually the powder plant culture and operating style faded, replaced by the ways and technology of a modern chemical plant.

This spring we have the privilege of joining the folks at Apache Nitrogen Products, Inc. as they celebrate 100 years of continuous operation! Watch for more details in the upcoming March -April issue of Currents!



Gathering features 'America's Favorite Cowboys'

Nationally-renown Riders In The Sky coming to annual event

Riders In The Sky are truly exceptional. Empirical data and critical acclaim validate the claim that they stand "hats and shoulders" above the rest of the purveyors of C and W - "Comedy & Western!"

For more than 30 years Riders In The Sky have been keepers of the flame passed on by the Sons of the Pioneers, Gene Autry and Roy Rogers, reviving and revitalizing the genre. And while remaining true to the integrity of Western music, they have themselves become modern-day icons by branding the genre with their own legendary wacky humor and way-out Western wit, and all along encouraging buckaroos and buckarettes to live life "The Cowboy Way!"

Riders In The Sky are exceptional not just in the sense that their music is of superlative standards (they are the only exclusively Western artist to have won a Grammy, and Riders have won two), but by the fact that their accomplishments are an exception to the rule as well.

That Riders In The Sky was even

formed is a feat of improbable likelihood. What are the odds that a theoretical plasma physicist, a wildlife manager - galvanizer - Life Scout, an English major - shot putter - Bluegrass Boy, and a Polka Hall of Fame member would collectively become "America's Favorite Cowboys?" And even more unlikely is that 30-plus years later, the original members are still "bringing good beef to hungry people" while putting up Ripken-like numbers!

Riders In The Sky's first official public performance was Nov. 11, 1977, at the erstwhile Nashville nightspot "Phranks & Steins." Taking the stage that night for a crowd of eight or nine (counting Herr Harry behind the bar) were

Ranger Doug (Idol of American Youth) on arch-top guitar and baritone vocals, and Too Slim (A Man Aging Like Fine Cheese)

on bunkhouse bass, face and tenor vocals. A chain saw may have been in the mix somewhere that night but was soon retired. Replacing the chain saw was Woody Paul (King of the Cowboy Fiddlers) on fiddle, tenor vocals and rope tricks, and the launch was successful! They subsequently added the "Stomach Steinway" stylings of Joey the Cowpolka King on accordion and baritone vocals, much to the delight of 'Polkaholics' everywhere.

As a classic cowboy quartet, the trail has led them to heights they could have never predicted. Riders has chalked up over 6,100 concert appearances in all 50 states and 10 countries, appearing in venues everywhere from the Nashville National Guard Armory to Carnegie Hall, and from county fairs to the Hollywood Bowl. Their cowboy charisma and comedic flair made them naturals for TV, and landed them their own weekly show on TNN, as well as a Saturday morning series on CBS. They have been

guests on countless TV specials, documentaries and variety shows, appearing with everyone from Barney to Penn & Teller.

If you consider their compositional credits, one might

call them "Writers In The Sky!" In addition to penning award-winning songs for their own albums, they wrote the score for Pixar Animation's 2002 Academy Award-winning short "For the Birds." They composed the theme song for the internet cartoon show "Thomas Timberwolf" by renowned Bugs Bunny creator Chuck Jones. But the animated character that history will most certainly link to Riders In The Sky is the loveable cowboy Woody, as Riders performed "Woody's Round Up" in "Toy Story 2," with the album of the same name garnering Riders their first Grammy Award in 2001 for "Best Musical Album for Children." Two years later, Riders roped their second Grammy in the same category, for "Monsters Inc. - Scream Factory Favorites," the companion CD to Pixar's award-winning movie.

Equally as exceptional, but of greater significance, is that in 1982, Riders In The Sky became the first, and to date only, exclusively Western music artist to join the Grand Ole Opry, the longest running radio show in history, and thus began a love affair with radio as well. In 1988, they recorded comedy skits for the album "Riders Radio Theatre" and launched the long-running international weekly radio show of the same name on public radio. And keeping pace with the ever-changing technological landscape, in 2006 "Ranger Doug's Classic Cowboy Corral" debuted on XM Satellite Radio, still heard weekly on SiriusXM Channel 56.

Ultimately, exceptional careers do not go unnoticed, and throughout theirs, Riders In The Sky have been honored regularly. In addition to being inducted into the Grand Ole Opry, Riders are in the Western Music Association's Hall of Fame, the Country Music Foundation's Walkway of Stars, and the Walk of Western Stars (in Newhall, CA near Melody Ranch Studios) along with Gene, Roy, John Wayne and other cowboy legends. No less important than their two Grammys, Riders have been the Western Music Association's "Entertainers Of the Year" seven times, and won "Traditional Group of the Year" and "Traditional Album of the Year" multiple times. The Academy of Western Artists has named them "Western Music Group of the Year" twice in five years, and the National Cowboy & Western Heritage Museum has bestowed Riders with their Wrangler Award statuette three times.

Yes, it would be "The Easy Way" to call it a career after 30-plus years, but it wouldn't be... "The Cowboy Way!" And so, the never-ending trail drive continues. The ponies are rested and watered, and America's Favorite Cowboys are ready to saddle up and ride, bringing good beef to hungry people wherever they may be.



The Western Heritage Schools Outreach Program (WHSOP)

Sponsored by the Cochise Cowboy Poetry and Music Gathering

What does your mind conjure when you think of cattle grazing and ranchers preparing for a roundup? In your imagination, what do you see when a dog lies in front of a fireplace, a lady is crocheting, and a man is staring at the embers? It is this unique human condition, imagination and creativity, that sparkles in the poems the students throughout Cochise County write. I wonder how these young students sink their teeth into an idea and create such marvelous renditions in a very short period.

The Gathering developed the program in concert with the Cochise County School curriculum, which provided a forum for students to use the skills taught in History, English and Social studies to create their unique masterpiece. Over the years, the Gathering has seen some remarkable works created by students throughout the county. It provides an opportunity for students to challenge themselves to research and experiment with the beauty of the English language.

Volunteers visited over 30 schools in Cochise County, introducing students to our western heritage, history and life on a ranch, inviting them to discover their creativity and to write a most imaginative poem. They focused on motivating students to better appreciate their western and Arizona heritage, and provide a venue for them to become more proficient writers. Many students accepted and conquered the challenge. The end result of much time, energy and patience on the part of the many volunteers supporting the annual Western Heritage Schools Outreach Program (WHSOP), celebrating its 25th year, is the many poems submitted by students.

Poems in this 25th edition of the Saddlebag of Poems represent fewer than 10% of the incredible poems written by students in the 3rd through 12th grades. In addition to writing these poems, student poetry winners prepare to stand before their families, peers and audience to recite out loud and bring their poems to life on stage. These writing and oral speaking skills are quantum steps towards essential life skills.

This year our Educator of the Year is Ms. Lesti Webster from the San Simon School. She is a wonderful supporter of her students and encouraging them to use their talents to create marvelous poetry. We also had two scholarship winners, each receiving \$1,000. They are Joshua Bell, from Veritas Christian Academy, and Andrew Gordon from San Simon School. We have a total of 36 students who will have their poems published in this year's Saddlebag of Poems. Several are repeat winners (practicing to win a scholarship as a High School senior!)

