



# EMPIRE RANCH FOUNDATION NEWS

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[www.empireranchfoundation.org](http://www.empireranchfoundation.org)



Mustang Mountains seen beyond the restored Stone Corral; Victorian Addition west view (photos: TuleReed.com Photography (left), Sherry Blanchard Stuart (right))



## Make Our Second Decade Even Better than the First!

### Message from the President

This is the 10th anniversary of the Empire Ranch Foundation! Start the celebration with a quick look back. An article in this issue summarizes work done with your membership and volunteer support (see p.2).

In partnership with the BLM we have halted the serious deterioration of the ranch buildings and provided the foundations to build upon for the future. Your support was essential to completing this work!

During our 10th anniversary year significant improvements will be completed. These include a new potable water system, permanent restrooms, a heritage trail marking important features of the Ranch, and repairs to the Victorian Addition's west wall foundations and interior (see p. 4). Our expanded educational programs will introduce even more children to their Western heritage (see p. 3), and our growing history program will document and preserve the Empire Ranch's past.

Our second decade starts with a big challenge. Our expected multi-million dol-

lar funding from the BLM for large restoration projects is not coming anytime soon, and other BLM funds will be very limited. Saving and restoring this very special, magical place—a time capsule of Arizona's history—now falls on us, not someone else, not somewhere else, not some other time!

And so we need your help even more. Not only do we have buildings and corrals to restore, but we have stories to tell our next generations: stories of cowboys and Indians, of ranchers and sheep herders, of miners and homesteaders and their families, of antelope and mountain lions, of singing coyotes and hooting owls, of vermilion flycatchers and red-tailed hawks.

When you renew your membership, please consider increasing your support, ideally to next higher membership level.

Consider also volunteering your time and effort while enjoying the beauty and serenity of the ranch. Be part of a new chapter in the story of the Empire Ranch!

*Laurel Wilkening, President  
Empire Ranch Foundation*

## Empire 100 Art Show in Two Words: “Record Breaking”

Empire 100 volunteers were delighted with the results of the 2007 Art Show at Northern Trust Bank. The yield was the record-breaking most in every category since the beginning of the art shows: the largest number of artists participating, the most art sold (51 paintings and 3 sculptures); the highest gross earnings for art sales (\$73,185), and record breaking earnings from artists' contributions (\$18,296) for the Empire Ranch Foundation.

Santos Barbosa, the signature artist for 2007, could do nothing wrong. Every piece of his art sold. He even had a patron follow him from the parking lot into Northern Trust to buy a painting that he was merely carrying in to show Bruce Andre, the musician at the first reception.

Bernie Fierro walked off with the People's Choice Award for his large, humorous painting of a pack of cowdogs in the back of a pick-up truck. Many paintings featured images from the Artist Shootout photo shoot at the Empire Ranch last spring. It was exciting to see art buyers trickle into Northern Trust throughout the six-week exhibition, as increasing red dots indicated continuing sales.

With this memorable success, anticipation is high that next year's show will be even better. How could it not be? Buck McCain will be the signature artist!



*Published by the Empire Ranch Foundation, a not-for-profit organization, in cooperation with the Bureau of Land Management. The purpose of the Foundation is to protect, restore, and sustain the Empire Ranch historical buildings and landscape as an outstanding western heritage and education center. Donations to the Foundation may be sent to: P.O. Box 842, Sonoita, AZ 85637-0842.*

# Look at All We've Accomplished!

In 1997 the articles of incorporation for the Empire Ranch Foundation (ERF) were approved, marking the first official step in the creation of a dynamic volunteer 501(c)(3) charitable organization. Working in partnership with BLM, ERF's mission is dedicated to protecting, restoring, and sustaining the Empire Ranch historical buildings and landscape as an outstanding western heritage and education center.

Below are highlights of accomplishments during the past ten years, and descriptions of those planned for 2007 are throughout this issue. Look for more articles about these projects and activities in future newsletters as we begin a year-long celebration of ERF's 10th anniversary.

