



The Springs at Santa Rita, 951 West Via Rio Fuerte, Green Valley, AZ 85614

**April 2026**

**Website:** [www.thespringshoa.org](http://www.thespringshoa.org)

**Chat email:** [thespringschat@gmail.com](mailto:thespringschat@gmail.com)

**Editor:** Eileen Owen

**The Chat** is a venue for the Springs HOA Board of Directors to communicate with the residents of the Springs, but more than that, the newsletter hopes to contribute to a sense of community camaraderie.

**Board of Directors :** **Bruce Grieshaber**, President; **Lynn Daniels-Anderson**, Vice President; **Cathy Roberts**, Secretary; **Sharon Toborg**, Treasurer; **Jim Clausen**, Grounds; **Victor Frankfather**, Infrastructure; **Rick Fillion**, ARC.

## APRIL CALENDAR

### **Apr 3 – Friday – Happy Hour** – Fiesta Deck 3-5 pm

Please bring your dinnerware, napkins, beverage, and a munchie to share. In the event of inclement weather we will meet in the Anza room. This will be the last happy until October.

### **Apr 14–Tuesday – HOA Board Meeting** – Anza Room- 2:00

Hybrid meeting. Zoom information will be included in the agenda.

### **Apr 16 – Thursday – Potluck** – Anza Room – 5:00 pm

Potlucks are open to residents, their guests, and renters. Please bring your dinnerware and beverage. In addition, bring a dish to share that will feed 8 people (also a name tag) If nuts or shellfish are in the dish, please make a small card stating that. Also if you make gluten free or vegan dishes, a sign is helpful. Food assignments for January.

Last name starting with A-F (salad)

Last name starting with G-O (main dish)

Last name starting with P-Z (dessert)



## Highlights From Your March 17, 2026 HOA Board Meeting

By Cathy Roberts

The meeting was held in the Anza Room following the hybrid format with 36 homeowners present. Roll was called and a quorum was established.

Board member reports were presented and can be found in their entirety on the HOA web site, [www.thespringshoa.org](http://www.thespringshoa.org) for your review. A brief synopsis follows.

- **President:** Bruce collaborated with VP, Lynn, to finalize and publish the job description for Office Manager. This position will be open in 2027 and is currently accepting applications. He attended the Picnic in the Park and the Volunteer Appreciation Party. He finalized a new contract with Republic Waste Removal for the next 5 years with an initial rate of \$18/month for one year. It will increase by 5% each year during the remainder of the contract. Once each year they will provide a roll-off dumpster for large items. As president of the Santa Rita Springs Master Association, Bruce worked with the secretary and treasurer to prioritize needs of the seven HOAs for 2026. He, along with our attorney, finalized the contract with Wyyerd Access. He also worked with the grounds crew and Perry Park Committee.
- **Vice President:** Lynn, along with Becky Meinking, continues her work with the ARC. The newly revised handbook is nearing publication. She worked alongside Bruce in the development of the new Republic Waste contract. She also provided direction to residents to get the best resolution to their landscaping/maintenance concerns. As coordinator of volunteers, Lynn offered her deep appreciation for those that handle our monthly events as well as those big annual events such as the garage sale and Volunteer Appreciation Party. Their efforts do not go unnoticed.
- **Treasurer:**
  - Checking/Savings Balance            2/28/2026        \$742,486.13
  - Reserve Fund/Savings                2/28/2026        \$597,627.89
  - Operating Fund Savings              2/28/2026        \$136,499.51
  - Operating Fund Checking             2/28/2026        \$ 8,358.73
- **ARC:** Rick provided an update from the Fall 2025 maintenance notices. There were 38 first notices mailed the first week of October and nine second notices. There were a total of eight completions. No weed/yard maintenance notices; just courtesy reminders. There were 11 requests received. The semi-annual inspection is scheduled for the last weekend in March. Early April is the target date for mailing letters.
- **Grounds:** Jim and his all volunteer crew have been extra busy keeping the grounds Firewise compliant. This is no easy task as the rains and mild winter have given renewed life to the shrubs and weeds. The battle of the buffel grass, along with other invasive species (fountain grass & stinknet, etc.) is ongoing. There were 146 volunteer hours logged in February with 26 cubic yards of debris removed. Smoke bombs were placed in squirrel holes in the common area behind Nardos. As the winter season draws to an end, the volunteer snowbirds will be returning to their summer homes, the crew will shrink dramatically. If you are a full time resident and are able, consider offering an hour or two each month to keep our community beautiful. Your fellow residents are very thankful for each volunteer and the value they bring to our

community. If you are interested in being a part of this crucial group, just drop an email to [grounds.thespringshoa@gmail.com](mailto:grounds.thespringshoa@gmail.com) or catch the crew when they are out in the neighborhood. Ladies and new members are always welcome.