We are grateful to the teachers who mentored and motivated our youth to write and submit poetry. The following schools participated: All Saints Catholic School, Ash Creek Elementary, Bella Vista Elementary, Buena High School, Carmichael Elementary, Colonel Smith Middle School, Elfrida Elementary, First Baptist Christian Academy, General Myer Elementary, Joyce Clark Middle School, Palominas Elementary, Pearce Elementary, Pueblo del Sol Elementary, San Simon Elementary, San Simon High School, St David Elementary and Veritas Christian Community School.

The Gathering is always looking for community-minded people who would like to be part of this great event that supports and entertains our community. If you are interested in working with the Gathering or with the school program, check our website (<https://www.cowboypoets.com/volunteers>). The Gathering appreciates the hard work of all our volunteers and teachers who invested in our youth. Their professional support and dedication made this process a marvelous experience for our students throughout Cochise County.



2020 Schedule

At Buena High School
COMPLETE SCHEDULE IS AVAILABLE AT <https://www.cowboypoets.com/schedule>

FRIDAY NIGHT, FEB 7

7:00pm // Opening Concert
(Doors will open at 6:30pm)

FEATURING
Juni Fisher
The Hanson Family
Thatch Elmer

Regular Admission Friday Night
Only
Adult: \$25
Students (thru 12th Grade):
1: \$6.00
2-5: \$10.00 (total for up to 5)

SATURDAY DAY, FEB 8

10:00am to 4:00pm // Multiple
Sessions
(Doors open at 9:00 AM for
OPEN Mic sign-up)

Regular Admission Saturday
Daytime
Adult: \$15
Students (thru 12th Grade): Free

4:30 - 6:00pm // Barn Dance
FEATURING
Nightlife
Barn Dance all ages: \$8.00

SATURDAY NIGHT, FEB 8

7:00pm // Finale Concert
(Doors will open at 6:30pm)
FEATURING
Riders in the Sky
Mikki Daniel
Amy Hale

Regular Admission Saturday Night
Only
Adult: \$46
Students (thru 12th Grade):
1: \$6.00
2-5: \$10.00 (total for up to 5)
Adult VIP: \$59.00 (includes VIP
seating & early admittance)



¹⁰Census countdown underway

SUBMITTED BY AMANDA BAILLIE
Public Information Officer, Cochise County
Board of Supervisors

The countdown to the 2020 Census has begun!

The Census counts every person living in the United States every 10 years and the information gathered is critical to the future of our communities.

It's important that everyone living in Cochise County be counted when the Census begins in March.

Complete and accurate Census data is vital because:

It determines the number of seats each state gets in the House of Representatives Congressional, state and local district boundaries are redrawn after every Census The distribution of more than \$675 million in federal funds for schools, hospitals, roads, public works, and other programs is based on population counts

These are just some of the reasons why your participation in the 2020 Census is vital.

Cochise County is working with its municipal and community partners across the region to help inform our residents about the importance of the 2020 Census, and to ensure a complete and accurate count.

Below are the answers to some frequently asked questions to help you learn more about the 2020 Census. You can also find information at www.2020Census.Gov

What is the Census?

The Census is a count of every person who lives in the United States and its territories. It happens every 10 years. In March 2020, you will be asked to count everyone who lives in your home as of April 1. Responding to the 2020 Census is a chance to shape your future.

What's in it for me?

Your responses inform where over \$675 billion in federal funding is distributed every year to communities nationwide for clinics, schools, roads and more. For every person NOT counted in the Census, our local communities will lose about \$2,000 annually for the next decade.

Census data gives community leaders vital information to make decisions about building community centers, opening

businesses and planning for the future.

Responding also fulfills your civic duty because it's mandated by the U.S. Constitution. The United States has counted its population every 10 years since 1790.

Your responses are used to redraw legislative districts and determine the number of seats your state has in the U.S. House of Representatives.

Is my information safe?

Your responses to the 2020 Census are safe, secure and protected by federal law. Your answers can only be used to produce statistics. They cannot be used against you by any government agency or court in any way — not by the FBI, not by the CIA, not by DHS and not by ICE.

What will I be asked?

You will be asked a few simple questions, like age, sex, and the number of people who live in your home, including children.

What won't I be asked?

The Census will never ask for Social Security numbers, bank or credit card numbers, money or donations or anything related to political parties.

When and how can I respond to the Census?

In March 2020 every household in America will receive a notice to complete the Census online, by phone, or by mail. In May, the U.S. Census Bureau will begin following up in person with households that have yet to respond.

How can I help ensure a complete and accurate Census count?

As well as completing your survey, there are other ways you can get involved.

Become a Census Taker

The U.S. Census Bureau is recruiting Census Takers to help ensure citizens respond to the survey. To find out more about these paid positions visit <https://2020census.gov/en/jobs.html>

You can also volunteer to help your local Complete Count Committee by contacting the following people:

How the 2020 Census will invite everyone to respond

What to Expect in the Mail

When it's time to respond, most households will receive an invitation in the mail.

Every household will have the option of responding online, by mail, or by phone.

Depending on how likely your area is to respond online, you'll receive either an invitation encouraging you to respond online or an invitation along with a paper questionnaire.

Letter Invitation

- Most areas of the country are likely to respond online, so most households will receive a letter asking you to go online to complete the census questionnaire (or to respond by phone).
- We plan on working with the U.S. Postal Service to stagger the delivery of these invitations over several days. This way we can spread out the number of users responding online, and we'll be able to serve you better if you need help over the phone.

Letter Invitation and Paper Questionnaire

- Areas that are less likely to respond online will receive a paper questionnaire along with their invitation. The invitation will also include information about how to respond online or by phone.

WHAT WE WILL SEND IN THE MAIL

On or between

You'll receive:

March 12-20	An invitation to respond online to the 2020 Census. (Some households will also receive paper questionnaires.)
March 16-24	A reminder letter.
	If you haven't responded yet:
March 26-April 3	A reminder postcard.
April 8-16	A reminder letter and paper questionnaire.
April 20-27	A final reminder postcard before we follow up in person.

We understand you might miss our initial letter in the mail.

- Every household that hasn't already responded will receive reminders and will eventually receive a paper questionnaire.
- It doesn't matter which initial invitation you get or how you get it—we will follow up in person with all households that don't respond.

United States
Census
2020

Cochise County - Amanda Baillie
(abaillie@cochise.az.gov)
Sierra Vista - Adam Curtis (adam.curtis@sierravistaaz.gov)
Bisbee - Ashlee Coronado (acoronado@bisbeaz.gov)
Benson - Michelle Johnson (mjohnson@bensoaz.gov)
Douglas - Xenia Gonzalez (xenia.gonzalez@douglasaz.gov)
Huachuca City - Suzanne Harvey

(sharvey@huachucacityaz.gov)
Tombstone - Elka Remeikis
(publicworks@cityoftombstoneaz.gov)
Willcox - Caleb Blaschke (cblaschke@willcox.az.gov)

Finally, we simply ask you to encourage your family, friends, neighbors and work colleagues to complete their 2020 Census questionnaire. Be Counted and help Shape Your Future!