- 1997** • Empire Ranch Foundation incorporated
- 1998** • Pro Neighborhood grant awarded to conduct and transcribe oral histories
  - ERF bylaws approved
- 1999** • Save American's Treasures \$95,000 matching grant awarded to stabilize the Empire Ranch house
  - First annual Empire Ranch Roundup Open House
- 2000** • First issue of quarterly ERF Newsletter
  - Restoration and repair of windows, lintels, and doors completed
  - Matching grant's \$95,000 fundraising target successfully met
- 2001** • Action Plan approved for *Completing Stabilization and Repair of the Roof, Drainage, and Foundation Systems at the Empire Ranch House*
  - First Spring Trail Ride & BBQ
  - ERF website launched
  - Adobe Haybarn emergency drainage project completed
  - First Western Art Show and Sale
  - Emergency stabilization of Ranch House chimneys completed
  - First preservation contract awarded to Statistical Research, Inc.
- 2002** • Removal of contaminated soil above ceilings of Empire Ranch House
  - Stabilization and repair of the roof, drainage, and foundation systems at the Empire Ranch House completed
  - Emergency shoring of the Adobe Haybarn walls completed
  - Repairs and restoration of the Stone Corral completed
  - Ranch house windmill repairs completed
  - Overhead electrical lines relocation underground completed
- 2003** • First annual Empire 100 art show
  - Phase I of emergency repairs to Ranch Hand's house completed
  - Phase I of emergency repairs to Adobe Haybarn completed
  - First members' potluck lunch
- 2004** • First "Legacy Day" educational program for middle school students
  - Adaptive-Reuse Plan for the Empire Ranch Headquarters approved.
  - Southwest Foundation for Education and Historical Preservation grant awarded for preservation of the Adobe Haybarn
  - Phase 2 of emergency repairs to Adobe Haybarn completed
- 2005** • Emergency repairs to the northeast corner of the Adobe Haybarn completed
  - First Artist Shootout photo shoot
- 2006** • Phase 1 and 2 stabilization and roof repairs to South Barn completed
  - Phase 1 emergency repairs to Victorian west gable and wall completed





Hands on the Land

## New Summer Program at the Empire Ranch

"Wild about the Grasslands!" a summer day camp will teach students grades six through eight all about the ecology of the rangelands. This exciting summer program is part of Hands on the Land, a nationwide cooperative network of field classrooms designed to enhance students' environmental education. Funded by a grant from the Bureau of Land Management, the program is the second in a series of programs initiated by ERF as part of its commitment to youth education.

During the week of June 11-15, students will play the role of "naturalists" as they work with conservation scientists and rangeland managers to monitor vegetation and wildlife unique to the Sonoita Valley Grasslands. Regional artists will engage students in the creation of artworks inspired by nature. Participants will explore nature trails, track wildlife, learn high tech outdoor navigation skills, and play outdoor adventure games.

The concept of preservation while assessing the importance of protecting, restoring, and sustaining the historical buildings and landscapes of the Empire Ranch will also be introduced.

Board Member Dick Schorr is now joined by Gail Corkill, who will develop the Hands on the Land curriculum, direct the program, and design a program continuation plan. Gail, who holds a Doctorate of Education from the University of Arizona, has lived with her family in Elgin for the past 10 years.

To register for the day camp or obtain additional information, please call 888-364-2829 or email :

[empireranchfoundation@yahoo.com](mailto:empireranchfoundation@yahoo.com).

To view the latest happenings at the Empire Ranch program site please go to [www.handsontheland.org](http://www.handsontheland.org).



## Legacy Day 2007

On Wednesday May 2nd Elgin Middle School students will be stepping back at least 50 years into the past to participate in live frontier territory living! The planned activities include:

•**Retaque corral fence building**—imagine building a corral to hold wild cattle and horses when no nails or boards were available. Students will participate in an exciting project to build a retaque fence using mesquite wood harvested from Las Cienegas National Conservation Area.

•**Wool spinning**—few machines were available out in these parts. Sheep were kept to provide wool for clothing, to graze around the homestead, and to provide food for the cowboys' families. Sheep also helped to spread sacaton grasses by soil penetration of their small, sharp hooves.

•**Cow survival on the Arizona range**—learning to find and identify edible plants will be a challenge for the students.

•**Rawhide rope making**—how did the vaqueros or for that matter, the nomads of 1000 years ago, restrain the wild horse, cow or even reindeer? There may be some sore hands by the end of the day.

•**Dutch oven cooking**—eat like the cowboys—tortillas, beans and carne machaca for the hard-working "pioneers".

We look forward to a wonderful and an educational day for these 50 or 60 young citizens of tomorrow.

## A Call for Volunteers

The Empire Ranch Foundation and BLM are seeking individuals and groups for "hands-on" support of preservation and interpretation work at the Ranch.

As we look to stretch our preservation dollars, there are numerous tasks that can be undertaken by willing volunteers, with direction and training from Foundation, agency, and contract experts. Some of this work will involve regular upkeep of the Ranch House and grounds for visitors and special events; other tasks include projects proposed at a recent ERF/BLM planning session. Many people have expressed a desire to take part in hands-on volunteer efforts. Projects include:

- Collect and prepare wood for retaque fence construction
- Move materials stored in the Mechanic's Shop to enable roof repair (see p. 4)
- Paint the exterior of the Children's Addition
- Repair and restore corral fences & gates
- Develop and implement a landscaping plan for the headquarters complex
- Clean Ranch House floors and windows to prepare for tours, special events, and regular public visitation

The first volunteer work day is scheduled for Saturday, April 21, starting at 8:00 am at the ranch.

Subsequent work days are planned for the third Saturday of each alternate month (June, August, October, etc.). The frequency of work days and scope of projects depends on the interest and enthusiasm of volunteers. So c'mon out, lend a hand and bring some ideas!