- **Infrastructure:** Victor has completed and logged the AED inspections. There was a speed bump extension ordered and installed at the exit near the front gate at a cost of \$54. Golden Lynx had 10 sections of badly damaged sidewalk that required digging out and replacing at a cost of \$3,000. As part of the Perry Park renovation, four benches and five picnic tables were disassembled. All the pedestals were painted black. Two table tops and benches were refurbished while three sets had to be replaced. This was a big project and with the help of the Grounds Crew, it was accomplished at a cost of \$6,254. This is a beautiful area and hopefully, now that the work is completed, more will take advantage of outdoor time in the shade and grass. Especially as the temperatures rise. It's a very peaceful area.

**New Business** - Motions made and approved: Lynn Daniels-Anderson moved to accept the Wyverd Connect LLC and Affiliates Access Letter of Agreement as presented. Second by Rick Fillion.

Gene McGaughey, our representative at the monthly GVC meetings, shared a petition for the Arizona Legislators to address the current property fraud issues. He also reports that on April 18 starting at 8:00am, there will be a "shredding event" for documents and electronics at the Green Valley/Sahuarita Chamber of Commerce. And a reminder, if you are in need of a notary, this is a free service provided by the GVC. Just call for an appointment.

Bruce mentioned that several homeowners have experienced fraud recently when using unlicensed/unbonded contractors. He recommends, should you employ one, that you pay with cash and get written estimates and receipts.

Open forum included discussion regarding strategies for replanting, irrigation, and noise abatement in the common area adjacent to the frontage road. There are differing opinions on the need for irrigation, plantings, etc. It was determined that there needs to be more research done by the Board before making any decisions. The Master Plan is outdated and needs to be brought to current standards based on environmental issues, water availability, use of sustainable native plantings, and cost. As for the noise mitigation, Victor and Bruce, using a decibel meter, took measurements from several locations in the area of concern. There was minimal difference in variation from one spot to another. All fell within the level of 50-62 db which is typical of an urban residential area ([protoolreviews.com](http://protoolreviews.com)). More to come on this important issue.

### **Keeping Up-to-date with HOA Business**

If you are like me and don't attend many Board meetings, isn't it great to be able to read in well written, interesting format what went on at the last Board meeting? Cathy Roberts does an amazing job of this. As HOA Board secretary she takes minutes of the meetings and then above and beyond her official duties as secretary, she summarizes it for The Chat. She is one of the volunteers who regularly contribute articles for the newsletter and should be recognized for doing so. Thank you Cathy.

## Notes from Your ARC Chairman

### **AZ State external light restrictions refer to Dark Sky compliance.**

But what is Dark Sky? Dark sky compliant lighting refers to fixtures and installations that reduce light pollution and the visibility of light sky while still providing necessary environmental illumination for safety and security. Light pollution includes sky glow, glare and light trespass.

Dark sky compliant lighting core principles are 1) light should only be used where needed, 2) fixtures should direct light downward to prevent sky glow and minimize glare, 3) lights should be no brighter than necessary 4) lights should operate only when useful, and 5) warmer lights should be used to reduce disruption to wildlife and human sleep cycles. There is a helpful document on the HOA website which has illustrations and links. You will find it under the tab *Architectural Review* and then *Exterior Light Policy*

**Pima County Outdoor Lighting Code Title 15.12** requires that all exterior lighting be fully shielded meaning no light is emitted above the horizontal plane of the fixture, minimizing light pollution and trespass. Mercury vapor lamps are prohibited. Outdoor light output is limited based on specific zoning, floodlights/spotlights must be aimed no higher than the ground. Unnecessary security lights should be off from midnight to dawn. Pima County has stricter, lower total lumen limits based on proximity to observatories.

**The Springs HOA** enforces the State and County restrictions by having the ARC Committee approve or disapprove proposed installation or modification to all external lighting. The requirement for ARC approval is included in several of The Springs governing documents.

**The Springs CCR 4.7.1** mandates the ARC review and approve the plans and specifications showing the lighting.

**The Springs Handbook 3.5** mandates that all exterior lighting is to be approved by the ARC prior to installation. It shall be indirect and shielded to prevent spillover onto adjacent lots and streets. Exposed bulbs, spotlights, and reflectors are prohibited.