Willcox celebrates new beginning for The Palace

Appearances can be deceiving.

At first glance the newest project undertaken by the Willcox Historic Theater group may make most people wonder why the location has been titled "The Palace." The building along Railroad Avenue had been forgotten for the past seven years after its previous owner literally locked the front door and walked away, spokesperson Gayle Berry said.

"It was in pretty rough shape," Berry said.

Thanks to an impressive volunteer effort and a substantial investment of grant funds and donations, the storefront at 116 N. Railroad Avenue is beginning to resemble its namesake.

"The community has been just great," Berry said. "We held a clean-up day and it was really amazing all the people that came out to help. We had members of the City Council, city officials and others who came out to repaint and clean up the space."

The space will be used to further the mission of the non-profit theater organization, with one side of the facility converted into an educational art studio and the other side into an intimate stage for theater performances.

The building was constructed in 1909 and was the location for a saloon after Prohibition ended in 1933. Few improvements were made after initial construction and the facility lacked air conditioning when it was purchased by the Willcox Historic Theater organization in 2019.

After the Herculean clean up effort and significant structural improvements, The Palace is now home to the same creative talents which have distinguished everything those affiliated with the non-profit group have accomplished in the community.

In addition to revitalizing the historic theater into a first-run entertainment facility, the group took over a neighboring building and entitled it Studio 128, making room for state-of-the-art video production, 3D printing, an acoustic audio facility and a computer lab.

The Palace will be home to traditional art studies, including painting, sculpture and other art forms. It will also offer a stage



Community volunteers in Willcox stepped up to renovate the interior of The Palace, a new venture undertaken by the Willcox Historic Theater non-profit organization. The new interior will include a small stage for one-act plays (upper right). When the local group unlocked the front door of the building, located on Railroad Avenue in the city's downtown, everything was just as it was left more than seven years after the previous owner walked away from the property (bottom right).

with a complete sound system and seating for single-act stage performances.

"We have generated momentum among some of the younger people in the community that has really contributed to the overall success of our efforts," Berry said.

The group has produced professional-

quality videos that have been broadcast at the annual Cowboy Hall of Fame Induction ceremony, the theater's "Shindig" fundraiser and at other mainstay community events.

The non-profit group has also been working with schools in Bowie and Cochise, providing a hands-on experience

and education in STEAM projects. Students from the schools are transported to Willcox once a week for classroom instruction on the computers.

"It's been great to see the community come together and invest in these efforts," Berry said. "We're not done and there's still plenty of opportunity in our future."

SOLAR POWER FROM PAGE 13

it costs more for the PV kWh than what SSVEC charges.

If this cost is less than 5.8 cents, you "make" money on all the kWh the system produces.

Any cost between these two numbers is a "make a little" / "lose a little" proposition.

Can I use batteries to capture all the kWh my system makes so I get full retail value?

Battery technology is improving all the time and there are several manufacturers selling residential battery systems. Adding batteries does allow you to get full retail value for all the energy your PV system produces. But this also comes with additional costs that must be included in the analysis. So, let's take the battery cost and determine the cost per kWh so you can again, make an "apples to apples" cost comparison.

One well known battery supplier has a battery that will store and deliver 15 kWh per night. The cost is estimated to be \$9,800

SSVEC Lunch Learning Sessions On Solar Power

- January 21, 2020 in Benson
 - January 23, 2020 in Sierra Vista
 - January 24, 2020 in Willcox
- RSVP to Michele McCollum at mmccollum@ssvec.com

to \$15,800 per battery pack (most homes will need 2-4 battery packs). The batteries come with a ten-year battery life.

The next step is to calculate the cost per kWh for the energy stored and delivered by the battery system. At 15 kWh per day for 10 years, a total of 54,750 kWh is produced. Using the lowest cost estimate you take the \$9,800 cost and divided it by 54,750, which then becomes \$17.9 cents per kWh. If SSVEC's retail rate was 19 to 24 cents like it is in California or Hawaii, then the economics support using batteries. Not so much with SSVEC low rates.

Why did the solar salesperson claim I will take my bill to "virtually nothing" by putting in solar?

We don't have firsthand knowledge of

what is said at the sales presentations. Based on conversations with members over the years, it seems like the sales people don't know that the electric rates for SSVEC are very different than APS or TEP.

For example, the export rate for APS is \$0.1161 cents, which is higher than SSVEC's retail rate (SSVEC's export rate is \$0.056744 per kWh). Sales people also use the national average annual price increase of 3 percent for energy to justify installing solar and "locking in your energy costs" because the electric companies increase their rates "every year."

SSVEC doesn't change the rates every year and even when looked at on an annualized basis our rates have changed less than 0.75 percent per year since 1993. Contrary to the national "norm," our kWh rate has gone DOWN each year for the last four years and our next rate adjustment is years away.

The solar sales representative makes it sound so good, what can I do to make sure I am not losing out on a good deal?

SSVEC is not "anti-solar" but we are "pro-member" and we want to help you make a good decision. We are more than

happy to review any proposal by a solar company and help our members decide if the deal is good for them. We have seen deals that make economic sense and some that don't. Therefore, we advise everyone to get multiple estimates because not all deals are the same.

Let us share one interesting contract review.

The price per kWh came close to retail but in the details of the contract, it never guaranteed that the PV system would produce any energy. In fact, the only thing the contract would guarantee was that the system would not cause any roof leaks.

It's the small things that you want to ask about like, how many kWh will the system produce in a month? A salesman told one member that "all of their day-time energy was free." This is true if your daytime consumption doesn't exceed the limits of the physical output of the PV system. For example; a 2,000-watt PV system (sounds big right?) will only produce 11 kWh per day on average. Depending on the time of year it can be 27 percent less or 6 percent higher than average. Those 11 kWh are worth \$0.88 of energy per day or \$26.49 per month.



David Drew (center) and his cowboys

1. Twenty-seven ranches were represented at a Round-up Association meeting on August 20, 1896. Ed Hooker was elected chairman and A. G. Hofsumer elected secretary. A motion was made by James Cook and seconded by Mr. Hardin to start the roundup at Hooker's Hot Springs on September 1, and work five days at the Hot Springs, two days at Allen Flat, two days at Steele's Croton Springs ranch, one day at Riley Springs, one day at the O T Ranch, one day at Cash Hooker's, two days at McKittrick's JH Ranch, six days at Col. Hooker's ranch, seven days at the Eureka, then round up to continue on the Graham side to Monk's range and wind up at the Circle I Ranch. This plan was agreed to after much discussion. Col. Hooker was to bear the entire expense of the round-up while working on his range and Mr. Nisbet would do the same on the Eureka range. William Speed was elected treasurer and was given the job of hiring a cook and ordering provisions and to assess fees to be collected from each cattleman for the round-up. David Drew and William Whelan were named as captains. Several ranches provided wagons and horses. Stockmen from outside the boundaries of the round-up who worked as cowboys would be boarded free.

