

Photo by Kit Rendon

Giselle Herrera works on her page. She has been busy interviewing students about their future travel plans since this year's high school yearbook theme is "Our Journey."

Two schools are host for area learning conference

By Renee Curren

Coatimundi MS

During an ordinary Thursday afternoon in October, Coatimundi Middle School, along with its partner school, Mountain View Elementary, had the extraordinary privilege of hosting a Southern Arizona Networking Conference.

The event provided an opportunity for leaders and staff members from Southern Arizona 21st Century

SEE CONFERENCE/ PAGE 13



Photo by Margarita Nilsen

Jazmyn Solarez at work in 21st Century class homework center.

High school yearbook takes effort from many

By Carol Miller

Rio Rico High School

Catching time in a bottle may be an impossibility, but capturing moments in time, along with all the wonderful memories of high school, is accomplished each year in the Rio Rico

High School yearbook.

Kit Rendon, Rio Rico High School business teacher, is in her second year overseeing the school yearbook, and has put some of last year's difficult lessons into practical learning and hands-on business

skills training in her fourth period yearbook class.

"Last year was crazy," Rendon admits. "Trying to learn it all as we went along. It could be a little frustrating.

SEE YEARBOOK/ PAGE 14

\$25,000 grant is won by San Cayetano Elementary

By Len Johnson

San Cayetano Elementary

San Cayetano Elementary's booster club and staff had been fundraising for three years to buy a large shade structure for their playground.

However, it took three paragraphs from a fifth-

grader and a week of online voting to finally get it.

The letter written by Sophia Renteria landed the school a \$25,000 grant from Lowe's, a national home improvement store chain.

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MIDDLE SCHOOL YOUTH

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Students give us much to cheer for

Superintendent's Letter



By David Verdugo

Superintendent

Santa Cruz Valley Unified School District

It's hard to believe we are heading into the home-stretch of the 2015-16 school year. This year has

been a good one for us. Some of the highlights include:

- We had a smooth opening in the fall, especially with our newest school, Calabasas School, -- our only PreK-8 school that we created by consolidating Peña Blanca Elementary and Calabasas Middle School.

- Our student enrollment is up by 100 students from the previous year, bringing our student enrollment to over 3,400.

- We celebrated the accomplishments of San Cayetano Elementary and Coatimundi Middle Schools -- two of 26 Arizona public schools to earn the A+ School of Excellence™ award for the 2014-2015 school year. They join Calabasas School in holding this distinction for the next three years.

- Rio Rico High School, once again, was recognized by U.S. News & World Report as a Silver "Best High School" in their Best High Schools 2015 rankings.

- San Cayetano won the Lowe's National Writing Competition, thanks to their fifth grade student, Sophie Renteria, who penned the winning entry. The school was awarded \$25,000 to build a shade structure for the school playground.

- Rio Rico High School was one of two Arizona high schools chosen to receive a new athletic field though the "Neighborhood Heroes" program sponsored by the Arizona Cardinals and Walmart. Proposed renovations include field irrigation, new grass and possibly a new scoreboard.

- RRHS junior Allie Schadler was named Gatorade Arizona Girls Cross Country Runner of the Year. This is the second year in a row that a RRHS runner has won this award; Carlos Villarreal won the boys award in 2014-15.

- Fifteen RRHS students received prestigious awards from Cambridge International Examinations. Angel

Ojeda, sophomore, received the "Top of the Country" award in biology.

In October, our schools received their test results from the first administration of the AzMERIT in March, 2015. AzMERIT (Arizona's Measurement of Educational Readiness to Inform Teaching) is intended to measure Arizona's newest standards, created in 2010, replacing the AIMS (Arizona's Instrument to Measure Standards) test.

We intend to use these results as our baseline information from which we will chart our improved student performance in subsequent years. The next administration of this test will be in March 2016. (Please see Mr. Schadler's article on our performance, Page 5).

My hope is that with the continued support from our parents and community members, our students' achievements will soar to new heights.

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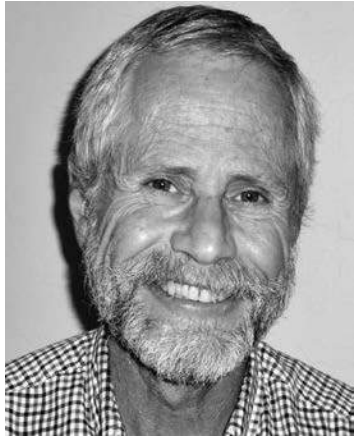
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Student safety impetus for changes at Mt. View



By Mark Dittmar

Mountain View Elementary

This year Mountain View Elementary made changes in its existing procedures to enhance student safety.

"As a parent myself, I'm a real stickler for safety," said Principal Christopher Jackson, who instituted the changes that directly impact school lockdown, fire prevention, and dismissal procedures.

In the fall, teachers attended meetings where school safety and Arizona state law were covered.

"The atmosphere in the trainings was very serious," said fifth grade teacher Tracy Hall. "We discussed worst case scenarios and what each one of us should do in an actual emergency."

Then the campus began



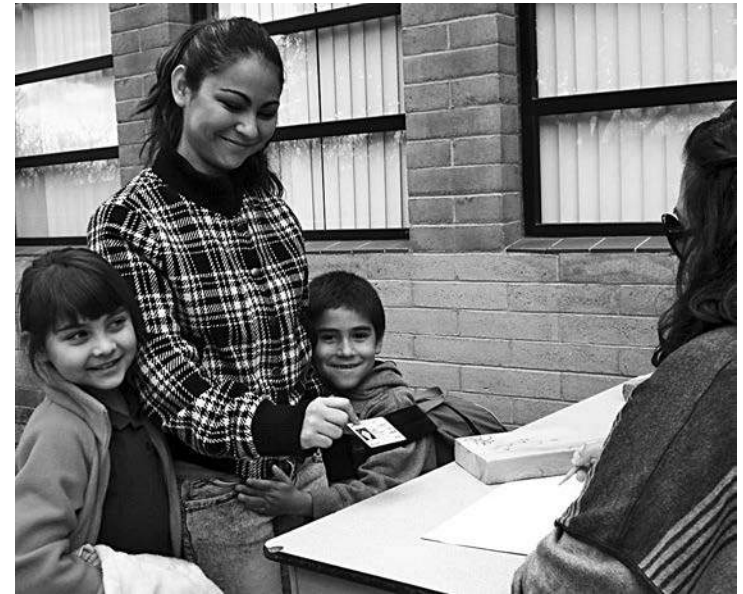
practicing spontaneous fire and lockdown drills with a vigilant eye for ongoing improvement. Fire drills for example, were not only evaluated by how long it took to evacuate the school to a safe area farther from the building than before, but how efficiently the exodus was performed.