If a homeowner fails to receive ARC approval, they may inadvertently violate one or more of the State laws, County codes and/or Springs HOA governing documents. For example, a homeowner wants to add a string of lights to the crossbeam over the patio, requesting approval could result in an approval on condition that the lights be hung on the inside of the beam and the lights not be exposed from outside of the beam, because it is the law.

PLEASE ask before acting. --Rick Fillion

### **Wondering About Your Trash Bill?**

We have received comments from residents that their Republic trash bills have gone up by \$6-\$8 on their last quarterly bill. Today, March 9, we have signed a new 5-year contract with Republic that will take your quarterly bill back to \$54.00. This will be retroactive to March 1, 2026. There will be an annual 5% per year increase in years 2-5. It would have been a 7% annual increase if we had made a series of one-year contracts. Also, once a year they will

provide us with a large dumpster for a community waste dumping day free of charge. There will be more information on that to follow.

We think this provides some longer-term stability in pricing and an opportunity to have our residents get rid of some unwanted trash once a year.

On behalf of the Board, Bruce Grieshaber, President

## **Adopt A Plant**

Over the past 2 years, Springs Ground Crew volunteers have transplanted approximately 50 small agaves or cacti along the Nature Park trail, many near the decorative benches. The objective was to replace plants that have died and were removed, either from lack of rain or from disease. The transplants can be easily identified by an adjacent, miniature white flag. In addition, the new transplants are usually surrounded by small rocks. Like all transplants they need to be watered on a regular basis to get established. Once established, the transplants should be able to independently survive Southern Arizona conditions.

Many grounds crew volunteers are not here in the summer, which is when the new Nature Trail transplants, require moisture the most. As a result, many of the transplants don't survive our harsh summers and we stand to lose a large percentage of them.

Opinions vary regarding when to start watering an agave or cactus transplant. For one thing, their roots need time to heal over. So beginning in May, if you walk our Springs Nature Trail regularly, or even occasionally, and you carry a water bottle, please consider emptying any remaining water from your container onto one of the flagged transplants. You may even wish to adopt one that you consider a favorite. By doing this, you can play a key role in keeping our Nature Park looking beautiful.

--Lee Blahnik



## March Happy Hour

Another beautiful day in paradise as residents enjoyed meeting and greeting.



## Volunteer Appreciation Party



There was a large attendance at this annual party put on by the HOA Board of Directors for the many volunteers who donate their time to making things happen here in The Springs. The committee responsible for organizing the event included Vice President Lynn Daniels-Anderson, Karen Mitchell, Becky Meinking, Dawn Weber, Karen Kangas, and Beth Smith. Food and drinks were plentiful. President Bruce Grieshaber introduced the Chairpersons of the committees who in turn thanked their volunteers. Bruce and Becky keep things lively by introducing a couple of trivia games with candy as the prizes. Former resident but still a volunteer, Dan Ridder entertained the group with his guitar and vocals.

## Picnic in Perry Park



This was the last Picnic in the park for the season. The weather was perfect—warm and no wind. Thanks you Dave and Gloria for setting it up for us each month with hot coals and decorated tables. Special thanks to our former resident and super volunteer, Dan Ridder, for supplying great music for our enjoyment.

## What's New?

I am a walker here in the Springs and I noticed a couple of new benches. I asked the creator of all our beautiful benches, Judy Bierman, for some information about the two new unique benches.

The first one is located on Hero next to the mailboxes. It is Bench #49 (and yes, she had made and designed 48 other benches located throughout the Springs community and the nature trail). The materials for the top were bought by John and Karen Kangas. It is dedicated to Jim McGraw, their neighbor, who was a World War II veteran. Jim was a Purple Heart, Prisoner of War hero. He served as a tail gunner on a B-24 airplane and while stationed in Europe he was wounded, declined to be sidelined, then on a following mission his plane was shot down. He was captured and spent the remainder of the war (15 months) in Stalag Luft 1. Jim was a true example of The Greatest Generation. Jim was 103 when he passed last year and a Springs community member for 20+ years. He was a special man!



Bench #43 has quite a story and is located on the south side of the nature trail. It began as a bull petroglyph donated by Deb and Rick Fillion. Unfortunately it faded out in the AZ sun Judy didn't know what to do to fix it, so she decided to ask Jean Hanson to paint a beautiful AZ sunset picture over it which made it bench #43 B. That only lasted a couple of years before the paint peeled off even though it had sprayed it with several coats of some protective and UV spray.