2. In November 1896, Charles Kieser, considered one of the most exemplary of local cowboys, in assisting another vaquero to dress a beef, received a bad cut across the fingers of one hand. His middle finger was nearly severed. Finding that the finger would permanently disable him for vaquero work in its stiffened condition, he decided he didn't need it anymore and had it amputated.

3. Billy Speed was cattle inspector for southeast Arizona district for sixteen years from 1894 to 1910. In 1908, Billy Speed was the lawman who shot and killed train robber and former Willcox deputy Bill Downing in the alley off Maley Street. When Speed resigned, former Arizona Ranger, Oscar McCAda assumed the position.

4. In 1936, Frank Wootan handled all the cattle inspections alone as he had no deputy inspectors. It was a big job. In just



Monk Ranch Cowboy in Willcox - Cattle Exchange Saloon



Frank Wootan

the month of November, twelve thousand four hundred head of cattle were shipped from the Willcox range. Willcox was then, and for many years, the leading shipping point in the entire United States for shipping cattle directly from the range. Cattle were driven into town and loaded into cattle cars on the Southern Pacific Railroad.

Frank wrote a poem:
The Inspector
Bring back again those good old days
Of Brutus, Caesar, and Hector.
They bought and sold, they lived and died
with never an inspector

In Eden's garden, Mother Eve
With a few fig leaves bedecked her,
The fruit they eat today must wait until
Checked by a fruit inspector

The Little Hen once laid her eggs
As nature did expect her.
But now each step from nest to nest
Is checked by an egg inspector

The cow must not give up her milk
For beef you can't dissect her,
Unless the smell of all her parts
Suits some damned fool livestock inspector

When all is ended and Old Nick
Has gathered each male factor,
I hope in each hot spot in hell,
There sizzles an inspector!

5. Lillie Harrington, who spent many years as manager and chef at the Cochise Hotel, spent her honeymoon in 1925 on a 200 mile journey helping her husband and father-in-law drive a herd of 38 horses from the Tucson area to Young, Arizona. At one point they had to swim the horses across the Salt River. She was also the cook serving three meals every day of jerky, biscuits, gravy, and lots of black coffee. They slept on a tarpaulin, but she



Range cattle ready for shipment



Lillie Harrington

was so tired each night, she said, "I could have slept on a bed of catclaw." She was 17 years old at the time.

6. Sometimes ladies from the area would go to watch the round-ups. In October 1917, during a round-up at the ranch of the Misenhimer brothers, Mrs. F.



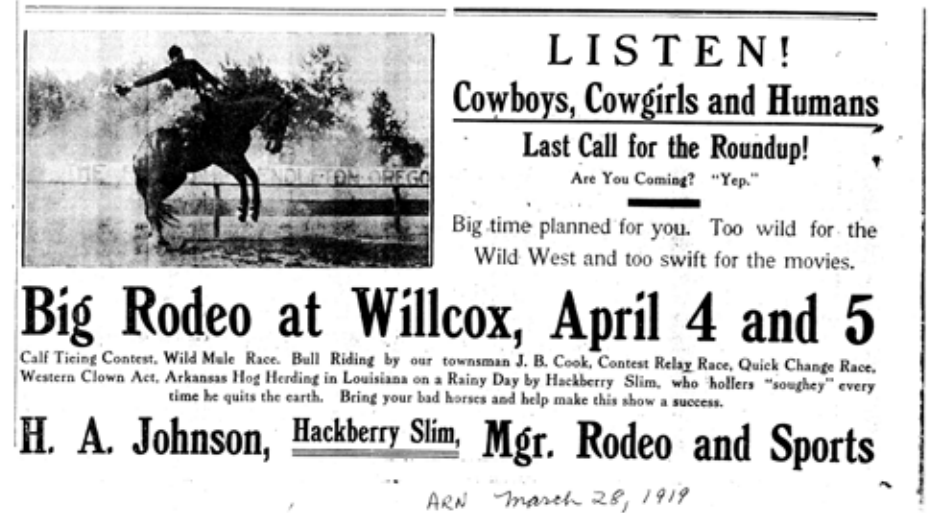
John Sherman Klump

A. Mulkins of Douglas had come to watch the excitement. Her knowledge of first aid came in handy when John Klump, one of the cowboys, rode to the house in the evening. He dismounted and threw his saddle over a bar as usual. He then threw his chaps onto the bar of which a six-shooter in a holster was strapped. The gun slipped to the ground striking the hammer in such a manner as to discharge a bullet. The bullet passed through the fleshy part of his left arm, narrowly causing death or serious injury. Mrs. Mulkins immediately applied a tourniquet and bandaged the wound. Mr. Klump was taken to Dr. Briscoe in Willcox, who said he was progressing nicely, and he was soon back in the saddle.

7. Juan Sierra Leon was one of the best known of the cowboys of Mexican heritage in Southeast Arizona. His father came to Arizona Territory in 1851 from Spain. His mother was from Sonora, Mexico. Juan began ranching when he was 12 years old. He worked for many years for Col. Henry Hooker at the Sierra Bonita Ranch, but was also employed by the MK Ranch, the Mule Shoe Ranch, and Bill Busenbark. He also worked as a stuntman in the movies along with his brother who was a double for Tom Mix. Juan was inducted into the Willcox Cowboy Hall of Fame in 1985. Many of his descendants and relatives still live in the area. His portrait and those of all the other Cowboy Hall of Fame inductees may be seen in the Rex Allen Arizona Cowboy Museum on Railroad Avenue in Willcox.



Juan Leon



Rodeo poster 1919

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Deadline for the March 2020 issue of Currents featuring events for the months of April and May is February 12. Email information to epetermann@ssvec.com.

JANUARY

JANUARY 17 TO 20

Wings over Willcox

Willcox

The Wings over Willcox festival is the perfect opportunity to see all the winter migrants that visit our area and to see the other wildlife and natural wonders of Southeastern Arizona. Our festival provides opportunities to explore nature in Southeastern Arizona through tours on photography, geology, history, botany, agriculture and the wonderful Sandhill Cranes and other birds of our area. We invite you to take advantage of these opportunities by signing up for tours and seminars. We hope you can join us!
Contact: (520) 384-2874, and www.wingsoverwillcox.com.

JANUARY 20

MLK Parade and March for the Dream

Sierra Vista

Hosted by the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), this event will kick off at 10 a.m. at Veterans' Memorial Park 3105 E. Fry Blvd., in Sierra Vista. The day will continue with a celebration of Dr. King's memory with speakers and special events.

JANUARY 21

Martin Luther King, Jr. Day of Remembrance

Sierra Vista

Cochise College invites the public to celebrate and remember Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. A Day of Remembrance with a reading of the "Letter from Birmingham Jail" will be held in collaboration with the Cochise County offices on Tuesday, January 21, 2020. 10 a.m. - noon at the Board of Supervisors Hearing Room at Melody Lane in Bisbee. 2 p.m. - 4 p.m. in the Library Horace Steele Conference Room on the Sierra Vista Campus with a connection to classroom 1108 on the Douglas Campus. To read the entire letter takes approximately an hour. Light refreshments will be served after the reading on the Cochise College Sierra Vista Campus.