"Initially it took six minutes to move our entire school population across the field to safety," said school secretary Veronica Avila. "Now we can do it in

five minutes and hope to improve upon that."

Another example of enhanced safety is the student "pick-up" policy. Previously children left their classrooms and walked unattended to vehicles waiting outside. Now at dismissal, students in grades K-2 designated as "pick-up" students are escorted by an adult into the school library where they wait for parents with proper identification.

"All of our parents' com-



Photos/Mark Dittmar

At left, Savannah Lopez picks up her daughter, Lyra, at Mountain View Elementary. "I feel a lot better knowing my child is safe," she said.

Above, Following Mt. View's new safety procedures, Maria Chavez picks up her children Angel and Stephanie from kindergarten teacher Monica Salas.

ments have been positive," said Principal Jackson, after the new program was introduced. "It's a bit of a hassle coming in to get your child but everyone I've spoken to thinks it's well worth it."

Savannah Lopez, mother of kindergarten student Lyra Lopez, echoed his remark. "I feel a lot better knowing my daughter is safe," she said.

School security policies prohibit publishing details of the school's lockdown procedures, "but rest

assured Mountain View students are as safe as they can be," said Mr. Jackson.

Then with a twinkle he added, "So far the only intruder we've had on campus has been a skunk... and we were even ready for him!"

For more information concerning any safety procedures in place at Mountain View Elementary, please contact the school office at (520) 375-8401. Comments or questions are always welcomed.



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'Fit & Fun Challenge' program gets kids moving

By Chris Bachelier

Mix It Up Nutrition Education Director

Elementary students should get 60 minutes of physical activity a day. However many students only get one 20 minute recess once a week. Add to that the amount of time they spend in front of screens, either playing video games or watching TV, and that means that most students do not get the recommended amount of activity on a regular basis.

The Mix it Up Nutrition education program is trying to promote more daily physical activity with their "Fit and Fun Challenge" program. The program encourages students to get 30 minutes of physical activity 4 days a week outside of their school day. Students are given a card to track their activities every month.

At the end of the month the cards are turned in at school and the classroom with the most returned cards receives the Fit and Fun trophy for that month. All three SCVUSD elementary schools are participating in the challenge.

Parents can also participate in the Fit and Fun challenge with their child. On the back side of the card is a Parent/Adult Partner Challenge. Parents can exercise right along with their child to encourage them to get their daily exercise. It helps them reach the recommended 30 minutes daily physical activity for adults and keep a New Year's resolution.

A few inexpensive activities that parents and students can easily do together are walking, biking, dancing to music or to a video, or playing together. The idea is to pick something that both you and your child enjoy so that it will be easy to continue.

Also limiting screen time or replacing it with movement activities will also help children reach their physical activity goals.

Encouraging students to participate in walking clubs or walk-to-school days can increase their

Fit and Fun!
Parent/Adult Partner Challenge

Active Together!

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30 min	30 min	30 min	30 min
30 min	30 min	30 min	30 min
30 min	30 min	30 min	30 min

Parent/adult, please track your physical activity above.
_____ completed the Fit & Fun Partner Challenge.
Adult's name _____

Thank you for encouraging your child in this challenge!

Fit & Fun! is a collaborative program of UA Nutrition Network and schools in Nogales and Rio Rico. Funding for this program is from USDA-SNAP through the Arizona Nutrition Network at ADHS.

activity levels. Both Mountain View and Calabasas School have regular walk-to-school events. Check with your parent liaison about dates and availability of walking clubs.

Other activities that promote physical activity are exercise or dance videos. Encouraging children to try a new activity or join a sports team are also good ideas to get them up and moving. Use sedentary activities such as video games and watching TV as rewards once they complete 60 minutes of physical activity.

For more information and ideas on how to be active as a family go to <http://www.letsmove.gov/active-families>

If you are interested in more ideas about physical activity or a nutrition education class, please feel free to contact Chris Bachelier, program director, at cbach@cals.arizona.edu or (520) 281-2994, Ext. 114.

Funding for this program is from USDA-SNAP through the Arizona Nutrition Network at ADHS.

New teaching approaches focus on learning styles

By Mark Dittmar

Mountain View Elementary

Principal Christopher Jackson believes a key component to student success is the classroom teacher so he's brought two cutting-edge teaching approaches to Mountain View Elementary School: Response to Intervention (RTI), and Differentiated Instruction (DI).

The purpose of this training is to equip teachers with the knowhow to reach an ever-broadening range of students who call Mountain View "home."

In short, DI seeks to reach all students, especially those who may be struggling academically and need more support. To do this, teachers are learning to identify how individual children best learn. Auditory learners, for example, learn best through

song; visual learners through images. Ongoing evaluations and end-of-a-unit tests provide useful data to speed the process.

RIT, a subset of DI, is a way of identifying students who require extra support early on and providing increasing levels of diverse support so they will be successful.

Children have different levels of readiness, varying learning profiles and assorted interests so it's a challenge for a teacher to help them all succeed, but the RIT and DI instructional approaches have proven to help level the playing field.

"RTI and DI are like two sides of the same coin," said Instructional Specialist Michele Titcomb. "The purpose of both methods is to individualize instruction to meet as many needs as possible."

And that's the goal of good teaching.



Photo/Mark Dittmar

Amanda Chambers-Huerta identifies and instructs a group of kinesthetic learners in her class.

AzMERIT measures more rigorous standards than AIMS

By Stephen Schadler

Assistant Superintendent
Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment

In October, Santa Cruz Valley Unified School District No. 35 received test results from the Spring 2015 administration of the State's newest student assessment, AzMERIT -- Arizona's Statewide Achievement Assessment for English Language Arts and Mathematics.

AzMERIT (Arizona's Measurement of Educational Readiness to Inform Teaching) is intended to measure Arizona's newest standards, created in 2010, replacing the AIMS (Arizona's Instrument to Measure Standards) test.

For the last six months, the Arizona Department of Education (ADE) and districts have been preparing teachers and parents for what, at first glance, appear to be shockingly lower results than the previous AIMS test. These results, though lower for our district and for every other Arizona school district, are not shocking. Rather, they are expected, and we at SCVUSD embrace the story they convey.