Now, what to do!! She finally decided to tile over the area where the painting had been. The tile work became a tribute to six of the Bierman's friends who have passed on: Lynn and Del Mottaz, Scott Denzer, Leon (Doc) Hanson, Deb Studer, & Bob Bender. Now Judy calls it Bench #43 C.



Thank you Judy Bierman and your helpers for creating all those beautiful benches for us to admire and "rest a spell" while walking here in the Springs. A big thanks also to Judy's husband, Dick, and his friends for the heavy work lifting and placing the benches throughout the community.

(If anyone is wondering what happened to the bench that was previously by the mailboxes on Heroe, it now resides out on the nature trail.)



### Recent Home Sales (March)

Address	Sold To	Home Town
3717 S. Camino del Cefiro	James & Cynthia Lauffenberger	Green Valley, AZ
3665 S. Avenida de Encino	Charles & Nancy Knoeck	Wausau, WI
3977 S. Camino del Heroe	Cheri Lukas	Green Valley, AZ
3649 S. Calle Rambles	WC & Daria Blanton	Pequot Lakes, MN
3865 S. Camino del Golfista	Glenn & Diana Hamburger	Green Valley, AZ

## A Community Remembers a Hero

--article and photos by Bruce Grieshaber



On March 9, 2026, friends and neighbors of Edward James (Jimmy) McGraw gathered on his birthday to honor and remember a true American Hero. Jimmy lived, fittingly, on Camino del Heroe here in The Springs for more than 20 years. He passed away on February 7, 2025, just one month shy of his 104<sup>th</sup> birthday.

Jimmy was a decorated hero of WW II having earned the Purple Heart, POW Medal, and Bronze Star among others as a tail gunner on a B-24 bomber in the European Theater. On an early mission over France his protective canopy was shot off. He remained at his gun while the plane limped back to England. He suffered severe frost bite and other medical issues and was advised to return home. He refused and on his seventh mission his plane was shot down over Dieppe, France. He and his pilot were captured by German soldiers and taken to Stalag Luft 1, the most savage of POW camps. He was there 15 months before being liberated.

As part of the Greatest Generation, Jimmy has flown his final mission. His friends, led by John Kangas and Brian Watson, wanted to memorialize Jimmy's service to his country. They teamed up with The Springs resident Judy Bierman to design a bench to be placed a few steps from Jimmy's home. It was a perfect combination of John and Brian's love for their buddy and Judy's incredible talent in creating mosaic benches in The Springs (Jimmy's would be #49 for Judy). The Springs is grateful to them for their amazing efforts.

Please take a stroll down Camino del Heroe (Way of the Hero) and stop by Jimmy's bench next to the mailboxes. Take in the artifacts Judy incorporated in the design and maybe whisper a thank you and well done to our true American Hero.



Brian and John



Friends gathering for remembrance



Bench creator, Judy

## Feathered Gifts of the Santa Rita Mountains

--article and photos by Gary Moe



Little did I know when first visiting Green Valley that I would find as much outdoor recreation as it offers. For me, the Santa Rita mountains and the Coronado National Forest were a real gift. I have hiked 350 miles with the Green Valley Recreation club, and have probably come close to that many miles hunting the mystical Mearns Quail with Heidi my German Pointer hunting dog.

Many in the Springs HOA have seen the Gambels quail. I suspect most have not seen or even know about the Mearns quail, also referred to as Montezuma quail.

Our Springs HOA sits at about 3000 ft elevation and to our east Mount Wrightson tops out at 9500 ft. Half way up these mountain slopes you find live oaks, alligator junipers, red bark manzanitas, and rocky draws which become home to the Mearns quail. Beneath the shade of these ancient trees the birds dig and scratch for wood sorrel (oxalis), and nutsedge. They have elongated toes which allow them to dig for these ground tubers.



The Mearns quail need the summer monsoons to bring on green growth and insects to support their early autumn brood hatch. As we know, our monsoons have not been normal the last 3 years and as such the Mearns quail are at a low population at present. My last good year of hunting Mearns quail was the winter of 2023 since we had two good monsoon years in summers of 2021 and 2022.

Mostly during the last 3 years I watch my dog Heidi point the birds and let them fly away for conservation of the species. This year with the very low bird numbers I went out 4 times to search for Mearns and did not carry a gun.