JANUARY 25

Kartchner Caverns Cave Fest

Benson

Come to the park for our annual celebration of Arizona's underground wilderness! We are proud to host the Winter Technical Speaker Series for the National Speleological Society. Learn about ongoing cave research from the experts! All presentations will be in the Discovery Center Theater and are open to the public. \$7 per vehicle (1 to 4 adults). Time: 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., Location: Kartchner Caverns State Park, 2980 Hwy. 90, Benson, AZ. 85602, Contact: <https://azstateparks.com/kartchner/>

JANUARY 25

LinkedIn for the WIN: Network & Learn

Sierra Vista

You might think that LinkedIn is only for company folks and not the platform for small business owners and entrepreneurs, and you would be incorrect. Over the past year LinkedIn has become the go-to social networking site for anyone looking to generate leads, position yourself as a thought leader or simply improve your online resume. This Network & Learn event will provide an opportunity to expand your local/regional contacts in a professional



environment AND offer a workshop on maximizing LinkedIn in 2020. FREE Networking - FREE Refreshments - \$15 LinkedIn Training. Information: eventbrite.com/e/linkedin-for-the-win-network-learn-tickets-86834764117

JANUARY 25

2020 Bridal Fair

Sierra Vista

Join us for our 2020 Bridal Fair. Held at the Mall at Sierra Vista on January 25th, this event will showcase all the amazing wedding businesses in Sierra Vista to help you plan your big day! Are you a vendor? We'd love to have you! Information: cochisecrafters.com/2020-bridal-fair

FEBRUARY

FEBRUARY 1

Free Tax Preparation

Sierra Vista, Bisbee, Benson, Sunsites

Starting on or after Feb 1 in Sierra Vista at the Warrior Healing Center, 1838 Paseo San Luis, Monday through Friday, 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. Call (907) 830-1045 or (520) 224-8507. Bisbee at Bisbee Senior Center Fri. 12:30 p.m. to 4 p.m. and Saturday 8:30 a.m. to noon. February 1 thru April 13. Call (520) 432-2167 for details. Benson at Benson Community Center Wednesday, February 5 thru April 15. From 12 p.m. to 4 p.m. Call (520) 686-3234 for details. Above sites are walk-in, first-come-first-served. Sunsites at the VFW Mondays by appointment only. Call (520) 642-6674 after Feb 1 for an appointment.

FEBRUARY 1

Art Show

Sierra Vista

The Third Annual 2020 Open Judged Art Show will be held Feb. 1, 2020 with an Artists Reception beginning at 3 p.m., followed by an Awards Presentation. There will be a treasure hunt throughout the month of February with gift certificates awarded. Art will be on sale beginning January 28 through February 22 at the Huachuca Art Gallery, 1835 Paseo San Luis in Sierra Vista.

FEBRUARY 1 TO 28

38th Annual Quilt Show

Tombstone

The Tombstone Association of the arts hosts the 38th Annual Quilt Show. Enjoy some of the finest quilters' best works. The individual styles and designs leave you wondering how they come up with their ideas. Purchase tickets for the quilt raffle at \$1 each or six for \$5. Entry is free. Located at 383 E. Allen Street. Open daily from 9:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. For more information call (520) 457-2380.

FEBRUARY 4

Spaghetti Dinner

Sunizona

The Annual Sunizona-Ash Creek Community Association Spaghetti Dinner will be held on Tuesday, February 4, from 6 pm to 7 pm at the Association Hall behind Mustang Mall. Adult dinners are \$6, children from 6 to 10 are \$3, children 5 and under are free. The students from Ash Creek School will be performing for us at 7 pm. Come join us for some good food and fun entertainment. For more information contact Maryclare Tiuani (520) 429-5580.

FEBRUARY 7 AND 8

Cochise Cowboy Poetry and Music Gathering

Sierra Vista

The Cochise Cowboy Poetry & Music Gathering will celebrate the western lifestyle with music and poetry. Now in its 29th year, the Gathering welcomes top performers from across the United States, this year featuring award-winning "Riders in the Sky." The 2020 theme, "It's Cool to be a Cowboy," will flood a warmth of western hospitality across Sierra Vista. See the schedule of events and featured performers inside this edition of Currents.

FEBRUARY 8 AND 9

C4!! Cochise College Comic Con

Sierra Vista

Cochise College Comic Con (C4!!) is an annual multi-genre comic convention sponsored and hosted by Cochise College and the Digital Media Arts Club (DMAC). This year Cochise College Comic Con (C4!!) will be held on February 8 and 9, from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. on the Sierra Vista Campus of Cochise College, 901 Colombo Ave. Throughout the event there will be Panel Discussions, Vendor Rooms, Live-Action Role-playing, Table Top Gaming, Anime, Costume Contests, Signings, Readings, Photo Ops, Food, and Entertainment.

FEBRUARY 15

Adult Prom

Sierra Vista

The Adult Prom is a fun red-carpet event where you can experience prom for the very first time (for those who missed it the first time) or relive your high school prom all over again. You won't want to miss this fun night of dancing and all of the prom nostalgia without all of the high school drama! The Adult Prom is the Sierra Vista Parents' Coalition Annual Fundraiser and funds our community education initiatives. Ages 21 and up only. Held from 8 p.m. until midnight at The Old Door Shop, 5390 S. Highway 92 in Hereford.

FEBRUARY 15 AND 16

Vigilante Days

Tombstone

Join the Tombstone Vigilantes, Vigilettes and their guests on historic Allen Street for a fun-filled weekend. Enjoy western themed skits, shoot outs and fashion. Mosey down the street eating an ice cream, remembering the past and making memories for the future.

FEBRUARY 13 TO 22

Auditions

Sierra Vista

Theater on the Move will hold auditions for their upcoming production of "Killer in the Shadows," an old-fashioned "who done it" radio murder mystery and dinner. This original comedy written by Theater on the Move is inspired by the radio shows of the 1930s and 1940s. Auditions are scheduled on February 13, 14, 20 and 21 beginning at 6 p.m. On February 15 and 22, auditions are at 2 p.m. All auditions will be held at the Village Meadow Baptist Church, 1407 El Camino Real, Building 1, Adult Classroom.

There is a need for actors ages 16 and older. We also need three female singers for the pre-show entertainment. For more information contact Theater on the Move (Tommy Kelley), (520) 222-8711 or totmarizona@gmail.com.

FEBRUARY 22

Alfred (Al) Reyes Memorial - Annual Golf Tournament

Benson

Annual golf tournament sponsored by American Legion Post 45. \$50.00 entry fee per person (no atm at course) it's a (4) person scramble-limited to first 30 teams. Fee includes golf cart, meal, and prizes. Pick your team or we can put you on a team. Applications can be picked up in the lobby of the Chamber of Commerce, 168 E 4th St.

FEBRUARY 23 TO MARCH 1

Wild West Outpost Riding Workshop

Tombstone Monument Ranch

Katherine Barabite of Whispering Hooves invites you to a week-long intensive program in Horsemanship and Riding skills. All-inclusive workshop that covers accommodations, meals, riding activities, ranch entertainment and workshop, of course. Space is limited. Located at 895 W. Monument Road. On the internet at: www.whisperinghooves.com for more info or call (631) 764-7515.