Two important points are to be made. First, results from the two tests -- AIMS and AzMERIT -- are not comparable. They are different tests, measuring different standards and with significantly different expectations.

To compare the results would be like attempting to use an oven-thermometer to measure one's temperature for a fever. The instruments, though both used to measure temperature, are designed to measure different things. Each is calibrated against a different set of standards for purposes of measuring different environments or traits. They are not interchangeable, nor are the results comparable.

To this point, AzMERIT measures significantly more difficult and more rigorous standards than did the AIMS test.

The second point is specifically directed to parents. When you see your student's results, and you are tempted to compare it to your student's AIMS results, remember this . . . your child is the same talented person they were prior to taking the AzMERIT test.

Think of it this way -- your son [or daughter] is a star player on the Junior Varsity basketball team. When the coach suddenly asks him to play Varsity one night, don't be surprised if he struggles. He is the same star player with the same skills set that he had yesterday, but now he is playing in an environment with a much higher expectation. That is similar to what we're seeing with AzMERIT scores.

For SCVUSD, results from the AzMERIT tests depict a new "starting" point from which we will examine the district's long-term educational growth and development. Comparing year-to-year results, aggregated at a district level, is useful for examining how well the district is performing over time. This is our beginning year -- our beginning point for future comparisons.

AzMERIT - Percentage Proficient or Highly Proficient

English Language Arts

	Arizona	SCVUSD No. 35	Difference
Grade 3	40	32	-8
Grade 4	42	33	-9
Grade 5	32	27	-5
Grade 6	36	28	-8
Grade 7	33	22	-11
Grade 8	35	31	-4
Grade 9	26	22	-4
Grade 10	32	21	-11
Grade 11	30	16	-14

AzMERIT - Percentage Proficient or Highly Proficient

Math

	Arizona	SCVUSD No. 35	Difference
Grade 3	42	36	-6
Grade 4	42	39	-3
Grade 5	40	48	8
Grade 6	40	29	-4
Grade 7	31	20	-11
Grade 8	34	35	1
Grade 9 - Algebra 1	32	35	3
Grade 10 - Geometry	30	21	-9
Grade 11 - Algebra II	30	3	-27

Students were tested in grades 3-11 in two subject areas: English-Language Arts and Mathematics. Scores were categorized into one of four performance levels: minimally proficient, partially proficient, proficient and highly proficient. The latter two levels are considered passing scores.

In English-Language Arts, the percentage of SCVUSD students passing in each grade

(grades 3-11) ranged from 16 to 33 percent, compared to statewide results of 30 to 42 percent. SCVUSD grades 3, 4, and 8 performed highest, with passing rates at 32, 33, and 31 percent respectively. Grade 11 was the lowest with 16 percent passing.

In Mathematics, the percentage of students passing in each grade (grades 3-11) ranged from 3 to 48 percent, compared to statewide results of 30 to 42 percent. SCVUSD grades 3, 4, and 5 performed highest, with passing rates at 36, 39 and 48 percent respectively.

Grades 5, 8 and 9 exceeded the statewide passing percentage for the grade level (Mathematics), with SCVUSD fifth grade students exceeding the statewide passing rate by 8 percent.

To better understand SCVUSD's results, the SCVUSD curriculum and instruction staff has already compared that which was taught with that which was tested. They did this by working with teachers to compare each test's blueprint, called performance level descriptors, with each of SCVUSD's curriculum calendars. Calendars provide SCVUSD teachers with standards and timelines for each grade and subject area. Within only a few days, they found answers.

For example, the curriculum calendar for Algebra II (grade 11), the district's weakest performing area with only three percent of the students passing this exam, was found to have many of its standards measured by the exam taught after the exam was administered. Working to correct this, the curriculum staff and Algebra II teachers have now modified curriculum calendars to be prepared for next year's exams.

The curriculum staff has been working with teachers from each grade and subject area to modify and align all SCVUSD calendars.

"This year everyone -- at the state and district levels -- was anxious about the changes. We have new, more rigorous standards, which in turn, necessitates a new assessment. All of this change makes us uncomfortable. Of course, we want our students to be successful, so we never like to see scores fluctuate as they are," said SCVUSD Superintendent Verdugo.

"On the other hand, I am glad that we are holding the 'bar' higher -- we are expecting more, and we will be providing more. We are already working together to make positive changes for our students. I am optimistic that everyone will win in this environment."

For more information on AzMERIT, visit www.azed.gov/assessment.

Guest musicians' visits inspire at RRHS



By Amanda Dunn

Rio Rico High School

In 2014, Rio Rico High School Band performed the world premiere of "Bandscapes," while receiving the once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to work with its composer, Sy Brandon.

Music from all over the world visits Rio Rico High School through guest musicians. The RRHS band brings in an average of two guest artists per year.

"Students can see for themselves the power of every note and chord through world renowned composers," said RRHS Band Director Rachel Gasper, of the guest musicians she has invited over the years.

Gasper's students are able to see her lifelong dedication to music through her performances with the Green Valley Woodwind Quintet, a local group of musicians.



Photo by Rachel Gasper

RRHS jazz band students find a new way to understand music through a guest visit by David Valdez.

"Letting my students see me play allows me to show them first-hand how great music can be," said Gasper.

Students like Victoria Salcedo, trumpet player, enjoyed learning from the Green Valley Woodwind Quintet.

"I like listening to local musicians because I can see that my music can be a lifestyle, not just a class," Salcedo said. "Band gives

you a sense of belonging."

"When Moisés Paiewonsky visited the RRHS band room, he inspired me," said Luis Fierro, a trombone and clarinet player. Paiewonsky's performance inspired Luis to continue developing his natural talent by adding more expression and feeling to his music.

Cristina Molina, jazz piano and clarinet player, said

Angelo Versace, University of Arizona Director of Jazz Studies, was her favorite guest musician.

"He opened up my eyes to what I can do in jazz piano," said Versace. "Every guest musician helps us strive to be the best we can be."

"Listening to David Valdez's improvisations made me look at improvising in a new way," said Victor Sino-

hui, saxophone player.

The Rio Rico High School Band and Gasper invite guest musicians because they teach students to stay committed and work hard for the things they want. These rewarding experiences will be what students remember when they move on to brighter, more musical futures.



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Summer travel a great option for some students



Photo by Laura Berg
Victoria Salcedo, Jasmine Aguilar, Lisset Virgen, Alexis Yocupicio, and Israel Carpena, from left to right, visit Alice in Wonderland in Central Park, New York, in June 2015.