For more information, contact the Empire Ranch Foundation, 888-364-2829 or [admin@empireranchfoundation.org](mailto:admin@empireranchfoundation.org).



## Join Us on September 29th for the Best Roundup Yet!

"Children of the West: Growing up on the Empire Ranch" is the theme for this year's annual Roundup Open House at the Empire Ranch, Saturday, September 29, 2007, from 9:00am to 3:00pm. We'll have lots about kids and ranching, as well as western demonstrations, wagon rides, kid's corral for little ones, guided tours of historic buildings, educational activities & exhibits, arena events, musical entertainment, great food—the works! Mark your calendar—it's a great event for the whole family.



## Preservation and Restoration Plans

The Foundation has recently finalized a renewed long-term agreement with historic preservation contractor Statistical Research, Inc. (SRI). SRI and its subcontractor Means Design & Building Corporation, will now continue to be "on call" to perform historic preservation repairs and restoration work at the ranch headquarters, as soon as necessary funding is raised. Both organizations are nationally recognized specialists in the field.

As reported previously, remaining repairs to mend cracks and failing foundations in the Victorian Addition's west wall and gable are a top priority, at an estimated cost of nearly \$38,000. With the help of a 50% cost-share grant from the BLM, we planned to undertake the job this spring. However, the recent loss of the roof of the Mechanic's Shop during a wind storm (see photo) will require immediate attention and may affect plans.

Another priority is removal of old carpeting in the Victorian Addition, which is complicated by need for special handling of potentially hazardous asbestos tiles now beneath some carpeting.

Our next priority is repair of interior wall surfaces in the Victorian Addition, and adding electrical wiring and outlets to improve usability for public and educational functions.

These and other specialized or large scale projects will require significant funding resources. Thus your donations in the current Membership Drive are very important. In addition, we're planning numerous nonspecialist repairs and improve-



Recent wind damage to Mechanic's Shop (photo: BLM)

ments. For these we'll be actively seeking help from volunteers, young and old, skilled and unskilled (see article, p. 3).

## Administrative News

The Empire Ranch Foundation is pleased to welcome Christine Auerbach as its new administrator. Christine is the former project manager for the Tucson Arizona Boys Chorus where, for the past eight years, she worked in development, fundraising, and project management. She is also the former editor of several scientific and professional publications. She brings to the Foundation a wealth of experience in administration and marketing. A graduate of the University of Arizona, Christine resides in Tucson with her husband Gary and son Michael. Her two older children, David and Lauren, now live in Brooklyn, New York.

We would like to bid a fond farewell to Karla Cafarelli, who served as administrator from June through December 2006. Karla's enthusiasm, dedication and talent greatly assisted the Foundation in its long-term mission to preserve the Empire Ranch for future generations. Karla plans to remain active as an ERF volunteer.

## Ranch History Sources

For ranch history we recommend:

• *The Empire Ranch House: A Brief History* (Sept. 2006) for an overview of the development of the ranch house and its owners from 1876 to the present.

• *Rooms of the Empire Ranch House: Past Uses, Future Plans, and Progress* (as of Summer 2006) summarizing the time of origin and past names and uses of each room in the ranch house, plans for their restoration and use, and progress so far.

Download them from our website [www.empireranchfoundation.org](http://www.empireranchfoundation.org), or request printed copies by phone or mail (for contact information, see p. 1).

## Working Calendar

### May

2 "Legacy Day" student education day at the Empire Ranch

19 ERF Board Meeting

### June

11-15 "Wild About the Grasslands", 10am-3pm day camp for children who've finished grades 5, 6, or 7

16 Volunteer work day at the Empire Ranch

### July

21 ERF Board Meeting

### August

18 Volunteer work day at the Empire Ranch

### September

15 ERF Board Meeting

29 2007 Roundup Open House: "Children of the West: Growing up on the Empire Ranch," 9am-3pm

## 2007/2008 Membership Reply

*Yes, I want to help save the Empire Ranch for future generations!*

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Please enter name(s) in your preferred format for acknowledgments.)

Street/P.O. Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, ZIP : \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Check enclosed     MasterCard     Visa Card     This is a new address

\_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_  
Card Number                      Exp.Date.                      Signature

This donation is also in \_\_\_memory/\_\_\_appreciation of \_\_\_\_\_

This is a gift membership from: \_\_\_\_\_

## EMPIRE RANCH FOUNDATION

- \$25 Homesteader
- \$50 Total Wreck Miner
- \$100 Wrangler
- \$250 Vaquero
- \$500 Jefe
- \$1,000 Patron
- \$5,000 Cattle Baron
- \$10,000 Territorial Governor
- \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Year-end Gift
- \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Other

**Please Mail To: Empire Ranch Foundation, P.O. Box 842, Sonoita, AZ 85637**

The Empire Ranch Foundation has an IRS 501(c)(3) non-profit classification; donations are tax-deductible as allowed by law.

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