FEBRUARY 27

YES Fair

Sierra Vista

Public exhibition at the Youth Engineering and Science (YES) Fair, at the Windmere

CONTINUED ON PAGE 14

14 CALENDAR
FROM PAGE 13

Hotel and Conference Center, Highway 92 in Sierra Vista. The YES Fair presents over \$17,000 worth of awards to local students and teachers. These include trips for the Grand Prize winners in the 9-12 division and their advisors to compete at the Intel International Science and Engineering Fair this spring, as well as cash prizes in all divisions. An evening awards presentation will highlight this event, following an afternoon at the hotel where displays are open to the public to examine and enjoy.

MARCH

MARCH 4 TO 30
Celebrate the Arts
Benson

San Pedro River Arts Council will be sponsoring its 11th Annual "Celebrate the Arts" Fine Arts Show and Sale at the Cochise College Benson Center beginning on March 4 through March 30, 2020. An Open Reception featuring live music, refreshments, awards presentations, a raffle and a chance to meet and talk with the participating artists will be held on Saturday, March 14 at Cochise College Benson Center from 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. So do plan to join us then!

MARCH 7
Taste of Sierra Vista

Sierra Vista
Join the Rotary Clubs of Sierra Vista for food and drink sampling from more than seven local restaurants, tasting of local wines and beers, and live music from Desert Fever all to support local charitable needs!

Tickets are \$35 and can be purchased online starting January 15 or from the Rotary Clubs of Sierra Vista. Begins at 5 p.m. at the Ethel Berger Center, 2950 E. Tacoma St., Sierra Vista, AZ 85635

MARCH 7 AND 8
Quilts of the Huachucas 2020

Sierra Vista
The annual Quilt Show of the Hummingbird Stitchers Quilt Guild will be held on
Saturday, March 7, from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., and Sunday, March 8, from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. at Buena High School, 5225 E. Buena School Blvd., in Sierra Vista.
The show will feature more than 200 new and vintage quilts, a vendor mall, door prizes, an appraiser (fee), a boutique, food, and a gorgeous raffle quilt opportunity (raffle tickets available in advance from guild members or at the door). Some quilts

will also be available for sale.
Tickets are \$7 for age 13. Parking is free. More information and directions to the school are at
www.hummingbirdquiltguild.com.

MARCH 14 AND MARCH 15
Choir Concert

Sierra Vista
The Sierra Vista Community Chorus proudly presents its 2020 Sweet Treats & Swingin' Sounds concert, "Planes, Trains & Automobiles" on Saturday, March 14 and Sunday, March 15 at 2 p.m. both days (doors open at 1:15 p.m.) at the cafeteria at Buena High School. The cost is \$10 per person which includes homemade desserts and a full concert by the soloists and ensembles of the chorus. Tickets go on sale in February from chorus members and at Safeway. The chorus is very excited about presenting this concert for the first time at the cafeteria at Buena High School. This venue offers much more space for the audience, making it possible to present only two concerts this year rather than the previous three. There is also more space for parking and for displaying our fabulous desserts. This year's spring concert is "Motown Magic" on May 9 at Klein Center for the Performing Arts. For more information contact Director Sharon Keene at (520) 417-2305 or General Manager Martha Konklin, (520) 378-0730 or the website SVCommunityChorus.org.

MARCH 14 AND 15
Wild West Days

Tombstone
Wild West Days is sponsored by the Tombstone Marine League Detachment and the weekend is dedicated to honoring our military, past and present. Be proud to be an American and meet them on the streets of Tombstone and say thank you for protecting our freedom!

MARCH 21
Chiricahua National Monument
Stargazing

Willcox
Tucson Amateur Astronomy Association Stargazing to view amazing solar system and deep sky objects. You will see planets, nebulae, star clusters, double stars, and lots more. We will have several telescopes for public viewing. Observing location is either Echo Canyon or Faraway Ranch and will be updated as we get closer. A talk is scheduled before observing at Bonita Campground Amphitheater at 6:30 pm with observing from 7:30 – 9:30 pm. Please try to use red light flashlights and minimize white light (to include cell phones) that will hinder your night vision. Weather dependent. Chiricahua National Monument website: www.nps.gov/chir/index.htm

CONTINUED ON PAGE 15

WHAT'S HAPPENING AT
THE WILLCOX THEATER?

GUEST ARTISTS LIVE ON STAGE IN WILLCOX
The Los Angeles based Take3 genre-bending piano trio has a flair for the wild and unexpected. Whether performing their take on pop, jazz or classical tunes, they bring enthusiasm and love of music to audiences across the country, abroad, and now to Willcox on Thursday January 30! This performance received support from the Arizona Commission on the Arts, WESTAF (Western States Arts Federation) and the National Endowment for the Arts.

See Maiah Wynne, a multi-instrumentalist, one-woman tour de force, on February 13, with a show that appeals to people of all ages and backgrounds. Wynne is a rising star of the folk-pop world, shifting moods and themes from song to song. This performance received funding from the IMTour program of WESTAF (Western States Arts Federation) and the National Endowment for the Arts
Classic Country on March 21! Lawless and Mae are winners of the 2018 "Modern Country Duo of The Year". Jack Lawless and Rebecca Mae entertain with dynamic energy, style, and personable interactive charm, singing songs made famous by Patsy Cline, Merle Haggard, Johnny Cash and June Carter and many more.

Classic Country on March 28 with Dave and Daphne. Dave has toured the world with Barbara Mandrell, performed for presidents at the White House and is one of the most fabulous guitarists on the planet. Daphne described as a cross between Shania Twain and Patsy Cline was voted Female Vocalist of the Year by The Southern Gospel Music Association!

DRAMA ON FILM FROM LONDON'S STAGE SHOWS

Oscar Wilde's "An Ideal Husband", filmed live at the Vaudeville Theatre in London's West End, is an entertaining and still topical play. Sir Robert Chiltern's smooth ascent to the top of the political heap seems assured until Mrs Cheveley appears in London with damning proof of his previous financial chicanery. February 14 and 15.

"A Woman of No Importance," Oscar Wilde's audacious drama of social scandal centers around the revelation of Mrs Arbuthnot's long-concealed secret. Classically staged and recorded live at the Vaudeville Theatre in London's West End with an award winning cast including Eve Best and Anne Reid. March 13 and 14.

GET INVOLVED - DO YOUR OWN ART!!

Southern Arizona Independent Film Festival
Submission deadline is February 7. This family oriented festival solicits G and PG rated short films (under 15 minutes) from all levels of experience, age groups and genre interests.

Palace Players Whatever your interest in theater, we need you for our brand-new Theater Group!! Actors, writers, makeup, costume, scenery, tech - become a part of the Palace Players!! Check the website for times.

If performing is your creative muse, join us Friday, February 21 for Open Mic Night. Voice, Instrument, Poetry, Stand-up – Solo or Group – show off your talent and enjoy your neighbor's as well. No charge to perform or attend, but performers must sign up in advance.

On February 1 join us for Paint Night celebrating our 83rd Theater Anniversary where your instructor will help you create a painting, in your own style, with our canvases and paints. Come with friends, family or by yourself and take home your work of art.