By Amanda Dunn

Rio Rico High School

Travel opens up other worlds for Rio Rico High School students. Flying to new places can be exciting as well as educational, giving students the opportunity to see new places.

Together, students and teachers make lasting memories encouraging student growth and development.

Dagoberto Lopez, Director of Cima Vista High School at Rio Rico, and Lupe Delgado, educator and International Club Sponsor, are in the middle of planning their 2017 trip to Europe.

“It’s a life changing expe-

rience,” said Delgado. “I’ve seen students’ self-confidence improve, and they feel that they can do anything after they travel abroad.”

Students return from overseas inspired to pursue careers at the United Nations, and motivated to become bilingual, or even multilingual. Learners make real world connections between learning history, art, languages, and more when they visit places like the Roman Forum and Vatican City.

Delgado said that when students visit the Coliseum or Paris for the first time, she can truly see the difference travel makes in their lives.

“Students gain a sense of cultural understanding and respect. The more they know, the more patient and compassionate they become,” said Delgado. “The compassion these students exhibit for each other is extraordinary. Our students make the world a better place.”

Students interested in traveling a little closer to home, work closely with Laura Berg, social studies teacher. She and her students venture across the Eastern Seaboard, traveling to Washington D.C., and Arlington National Cemetery with the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, and the Statue of Liberty in New York City.

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Athletics are balanced with study



By Reneé Curren

Coatimundi MS

Madeline Del Rio, Coatimundi Middle School sports program director and Dean of Students, is very proud of her school athletes. "Ultimately," she says, "our athletes are students first."

Del Rio runs an eligibility check once every week to catch student athletes who may be struggling

with academic goals. She meets with them to support academic recovery and, when necessary, refers them to the 21st Century program for after-school tutoring or the homework center during their first hour of practice or game time. This plan keeps students motivated as scholars as well as athletes.

Eligibility also requires regular school attendance and a high standard of athletic sportsmanship, especially through difficult times. Student athletes live up to these challenges by supporting each other through injuries and ensuring fair treatment for themselves and their



Photo by Margarita Nilsen

The girls' soccer team warms up before a game with Carolina Colosio, front, and Anacarolina Espinosa, second from right.

opponents.

One of the most impressive highlights in CTMS athletes is

their ability to take on several responsibilities at once, wrapping themselves around the challenges and personal discipline that will be required of them in high school, college and careers. Many athletes are also jazz band members and maintain competitive grade point averages.

Eighth grader Alexa Colosio is one such student, keeping her grades at A's and B's while playing the clarinet in jazz band, volleyball, basketball and soccer. "Our girls' soccer team has been undefeated for three seasons straight," says Colosio, "and our basketball is undefeated so far this season, too." She practices eight hours or more per week before and after school. Her whole face lights up with memories of winning with her team, "the best team I've played with in soccer".

Anacarolina Espinosa, grade 8, has recently been accepted for All State Band,

auditioning on three instruments, trumpet, alto saxophone and baritone saxophone, while helping her soccer team to their third straight undefeated season and keeping up with advanced-level Cambridge classes.

Alejandro De La Rosa, grade 8, plays the trumpet in band while participating in football, soccer, and track. During football season he practiced as many as 12 hours a week while keeping his grades at B's and C's. He relives his favorite memory with a humble smile, "our football team was undefeated and got a trophy."

Yudith Ibarra Lopez and Gabriela Rodriguez, grade 6, are both cross country athletes and in band. Gabriela recently placed 13 in the top 20 in one of her races. Yudith just likes "running with the team". Gabriela is also a STUCO (Student Council) member.

Rene Arivizu, grade

8, plays the saxophone and is a recognized athlete in both football and basketball.

Being an intramural program, CTMS sports teams have the opportunity to compete with other districts such as Nogales, Elgin, Sierra Vista, and Little Red as well as within the SCVUSD district. Students may choose from sports that change quarterly throughout the year.

To ensure personal safety, each student must be released for participation by their physician prior to the season's start. In the heat of game competition students often press themselves to their peak athletic ability.

"It is truly a beautiful thing to watch," says Del Rio and parents' pride confirm the same thing. Del Rio adds, "They are extremely positive and supportive towards each other and have shown tremendous self-control, courage, and persistence."

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Young artists earn acclaim in 2 Arizona contests



By Jennifer Alejos

Calabasas School

We have three big winners from Calabasas School. They shared their art skills and natural observation skills as scientists in two significant art contests, one for Southern Arizona and one for the state.

Introducing wild-life into the classroom stimulates scientific inquiry. Calabasas fourth- and fifth-grade students studied monarch butterflies and their lifecycle. Questions arose such as, "What do they eat?" (answer: as caterpillars they eat milkweed), and "How do they get other animals sick from the food they eat?"

The Buenos Aires National Wildlife Refuge sponsored its 6th Annual Grasslands Fair in Sasabe promoting pollinators in an art contest. Fifth grade students Ricky Garcia and Ashley Cervantes took home first place and honorable mention, respectively, in their grade category, 3rd-5th.

As a reward, the Refuge is sending a team, along with their reptiles, to Calabasas to present "For Goodness Snakes," an

educational demonstration that gives students an opportunity to observe and learn more about reptiles.

In the winning entries, the students drew sticky butterflies by using glue to outline their drawings. They created an organic feel with gloopy and imperfect lines. Once dry, they practiced their technique of creating different values and blends using dry pastels to create a balanced and symmetrical colorful butterfly.

The Arizona Department of Education sponsored an "I'm Proud to be an Arizonan" themed art contest this year, as well. A panel of teachers, artists, education professionals, and the Arizona State Superintendent of Public Instruction Diane Douglas met to judge and select the winners from the K-12 submissions around the state.

Second grade student Gianna Aguirre won third place in the kindergarten-3rd grade division and she was the only winner from Santa Cruz County.

She submitted a colored drawing of a Southern Arizona landscape and an essay. Her detailed drawings are carefully labeled with each animal's name and plants that she sees in her backyard. She earned \$100. Her art will be on display in the Phoenix office until October.

An award reception will be held in Phoenix this March.



Photo by Jennifer Alejos

Ricky Garcia won first place for the grades 3-5 division for the Buenos Aires National Wildlife Refuge Grasslands Fair art contest.

