



# EMPIRE RANCH FOUNDATION NEWS

P.O. Box 842 • Sonoita, Arizona 85637-0842

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

*From the Headquarters:*

## Let's Roll!!

"Let's Roll" are the words resounding through America to inspire unity and action, and rolling we are at the Empire Ranch! Rolling on and rolling back the ravages of time. We are inspired by the most significant preservation contract awarded since the inception of the Empire Ranch Foundation—nearly \$230,000 to Statistical Research, Inc. (SRI) of Tucson.

If you have been out to the headquarters of the Empire Ranch lately, you have seen people in *action*. Historic preservationists are strengthening critical foundation elements and tying down the entire roof on the main house. (There is evidence that a section of the roof actually lifted from the walls in the past and redeposited itself horizontally about a foot off center.)

When the work is done, the buildings will retain their historic appearance but will provide strong underpinnings needed to transform the historic ranch house into an exciting educational site for young and old.

It has taken five years to perform necessary technical and historic assessments, obtain plan approvals, and assemble the funds to bring about the dramatic progress now occurring. For that we thank all of you and our partner, the Bureau of Land Management (BLM).

Energized and encouraged, the Empire Ranch Foundation has ambitious goals for 2002, which include:

- Planning the adaptive reuse of the headquarters buildings and ranch house rooms. Knowing precisely the way the rooms eventually will be used prepares for the next exciting restoration phase. The



*Francisco Montano of Means Design and Building Corp. hand casts replacement adobe for ranch house.  
(Photo: M. Witkind)*

public as well as the ERF and BLM will participate in the planning process.

- Pursuing grants and expanding membership to secure financing to complete stabilization and start restoration.
- Strengthening our volunteer program to facilitate broader volunteer participation in special events, educational program development, house tours, and building preservation and maintenance.

The Empire Ranch will be a busy place in 2002. Preservation construction will be ongoing. Guided trail rides are planned for May 4. The Roundup, continuing with the theme of Generations of the Empire, is scheduled for September 14. Western art shows and sales are planned for the Roundup and as a separate show in Tucson in the Spring of 2003.

Join the excitement on the Empire Ranch. Work and play with us; share your energy and resources. We have embarked on a long journey, but traveling the trail with friends lightens the load. One day we will all celebrate the creation of a beautiful

tribute to this heritage that we cherish. Together, *Let's Roll!!*

*Marion Hyland  
President, Empire Ranch Foundation*

## **Saddle Up! Our Ponies or Yours!**

**May 4**  
join us for another great  
**Empire Ranch  
Trail Ride & Barbecue.**

See full article on page 5,  
and make your reservations!

Sign-up deadline is April 22.

## NCA Dedication Celebrates Partners

Local supporters and Washington dignitaries joined together at the Empire Ranch on October 27, 2001, for the official dedication of the Las Cienegas National Conservation Area (NCA).

Enactment in December 2000 of H.R. 2941 to establish Las Cienegas NCA reflected a groundswell of public support from grassroots organizations and local individuals. The legislation, sponsored by Congressman Jim Kolbe, protects all of the 42,000 acres of the Empire Ranch within a larger regionally significant area extending south of Interstate 10 to protected lands of northern Sonora, Mexico.

Its broader purpose is to protect the watersheds, wildlife corridor, and open spaces of the region. Its provisions work toward the achieving desires of the Empire Ranch Foundation and other organizations to protect the visual landscape surrounding the headquarters and to preserve modern ranching techniques compatible with other responsible land use and conservation.

A number of the more than 30 supporting partner organizations for the NCA prepared informational booths for the event. These included: Audubon Society, Empire Ranch Foundation, Sonoran/Rincon Institute, Arizona Dept. of Water Resources, Sky Island Alliance, University of Arizona, and Sonoita Crossroads Community Forum.

The public enjoyed tours of the Empire Ranch House Headquarters given by Gerald Korte, foreman of the Empire during the Boice era. Mac Donaldson, lease holder on the Empire since 1975, gave

ranch tours that included state of the art range management philosophy.

The theme of the program was "The Partnership Connection" in which the Bureau of Land Management, responsible for NCA administration, honored all of the friends of the project. Congressman Jim Kolbe spoke to the audience who gathered under a large tent after enjoying lunch provided by the partners. He was followed by other speakers. Local young vocalist, Laura Wenzel of Patagonia High School, led singing of the national anthem and *America the Beautiful*. The colors were presented and retired by Boy Scout Troop 525 of Sonoita-Elgin. It was an American Day!