The Mearns quail are usually found between 4000 to 5500 ft elevation in the steep tree covered mountain slopes. Thus, good hunting dogs are usually out of sight. Most quail hunters will use pointing dogs that will point the quail covey and not flush them until the handler arrives to flush the birds. I use a GPS collar that is attached to Heidi with a

signal transmitter I carry on me. When Heidi goes on point, I get a signal on my transmitter giving me the distance she is from me and the direction. Hunting dogs will check back from time to time to their handler so the dog and hunter traverse the terrain as a team. A good dog will be searching for birds quite a distance from the handler since the hard search of the dog covering ground is what finds quail coveys. Heidi's farthest find on a covey was 276 yards from myself. It was steep country and rocky which took us about 10-15 minutes to get to her at 5400 ft elevation. My friend Don took 1 bird out of the covey that day. We let the rest fly for conservation purposes. Heidi's highest elevation find on Mearns quail was at 5800 ft, 215 yards from where I stood. Of course, straight up a steep mountain slope covered with oaks and junipers. It was a covey of about 15 birds and my friend Ugo and I each harvested 1 bird.

Hopefully this gives readers a glimpse into the haunts of Mearns quail in the Arizona mountains. --Gary Moe

### **"Winter Visitors" aka "Snowbirds" Check List**

It's that time of year when our winter visitors prepare to leave us. Pima county allows you request a sewer fee vacant rate for the months you are away from Green Valley. There is still a fee but it is lower than regular billing. You will need your account number from your billing record. You will also need the dates for when you are leaving and when you will be returning. [Www.pima.gov](http://www.pima.gov) In the search box, key in "suspend sewer" and hit enter. Look for sewer billing suspension, click on that link and complete the form, or call phone: 520-724-6609.

Donate non perishable items left in your fridge or pantry to the Green Valley Food Bank.

Make sure the HOA Office has your summer contact phone number as well as the phone number of your property manager while you are gone. When an emergency occurs these numbers are important. The Sheriff's Auxiliary Volunteers (SAV) will check the outside of your home while you are gone. There is no cost for this service. Phone 520-351-6744.

Jeannie tries to keep the website resident directory up-to-date. If you have previously had a land line phone and canceled it, please let her know so she can delete it. Also, if you are using a cell phone only, please make sure the number is correct. Send corrections to Jeannie at [hoa@thespringshoa.org](mailto:hoa@thespringshoa.org) or drop a note in the HOA box at the entrance.

Safe travels back to your other home. We will miss you.

## **Texas Rangers – Versatile and Beautiful**

--Article and photos by George Anderson

Texas Ranger (Sage) thrives in full sun, which makes them ideal for our Sonoran Desert environment. They need minimal water once they are established. They present a beautiful and vibrant purple flower after rains.

Speaking of their versatility, in their natural form the Texas Ranger Sage stands tall and can, to some, appear rangy. This look causes some residents to lean toward wanting to see them shaped into round ball-like hedges. This is how the Texas Rangers in The Springs have been shaped for many years.

Once shaped in this manner the internal branches no longer produce leaves and their typical vibrant blooms only appear on the outside edges of the plant rather than being present along the entire length of each branch. The interior of the plant basically dies.

The Ground Landscape Crew is beginning to look at each of the Texas Rangers in the various common grounds of The Springs and assess if a rejuvenation pruning is appropriate for them. This rejuvenation pruning will result in a large portion of the plant being cut back after which the versatility of the Texas Ranger will kick-in and it will regrow from its base and it's natural shape will return.

Our goal is to keep our many Texas Ranger plants healthy and showing their beautiful flowers for many years to come.

A healthy, natural Texas Ranger (Sage)



## Texas Rangers at HOA Office: Before and after rejuvenation pruning



## Typical shaped Texas Ranger in The Springs



## **Perry Park Renovation Project: - March 2026**

Our subcommittee did not meet this month due to an unforeseen situation for our committee chair.

Our focus when we reconvene in April will be on the beginnings phases of reimagining and designing the planting areas around the perimeter of Perry Park. We are assessing the existing drip irrigation system that feeds these areas and looking toward creating a visually interesting and beautiful boundary for the park.

Remember that *Perry Park* can be reserved by residents for personal events, parties, and other social occasions. It is a beautiful and peaceful place to enjoy. The reservation form can be found on the HOA website [www.thespringshoa.org](http://www.thespringshoa.org) Look for the tab Grounds Committee, then Perry Park Reservation Forms. --George Anderson

## **Thank you**

Thanks to residents who contributed articles to the Chat this month.