In her essay submission, she wrote, "I am proud to be an Arizonan because of all the wildlife, all the awesome plants, and all the amazing desert animals. [And I'm proud] because of all of the cool sky sights when it rains during monsoon season. I like it when the lightning zigzags by the mountains.

"I live in Rio Rico. There are many cool animals where I live. On the way to school deer jump in front of my mommy's car. It is super cool! There are a lot of wildlife in my backyard like roadrunners, hawks, coyotes, javalinas, and rabbits.

"One day I want to be a scientist helping animals survive."

"Now I'm not afraid of going to the dentist"
-L

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Our arrangers Alex Zuniga, Janeth Orozco and Jorge Jimenez are always available

All families served by Adair's Carroon Mortuary will receive a free memorial video from photographs supplied by the family (value \$250)

Adair's Carroon Mortuary Le da la bienvenida a

Hector Torrez

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Teens can earn personal trainer certificate



By Carol Miller

Rio Rico High School

When talking to high school students about what they would like to do with their lives next, one of the first things many college-bound students will do is ask what fields are hiring and will be continuing to grow.

The healthcare industry is consistently one of the largest industries in America, according to the United States Department of Labor, being the number one industry in many states already and steadily climbing in many others.

Rio Rico High School's Career and Technical Education (CTE) department has long addressed this by offering a Certified Nursing Assistant

(CNA) class. Seniors who complete the program and pass the certification test to obtain a Certified Nursing Assistant certificate are immediately able to work as they seek additional educational opportunities towards a nursing or doctoral degree.

Now, for those students who, by choice or due to schedule conflicts, are unable to take advantage of the CNA Certification, CTE and RRHS are happy to offer a new certification option: the Personal Trainer Certification.

Students who complete the Sports Medicine program are eligible to sit for the National Personal Trainer exam through Action Personal Training, thus giving them the opportunity to earn Personal Trainer credentials.

This is not an easy program by any means, and getting there is a challenging path.

Students interested in the program must take the prerequisite medical classes, just as if they were starting any of the medical

programs at RRHS.

Before they can take Personal Training, they must then pass Sports Medicine 1, a course addressing in-depth anatomy, physiology and sport injury management. Students are trained in weight management, injury prevention and rehabilitation, nutrition and of course exercise and training basics.

Upon graduation, students can get a job in a gym and really make a positive difference in people's lives and their health. It's a very different path, but still a healthcare path -- one which works well for those who want to be a trainer, and who are interested in massage, physical therapy, sport-specific medicines, or those who simply are unsure yet ready to work hard as they pursue additional in-depth pre-medical training.

The course is untraditional. In the Sport Medicine 1 class, students begin the process of keeping personal training journals while they examine their own



Photo by Carol Cullen

Carol Miller, sports medicine teacher, moderates a student debate on "Should we be able to transplant genes to create the perfect human?"

lifestyle habits -- nutrition, exercise and body composition. They identify their own healthy, or not-so-healthy, life choices and work towards a year-end goal.

By the second year in the program, students are doing the same for fellow students, working with the class instructor to design programs, learn different styles of exercises and help their clients understand the basics of nutrition.

This is the sec-

ond year with this program. Students are working hard to prepare for testing in April.

This year RRHS has 5 candidates who hope to finish the work to be eligible to sit for the test

For students interested in getting into the Trainer program, please consult the class schedule and contact a counselor during spring registration.

The initial classes are open to sophomores and continue

through senior year. Only seniors who complete all prerequisites are eligible to take Sport Medicine 2-Personal Training.

For any questions or to learn how you can help support the Personal Trainer program, or any of the CTE programs, please feel free to contact Carol Miller at cmiller@santacruz.k12.az.us

(Note: Carol Miller is the instructor for Sports Medicine at RRHS.)



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Holiday gifts pour in from residents, businesses



By Tonya Yanez

Calabasas School

During the holiday season, families all over the world partake in gatherings to share in each others' company. Families exchange laughs, recipes, and gifts. This is the same feeling at Calabasas PreK-8 School this past holiday season.

The Calabasas staff is very grateful to have two fantastic parent liaisons and a great group of coaches who wanted to make sure the holidays were a

little merrier this year for the students and families of Calabasas.

Before the winter break, the school's parent liaisons, Irma Velez and Patricia Alvarez, collected more than 400 toys, 134 jackets, 45 gift certificates, and enough food and produce to create more than 20 food baskets. This was the second time Velez led this collection.

"I saw a need for our school. I wanted our kids to have a better Christmas," said Velez. "So I gathered my parent volunteers and we went out to our community and reached out and we were able to get a lot of much-needed donations."

The first year they surpassed their goal so they increased it, and more than tripled their goal this year. With very generous

donations from local businesses, families, students, and staff, every elementary child was able to choose a toy to take home. In addition, some families got to eat a little more, and some children were a little warmer over winter break.

"It's amazing how much the community helped," said Alvarez. "I am very proud to be a part of it."

"I would like to send a big thanks to our community members," said Alvarez. "Specifically, our neighbors from ICE, Nogales Clinic, Veggie Produce, Mariposa Community Health Center, La Bocanita Restaurant, Rio Rico Pharmacy, The Italian Peasant, Green Valley Tutors and The Hilltop Christian Church for their donations to our Santa Shop.



Photo by Tonya Yanez

The Calabasas Cougars and the Rio Rico Fire Department played a basketball game and admission of a new unwrapped toy was the entry fee to the game. As a result, more than 100 toys were collected.

"And big thanks to our parent volunteers for helping me make this possible. And a big thanks to Rio Rico Fire Station and The Rio Rico Board of Realtors for the food baskets and jackets donated to our children."

Adding to the holiday spirit, Karla Ramirez and Heather Huerta, teachers and coaches at Calabasas, organized a basketball game in which the Calabasas Cougars played against the Rio Rico Fire Department

in order to collect toys for local children. A new, unwrapped toy was the entry fee to the game. They were able to collect more than 100 toys for the community. The Calabasas Cougars won 55 to 36.

Board member supports reading instruction

Photo by Len Johnson

SCVUSD board member Brian Vandervoet reads to and listens to San Cayetano Elementary second grader Ailyn Meza. Vandervoet frequently takes time out from his busy schedule in the produce business to visit with young students.





Register Early to Begin Your Education Adventure

At the Welcome Center: Enroll your child and schedule a tour of your child's new school. During the tour, you and your child will:

- Visit Classrooms,
- Meet Teachers,
- Tour a School Bus, and
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Eligibility

Kindergarten: Child **must** be 5 years old before September 1, 2016.