Check our website for a complete schedule of upcoming events, performances, films, workshops and classes in art, photography, digital and computer art, plus unique cinema offerings, jam sessions, history talks and much more.

Information and tickets at willcoxtheater.com or 520-766-3335



What's happening at the
Huachuca City Library?

Thursday Spotlight on Speakers, held at the Huachuca City Town Hall, 500 N. Gonzales Boulevard.

January 9, 2020 Mime! Begin your 2020 with fun and smiles. An entertaining old-fashioned pantomime with white face makeup... mime Donna F Brown! Huachuca City Library presents, from 10 a.m. to 11 a.m. Call (520) 456-1063 for more information.

January 23, 2020 Animal Communication. Encore requested for Psychic Mediums Dwight and Rhonda Hull. How you can better understand your fur babies? Bring a photo of your pet, living or on the other side, and you may receive a reading. Huachuca City Library presents at Town Hall 500 N. Gonzales Blvd., from 10 a.m. to noon. Their books will be available for purchase and signing. Call (520) 456-1063 for more information.

February 6, 2020 More on the bats of Arizona. Encore demanded return of the "Bat Ladies," Jean and Lindsey, from Kartchner Caverns. Huachuca City Library presents at Town Hall 500 N. Gonzales Blvd., from 10 a.m. to 11 a.m. Call (520) 456-1063 for more information.

February 20, 2020 Southeast Arizona Archaeology. Dr. Eric J Kaldahl presents the importance of Native American and Spanish archaeological sites from ancient Clovis times (11,000 B.C.) through the AD 1400s. Amerind's seminal research in southeastern Arizona is also presented in this slide illustrated presentation. Huachuca City Library presents at Town Hall 500 N. Gonzales Blvd., from 10 a.m. to 11 a.m. Call (520) 456-1063 for more information.

March 5, 2020 "Everything You Wanted to Know About Hummingbirds... but didn't know who to ask." Truth about hummers is often more incredible than fiction. Learn the facts about the amazing lives and travels of these living jewels says speaker Tom Wood, a founder of Southeastern Arizona Bird Observatory, SABO. Huachuca City Library presents at Town Hall 500 N. Gonzales Blvd, beginning at 10 a.m. Call (520) 456-1063 for more information.

March 19, 2020 Baseball History Lovers! Huachuca City Library presents Bisbee historian, author and Bisbee Black Sox vintage baseball player Mike Anderson. Anderson authored "Warren Ballpark." Source, Amazon "...if ghosts of baseball players come at night to relive their glory days, it is at Warren Ballpark in the old copper-mining town of Bisbee, Arizona. Warren Ballpark has been in use as a sports facility since 1909." Team names float through the night



air... Bisbee-Douglas "Porkers," Globe-Miami "Brownies," Juarez "Indios"... Anderson's book will be available for purchase at \$22. All proceeds go toward restoring Warren Ballpark. Beginning at 10 a.m. Huachuca City Library presents at Town Hall 500 N. Gonzales Blvd. Call (520) 456-1063 for more information.

April 2, 2020 Focus will be on the mountain plants at Carr House in Hereford, AZ. Huachuca City Library presents videographer and Carr House Host Mike Foster. Foster will share his love of the plant species in the Madrean Evergreen Woodlands. These plants more closely resemble those of the Sierra Madres Mountains to the south than Rocky Mountains to the north... hmmm. Beginning at 10 a.m. Huachuca City Library presents at Town Hall 500 N. Gonzales Blvd. Call (520) 456-1063 for more information.

CALENDAR
FROM PAGE 14

MARCH 28
The Butterfly Club Annual Spring Bazaar

Sierra Vista
The Bazaar will be at the Windemere Hotel March 28th, 2020 from 9am to 4pm located at 2047 S Hwy 92 Sierra Vista, AZ 85650 across from the Mall at Sierra Vista. We are so excited to be working with all the staff again so that we can offer you a large showcase of vendors, small businesses, food trucks, outdoor fun and more from all over the county and Arizona. Information: www.sierravistabutterflyclub.com

MARCH 28
37th Annual Copper Classic

Sierra Vista
Pro-Qualifying. Natural Bodybuilding & Bikini Championship featuring: Figure, Physique & Fitness Model. Information: copperclassic.com

APRIL

APRIL 4
Kars for Kids

Sierra Vista
The 9th annual car show to support the Boys & Girls Club of Sierra Vista and the Fraternal Order of Police Lodge 28 outreach programs. Raffles, awards, Live auction and more! Come out and enjoy yourself at the family friendly event. Begins at 8 a.m. and lasts all day at the corner of Highway 92 and Busby Drive in Sierra Vista.

APRIL 5
WRC 3rd Annual Easter Egg Family Run

Sierra Vista
Please join We RUN Cochise for our 3rd annual Easter egg family RUN/walk for members, their families and friends. The RUN/walk will feature a 1-mile family fun RUN/walk, an Easter egg hunt; as well as, a 5k. This is a family, stroller, sport chairs and wheelchairs friendly RUN that is open to all ages. Information: https://runsignup.com/Race/AZ/SierraVista/WRCFamilyEasterEggRUN

APRIL 10 TO 12
2020 Rose Festival

Tombstone
For 134 years the Lady Banksia Rose Tree has graced Tombstone with its beauty and fragrance. This rose tree is the largest in the world. Over 9,000 square feet with a trunk that is 12 feet around. The tree was planted by two friends Mary Gee and Amelia Anderson in 1885. The start came all the way from Germany. Located at 118 S. 4th Street. Admission is \$5 with kids under 14 free. Call (520) 457-3326 for more information.

APRIL 18
March for Mental Health

Sierra Vista
The 9th Annual March for Mental Health on Saturday, April 18, will feature food, entertainment and fun. Marchers will assemble at the Rothery Education Center, 3305 E. Fry Blvd, with registration opening at 7 a.m. and the March beginning at 8:30 a.m. The March benefits the National Alliance on Mental Illness Southeastern Arizona (NAMI SEAZ). There is no cost to participate. For more information, call 459-3228 or send an e-mail to namiseazinfo@gmail.com.

The Sound
of Music



Students at Joyce Clark Middle School in Sierra Vista staged the Rogers and Hammerstein classic "The Sound of Music" on Friday, December 13, at the school. Staff and parents made the production possible, and local businesses sponsored the performance.