Preschool: Child **must** be 4 years old before September 1, 2016.

March 1-31, 2016

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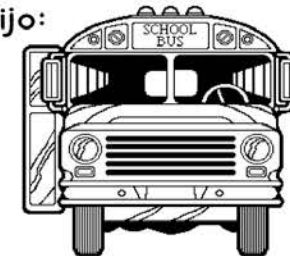
Parents Must Bring:

- *Original* Birth Certificate
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- Parent/Guardian Photo ID
- Proof of Address
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- Visitarán las aulas,
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- Recorrerán un camión escolar, y
- Recibirán una sorpresa con el "Boleto de Oro."



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Kinder: El niño **debe** tener los 5 años antes del 1 ro de septiembre del 2016.

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Marzo 1-31, 2016

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- Cartilla de Vacunación
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Welcome Center, Monday-Friday, 7:30am-3:30pm, De lunes a viernes
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Young students read to middle school buddies

By Tonya Yanez

Calabasas School

In the fall issue of this newsletter, we introduced the new R.E.A.D.S. (Reading, Excelling, Achieving, Developing, and Succeeding) program at Calabasas School, set up by Rebekah Cabrera, assistant principal for the elementary side of Calabasas PK8 School. The program is now under way and doing very well.

Students in grades 1-3 are selected for the program based on their MAP and DIBELS tests results. These students are paired with a seventh or eighth grade student to become reading buddies for the year.

READS takes place every Monday and Friday, 2 p.m. to 2:45 p.m. For the first 15 minutes, the elementary students check out new books, return books that they've read and receive their calendars signed by teachers and staff volunteers. At 2:15, the middle school students arrive during their SSR (sustained silent reading) class. During this time, more than 20 elementary students read with their responsible mentor.

"The students focus on reading skills and each mentor is trained to help the younger students with those skills," said Cabrera. In addition to reading at school, there is a home connection.

The elementary students are required to read 20 minutes with their parents at home each evening, including weekends.

"Students have a tote that includes books, sight words and phrase cards to practice, a folder with handouts such as a reading log, reading strategies, and word games to do at home with their parents," Cabrera said.

"As an incentive for reading each night, the students are able to pick a prize from the treasure box, but more importantly the students are gaining confidence in reading and improving their reading skills which will help them to be successful."



Photo by Tonya Yanez

Calabasas Assistant Principal Rebekah Cabrera introduces and hands out the new reading bags to the students and their reading buddy.

CONFERENCE

Continued from Page 1

Community Learning Centers (CCLC) to gather in one place. The agenda called for "an afternoon of connecting, collaborating, and creating programming best practices: a dynamic culture and environment; attracting and retaining teachers and students; meaningful and effective after school instruction; involving and engaging parents and community; and program organization, implementation, and record-keeping."

New and current grantees from schools in Southern Arizona and Arizona Department of Education representatives were welcomed by Superintendent David Verdugo. Attendees got an opportunity to ask



Photo by Margarita Nilsen

Conference participants in the CTMS conference await their tour of 21st Century classrooms already in session. Student tour guide Ezra Solis waits in the doorway to begin his escort.

questions, discuss implementation strategies, and brainstorm best practices for student, staff, parent, and community involvement.

They also visited both Coatimundi Middle School and Mountain

View Elementary to observe their effectively implemented programs in action. Program coordinators Lizzie Meneff, dean of students at Mountain View Elementary, and Ruchi Chhabra, site coordinator, 21st

CCLC, Coatimundi Middle School, showcased programs at their respective sites.

Both schools are currently in year four of the five-year federally-funded grant that provides funds for the before- and

after-school program, providing tutoring and homework help to all students who sign up. Students also participate in enrichment classes like chess, art, computers, robotics, cooking, cheerleading, sports

and career exploration workshops.

The program is sustained by a federal grant but aims at fostering stronger bonds with the community, sharing resources and building connections.

YEARBOOK

Continued from Page 1

But this year just having a better understanding of the deadlines and the stress that those create have made this year's class much better."

Not that Rendon stayed stuck in the past. "Our whole approach to this year's book is different," Rendon explains. "We are looking to make a book that is more inclusive of the whole school instead of being so senior-focused."

To that end, Rendon's photographic crew has been at every possible activity, trying to capture all of the excitement of a day in the life at RRHS. She even organized and photographed a group shot of the entire student body and staff on the iconic "ramps," a feat many thought would be impossible.

"We really want to make sure this yearbook shows how life is at our school this year, what everybody

is doing, and how every single student is an important part of each year, not only the seniors," said Rendon. "We want to show everyone's journey, and that's why 'Journey' is the theme for this year's book."

And what a journey it has been for those involved in its creation as well. Far from just taking pictures to be sent to a publisher, students in the yearbook class are responsible for the design of every page in the book, from start to finish.

"We get a blank page," Rendon explains, "and we have to decide everything about it. What will be on that page, what color should it be, what the main focus should be. It's a lot of work".

All that work is giving yearbook students direct, hands-on experiences that they will be able to take with them in their lives after RRHS.

Every student is involved in the many aspects of creating and funding the project, including photography, graphic design,



Photo by Kit Rendon

Shown here is a typical day for the Yearbook class that meets daily during fourth period.

interviewing, writing, networking and advertising. They spend countless hours both in and after school to make sure every teacher, staff member, and student is represented and included in the book, tracking students and staff down when needed.

They visit businesses to sell advertising and design graduation ads for parents. They go to games, to plays and band concerts, to festivals and activities and take pictures and notes.

They organize photo shoots for students and

families, students and cars, students living an everyday RRHS life.

In the space of seven short months, these dedicated students capture the memories that all of the students and staff of RRHS can have of their JOURNEY through the 2015-2016 school year.

With a copy deadline of March 7 looming, Rendon and her yearbook students are in the final stretch, and they are excited with what their product looks like.

"I think everyone will be really happy with the results," says Rendon.

"Our goal is to sell every copy we have, and once the students get a look at it, I know they're going to want one".

Yearbooks can be ordered from any yearbook class member or from Rendon any day during school, or can be ordered through the school's online ordering portal at jostensyearbooks.com. For businesses or parents interesting in supporting the yearbook, advertisements can still be purchased by contacting Kit Rendon at krendon@santacruz.k12.az.us.

SHADE

Continued from Page 1

"We've been focused on teaching our students the importance of sun safety," Principal Berenice Rodriguez said. "This shade structure really helps us attain the goal of being 'spot-free'."

While the structure came quickly in the end, it certainly didn't come easy. Installation is planned during Spring Break, March 7-11. The structure will be 50 feet by 45 feet with a 13 foot entry height and landscaping and trees are also planned around it.

The San Cayetano Booster Club sponsored a string of events to raise money for the structure, beginning in 2012. It rallied

parents and staff to restaurants, which donated a portion of the proceeds. The club also held fundraisers on campus, such as movie nights.

Other staff projects to raise money for shade included a video submitted to an American Academy of Dermatology contest. It didn't win, leaving about \$10,000 yet to be raised.

That's when second-grade teacher Stephanie Campbell noticed a grant being handed out by Lowe's. To win, a student's letter explaining why the school needed a shade structure was required.

The long-shot came in when Renteria wrote simply and from the heart two days before the Lowe's deadline. Included in her one-page essay:

"Arizona is one of the top places in the country

for cases of skin cancer. Most of our playground equipment is made with metal that can become really hot and cause injuries like blisters on our hands. San Cayetano is in a rural community and our budget is very small. We cannot afford the shade structure."

Within days, Renteria's letter was chosen as a finalist. Just making the top 10 wasn't enough, though. San Cayetano had to receive enough votes over five days on a Lowe's website to actually get the money.

After a voting frenzy on campus and in the community, Lowe's announced that Renteria's letter had won.

"I knew she could come through—she's sincere and a good writer. That's why I went to Sophia," said Campbell.



Photo by Mimi Renteria

Second graders, from left to right, Estrella Alcoverde, Kyara Valencia, Karla Bustamante and Alyson Dominge pose with Sophia Renteria (glasses) in celebration of being chosen for a large Lowe's grant.

Television news crews showed up for the shade structure celebration and

footage from the event aired on Tucson's ABC affiliate, KGUN9.

Positive parenting taught at family resource center

By Allyson Miller

Rio Rico Family Resource Center

“Actions speak louder than words.” We all know what this means but do you practice it with your children?

The Rio Rico Family Resource Center is offering a new series of classes that will highlight the ways in which the behaviors of children are shaped by the actions – not necessarily the words – of their most influential role model: their parents.

The Rio Rico Family Resource Center, administered by the University of Arizona Cooperative Extension in partnership with SCVUSD No. 35, provides free classes and activities for children and parents and builds a strong network of community partners.

Their new class for families with children aged 0-5 is “Abriendo Puertas/Opening Doors.” This interactive seminar series, the only evidence-based program of its kind for Latino families with children ages 0 to 5, addresses positive behavior management.

Today’s parents must adapt to a fast-paced lifestyle. In addition, many may not realize the effect that their personal upbringing now has on their own parenting style. This program gives parents and caregivers tools and strategies to develop strong values with their children.



Photo by Angie Yarbrough

Four mothers in the Abriendo Puertas class at the Rio Rico Family Resource Center try out various ‘personas’ of ways to manage a child’s behavior.

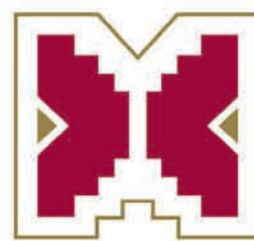
“Abriendo Puertas/Opening Doors” uses activities and scenarios to get parents thinking about how to effectively engage with their children. One notable hands-on activity allows participants, divided into groups, to draw from a fish bowl a realistic scenario of a child’s negative behavior.

From a screaming fit over ice cream to a tantrum over a stolen toy, participants are briefly transported to an imaginary – yet all too real – world of everyday parenting and tasked with solving the situation with positive discipline. Parents are encouraged to put themselves “in the shoes” of their child and are guided to respond in ways that reward good behavior, are consistent, provide options to the child, and offer alternatives to saying “no”.

This fish bowl activity, along with several others throughout the series, reveals that actions, as well as reactions,

really do speak louder than words. “Abriendo Puertas/Opening Doors” teaches parents how to be consistent with assertive – yet positive – tone, body language and reaction for a happier and more nourishing home environment and family life. The program is another important piece in the Rio Rico Family Resource Center’s continued commitment to creating a positive impact on youth, families and the community.

The Rio Rico Family Resource Center is located behind the library at the Garrett’s Shopping Center. Staff will be teaching “Abriendo Puertas/Opening Doors” as well as other classes and activities for both parents and children this spring. Free child care is available for attendees. For more information, call the Center at (520) 761-1135. The Family Resource Center Program is funded by First Things First.



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PRESIDENTIAL PREFERENCE ELECTION 2016

MARCH 22, 2016

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

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PLEASE CONTACT THE RECORDER'S OFFICE FOR MORE INFORMATION

Now through Friday - March 11, 2016: Request for Early Ballots Accepted

Request may be made in writing or verbally by contacting the Recorder's Office at (520) 375-7924.

Monday - February 22, 2016: Voter Registration Deadline

To register to vote, please visit the Santa Cruz County Recorder's Office or call (520) 375-7924 to request a voter registration form.

You may also register to vote online at servicearizona.com or co.santa-cruz.az.us/287/Recorder.

Qualifications to Vote: Be a United States citizen; a resident of Santa Cruz County at least 29 days prior to the Election Day; 18 years of age or more on or before Election Day; not convicted of a felony or treason, or your rights have been restored; not adjudicated to be an incapacitated person (A.R.S. 14-5101)

Wednesday - February 24, 2016 through Friday - March 18, 2016: Early Voting Available

Santa Cruz County Recorder, 2150 N. Congress Dr., Suite 101, Nogales, Arizona (Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. - 5 p.m.)

Early Ballots may be delivered to the Recorder's Office and any polling place until 7:00 p.m. on Election Day.

Monday - February 22, 2016:	Voter Registration Deadline
Friday - March 11, 2016:	Deadline to Request an Early Ballot by Mail
Friday - March 18, 2016:	Last day for Early Voting at the Recorder's Office
Tuesday - March 22, 2016	ELECTION DAY

ASSISTANCE TO VOTERS: If You Are Disabled or Ill, You May Request the Special Election Board by Contacting Our Office

MILITARY /U.S. CITIZENS LIVING OUTSIDE UNITED STATES: Information Available Online/Mail/Fax. Please Contact the Recorder's Office for More Information

SUZANNE "Suzie" Sainz
Santa Cruz County Recorder
2150 N. Congress Dr., Nogales, Arizona 85621
(520) 375-7990



ELECCION DE PREFERENCIA PRESIDENCIAL 2016

22 DE MARZO DEL 2016

CALENDARIO DE EVENTOS

SOLICITUD PARA REGISTRO PERMANENTE DE VOTO ANTICIPADO DISPONIBLE
POR FAVOR DE COMUNICARSE CON LA OFICINA DEL REGISTRO PÚBLICO PARA MAS INFORMACION

A partir de hoy hasta el Viernes, 11 de marzo del 2016: Se Acepta Solicitud de Boleta Electoral Anticipada
Las solicitudes deberán ser por escrito o verbalmente llamando a la Oficina del Registro Público al (520) 375-7924.