APRIL 18
Sierra Vista Symphony Spring Jubilee

Sierra Vista
Spring Jubilee: 75th Anniversary of the End of WWII All concerts are held at the Klein Center for Performing Arts Buena High School, 52125 E. Buena School Blvd, Sierra Vista, AZ. Concerts begin promptly at 7:00 pm. A pre-concert seminar is held at 6:00 pm in the Buena Lecture Hall next door to the concert center. More information: sierravistasymphony.org

MAY 2
15th Annual West End Fair

Sierra Vista
Mark your calendar for a free day of fun in the sun brought to you by the West End Commission! The fair will feature a variety of vendors, entertainment, and delicious food along Fry Boulevard. Vendor registration will open on Feb. 14. The goal of the West End Fair is to increase awareness of the diverse businesses found only in the West End and to build community support. Each year residents are invited to spend a day shopping and partaking of

delicious food and drinks at the fair and at nearby businesses. Through the fostering of stronger community ties, it is the commission's hope that residents see Sierra Vista's West End as the place to go when they want to shop local. The West End Fair is set for Saturday, May 2, from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. and will take place on Fry Blvd between N. Garden Ave and North Ave. Like always, we encourage and invite all West End businesses, service clubs, organizations, and small home-based businesses to be part of the fun. To learn more and even set a reminder for when registration opens, head here: bit.ly/2QLmPrQ

MAY 2
2020 Rising Sun Run

Sierra Vista
This annual, family friendly race features a very challenging half-marathon, 10k, 5k and 1-mile fun run- something for everyone! Proceeds received from the Rising Sun Run will benefit Rotary youth leadership and activities in our community, including vocational scholarships which will be presented at the finish line. For more information, visit: runsignup.com/Race/AZ/SierraVista/RisingSunRunSierraVista

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Spill the beans



WHY EAT BEANS?

The reasons are plentiful and here are just a few that the studies found.

Less depression	Nutrient dense
Less diverticulitis	Quality protein
Less diabetes	Happier heart
Less cancer	

FRIJOLE VAQUEROS

For this issue, I decided to update classic Cowboy Beans and give them some “south of the border” seasonings. Feel free to add browned ground beef or shredded chicken for more of a main course. Swap beans at your discretion - there are no “wrong” beans. You could add cheese, sour cream, and cilantro to finish, if desired.

- 4-6 servings
- 1 large onion, chopped
- 4 cloves garlic, chopped
- 2 tsp. cumin
- 1 carrot, finely chopped
- 1 cup corn, frozen, defrosted
- 2 cups cooked pinto beans
- 1 cup cooked kidney beans
- 1 can (4 oz.) diced green chiles
- 1 tsp. oregano
- 2 drops liquid smoke, optional
- ½ tsp chile powder
- About ½ cup water

Heat a saucepan over medium-high heat. Add just enough oil to coat the bottom of the pan, then add the onion and let brown. Add garlic and cook another 30 seconds. Add cumin and carrot and cook another 30 seconds, then add remaining ingredients. Season with salt and let heat through. Taste and adjust seasoning.



LENTIL LOGIC

Lentils are technically a legume, not a bean but are just as good for you and they cook quickly. So, they’re a great choice for weeknight dinners. Here’s a little lentil primer:

- Brown Lentils**
Their delicious, earthy flavor only needs a little salt, making them a good choice for less experienced cooks. I often add a green veggie or some leafy greens to the pot for the last minute or two of cooking for a perfect side dish. Cherry tomatoes, chopped bell peppers, or sliced red onion will make for edible art and can go in just before serving.
- Red lentils**
Actually orange in color, these are ideal in recipes for Dal, a classic Indian recipe dish that will warm you down to your toes on a chilly night. They are the quickest cooking lentils, which may be highly motivating.

French Lentils
Green French Lentils and Beluga Lentils are ideal for salads. Unlike other types, they hold their shape when cooked. I like to add sherry or sherry vinegar, goat cheese, and thinly sliced shallots to mine when cooked, but still warm. Try serving them over an interesting green like endive, radicchio, or escarole. Spinach would be lovely too, of course, and perhaps less exotic.



INDIAN SPICED RED LENTIL SOUP

The turmeric gives gorgeous color here, but is optional. A stick blender will quickly puree your lentils, but don’t annihilate them - you want some “identity” left. Pureeing is also optional. I like ginger paste from “The Ginger People” for its ease, but the Asian isle at the grocery store will also have ginger paste.

- 2-4 servings
- 1 medium onion, chopped
- 3 cloves garlic, finely chopped
- 1 Tbsp. cumin
- 1 Tbsp. coriander
- 1-2 Tbsp. grated ginger
- 2 cups broth or water
- 1 tsp. turmeric, optional
- 1 cup red lentils (Massor Dal)

Heat a saucepan over medium-high heat. Add just enough oil or butter to coat the bottom of the pan, then add the onion. Let brown, then add garlic and spices, and cook 30 seconds. Add water and lentils, and season with salt. Bring to a boil, reduce heat, and let simmer for about 20 minutes. Check lentils, and when tender, mash or puree slightly. Taste and adjust seasoning.

BY CHEF CHRIS

Full of beans, bean counter, bean pole, don’t know beans... Bean references are certainly plentiful. Surely the reason they are entrenched in our lexicon is because they’ve ever been a staple on our plates - in good times and bad.

Cartoons from the earlier part of the last century often showed people down on their luck eating beans out of a can. I sometimes think cabbage and beans are the reason many of us are still alive and kicking in this century and testament to their wholesomeness throughout the millennia.

Cowboys and their beans are practically a cliché. They, however, cooked their own as canned beans didn’t appear until 1904. They fit easily into their packs and only needed a few ingredients to become a tasty, nourishing meal on the trail.

A cook on the chuckwagon would soak the beans during the day, then cook them in the evening. That hasn’t changed, and soaking is still generally considered part of the process of enjoying these nutritional powerhouses, and most likely the reason we don’t like to cook them for ourselves more often.

Newsflash! Soaking is secretly optional and science says it only slightly shortens cooking time. I’m very much hoping that this will inspire more of you to start cooking your own. I’m not averse to canned beans, I absolutely have some on my shelf right now. But as the seemingly snobby cooks among us will be quick to tell you, the flavor and texture of home cooked beans is infinitely better.

As the new year begins, I will suggest that eating more beans is a simple way to up your nutrition and health game this year.

MAGIC (FOR) BEANS

I was sadly slow to understand the magic of Liquid Smoke. Just a few drops will transform any bean dish by giving the smoky flavor that we crave without having to go to the trouble of adding a pork product. You can always add more, so start with just a drop or two.

YE OLDE CROCK POT

After years of struggling with bean cookery, I finally headed the advice of a Cuban friend: Use a crock pot. What a difference! The theory is that the metal in a regular pot affects cook time, and can sometimes even prevent beans from ever becoming tender. I now confidently make beans, that always become edible, in my basic crock pot.

QUICK TUSCAN WHITE BEAN STEW

This only takes 10 minutes to make but tastes like you cooked for hours! Just about any vegetable can be thrown into this wonderful stew and frozen spinach is fine. Freezes well, so make a double batch. A small sprig of fresh rosemary can replace the thyme. Cook your own white beans to make me happy.



- 2 servings
- 2 links (about 8 oz.) Italian sausage, casings removed
- 2 cloves garlic, finely chopped
- Broth as needed, about a cup
- Splash white wine or lemon juice
- 1 bag baby spinach or 1 bunch asparagus, chopped
- 3 sprigs thyme
- 1 can white beans, drained
- ½ pint cherry tomatoes, halved

Sauté sausage over medium high heat and drain any fat. Add garlic and cook for 30 seconds. Add broth and stir up brown bits from the bottom of the pan. Season with salt and add thyme. Add beans and spinach or asparagus and let simmer briefly. Add tomatoes and adjust seasoning.