Lunes, 22 de febrero del 2016: Último día para Registrarse para Votar

Para registrarse para votar favor de pasar a la Oficina del Registro Público o llamar (520) 375-7924 para pedir la forma de registro de votante.

Puede también registrarse por medio de internet a: servicearizona.com o co.santa-cruz.az.us/287/Recorder.
Para requisitos o cualquier otra pregunta, por favor visitar el sitio web de la oficina o comunicarse a la oficina por teléfono

Requisitos para Votar: Ser ciudadano de los Estados Unidos; ser residente Del Condado de Santa Cruz por lo menos 29 días antes de la Elección; tener 18 años de edad el día o antes del Día de Elección; no haber sido convicto(a) de felonía o delito mayor o de traición, o que se la hayan reintegrado sus derechos; y que no se le haya declarado ser persona discapacitada (Estatuto 14-5101 de Arizona)

Miércoles, 24 de febrero del 2016 hasta el Viernes, 18 de marzo del 2016: Votación Anticipada Estará Disponible.

En la Oficina del Registro Público, 2150 N. Congress Dr., Suite 101, Nogales, Arizona (Lunes a Viernes, 8 a.m. - 5 p.m.)

Las boletas electorales anticipadas pueden entregarse en la oficina de Registro Publico y en cualquier casilla electoral hasta las 7:00 p.m. el día de la eleccion.

Lunes, 22 de febrero del 2016:	Último día para registrarse para votar
Viernes, 11 de marzo del 2016:	Último día para solicitar una Boleta Anticipada por Correo
Viernes, 18 de marzo del 2016:	Último día para Votar por Anticipado en la Oficina del Registro Público
Martes, 22 de marzo del 2016:	DIA DE LA ELECCIÓN

ASISTENCIA PARA VOTANTES: Si Usted Está Enfermo(a) o Incapacitado, Puede Solicitar al Consejo Electoral Llamando a la Oficina Del Registro Público.

MILITAR Y CIUDADANOS ESTADOUNIDENSES QUE VIVEN FUERA DE LOS ESTADOS UNIDOS: Información disponible en el Internet/Correspondencia/Fax. Por favor contacte a la Oficina del Registro Público para más información.

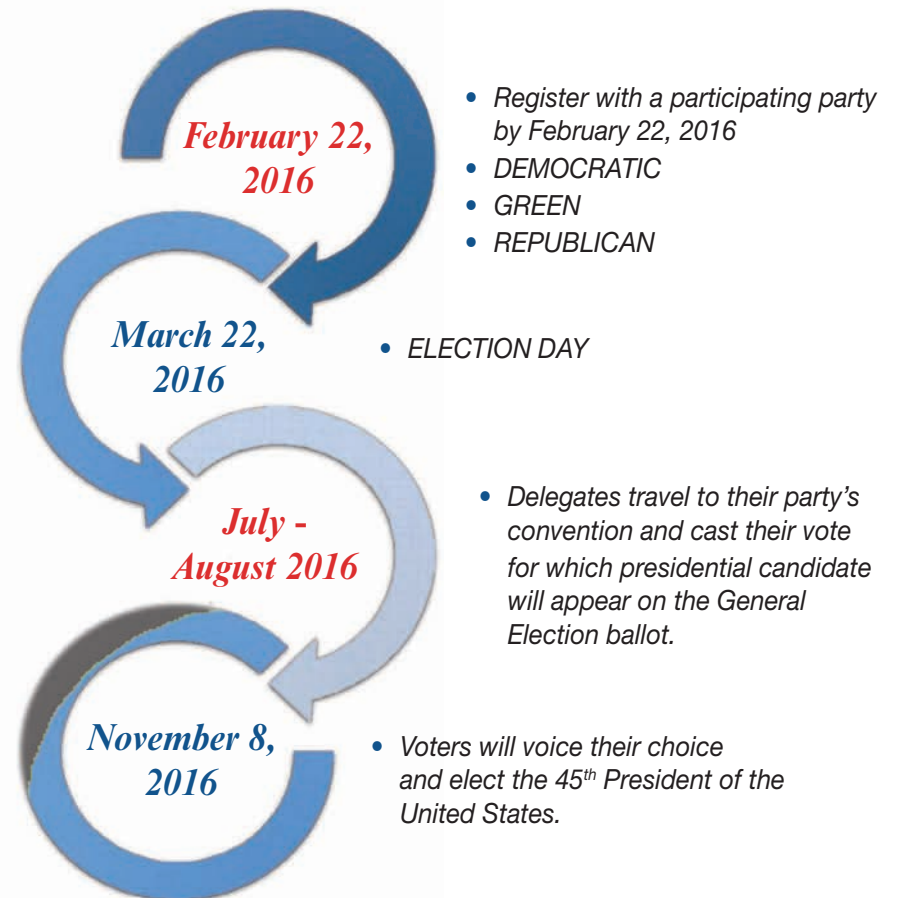
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HOW THE PRESIDENTIAL PREFERENCE ELECTION WORKS

It's Arizona's opportunity to vote and let their parties know who they prefer as their Presidential Candidate.

Rules for the Presidential Preference Election

- Only those voters who are registered as either Democratic, Republican, or Green Party are eligible to receive a ballot for this election.
- Those voters who are registered as Independent or Party Not Designated and want to participate in this election can choose to re-register to vote as either Republican, Democratic OR Green. This can be done either at servicearizona.com or by completing a paper voter registration form and returning it to our office. This must be completed by midnight on Monday, February 22, 2016.
- After Presidential Preference Election voters can change their registration back to Independent or Party not Designated by re-registering at servicearizona.com or co.santa-cruz.az.us/287/Recorder by completing a paper voter registration form and returning it to our office.



Suzanne "Suzie" Sainz
Santa Cruz County Recorder
2150 N. Congress Dr.,
Nogales, Arizona 85621

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