*Among the BLM representatives were BLM State Dir. Denise Meredith, Tucson Field Office Mgr. Shela McFarlin, and Asst. Dir. for Natl. Landscape Conservation System Elaine Marquis-Brong.*



*Above: Guided tours included explanations of stabilization needs of the Stone Corral.*



*Left: Visitors browsed the Foundation's and other partner organizations' exhibits in the exhibit tent. (Photos: BLM)*

## Reflections From Fifty Years Ago...



My brother Wag and I drove my father Wagner Schorr (Wag) to check on the progress of the preservation work at the Empire Ranch Headquarters last Fall. In wandering through the main residence we were noting the reinforcements in place in each room, the newly re-worked doors, and the general condition of the home.

Dad pointed with his cane to areas in the home that he and my mother Marie remembered. Frank and Mary Boice as well as my parents were living in an era of close-community activity. Ranchers depended on each other in their daily lives. In this period of time before public electricity, telephones and television, neighbors relied on each other whether it was for gathering cattle, for family illness or tragedy, or for social interaction. Ranch families especially enjoyed the Elgin Community Club dances, the plays, and potluck socials.

One special social event was the New Year's Eve parties at the Empire Ranch put on by the Frank Boices. Friends from all over Pima and Santa Cruz Counties would be there. Mom would describe the big roast of beef and all the other holiday foods that were there. Many memories like these are shared by the old timers that lived during the era.

The History Committee of the Empire Ranch Foundation is at work documenting past events and activities that occurred during this time lest we all forget to tell our children about this rich heritage. We invite our readers to take a moment to write down stories remembered that may be of interest for our research.

*Dick Schorr, Tucson AZ*

*[Editor's note: Wag Schorr was a true generation of the Empire who passed away in December 2001. Photo shows Dick and Wag, Whetstone Mtns in background, Dec. 1978.]*



*K. Hapton and M. Carbone of Means Design at work bracing and anchoring the roof above Victorian Addition living room.*

*Foreman J. Barnett, architect B. Vint, ERF's S. Leidner, and E. Means inspect underpinning of bedroom foundation. (Photos: SRI)*

## Action Plan Repairs 60% Complete at Year End

Preservation projects at the Empire came a long way between October and December 2001. In mid-October, the Foundation gave “notice to proceed” on the *Action Plan* portion of a long-term preservation contract awarded Statistical Research Inc. (SRI). At least 60% of the work had to be completed by the end of 2001 in order to meet Millennium Grant requirements.

This work, costing nearly \$230K, executes key stabilization measures recommended in the *Action Plan* for roof, drainage, and foundation systems at the Empire Ranch House. Stabilization includes repairs and preventive measures to ensure that the building is safe and does not collapse. The *Action Plan* report was completed and approved in 2001.

While SRI and the Foundation finalized the contract, SRI's subcontractor, Means Design and Building Corp., mobilized its work force. The crew set up scaffolding, assembled materials, and painted new lumber for roof repairs. The BLM brought in hazardous materials removal contractors on short notice to vacuum attic crawl spaces that still contained earth potentially contaminated with biohazards such as rodent, bird, and bat droppings.

Meanwhile, Means Design installed or adjusted shoring, removed plaster, and excavated areas adjacent to the foundations requiring repairs. An archaeological monitor oversaw all digging (in a future issue we'll tell you about some of the finds!).

Before actual work began, well-known

preservationist and structural engineer Melvyn Green visited the ranch to review and comment on the proposed repairs, particularly those to the roof system.

Roof structure repairs focused on installing new rafters, cripple studs, roof anchors, headers around chimneys, and diagonal and end-wall braces. These tasks, requiring close work in very cramped spaces, strengthened and anchored roofs that have been stressed and shifted by spreading walls, over-spanned rafters, and crumbling supports.

Foundation and associated wall repairs included underpinning failing foundations under the south walls of the Victorian Addition and the west walls of the rooms west of the zaguan in the rear addition.

Underpinning involves working in sections, with each section completed before the next is removed. Workers excavate to the base of the foundation, remove rotten adobes and replace them with new foundation materials, repair a small portion of the adobe wall associated with the foundation, and apply a lime wash to the new surface.

Architect Bob Vint periodically inspected in-process work to ensure that it had been completed according to *Action Plan* specifications. These inspections also included the ERF executive director, BLM staff, and Means Design representatives.

We invite you to come and “inspect” the ongoing repairs as we continue the process of piecing the past back together.

## The Adobe Story



*J. Egurrola and F. Montano of Means Design fill an adobe form. (Photo: SRI)*

During the preservation process, many activities have been occurring simultaneously. Advance manufacture of replacement adobes was a key task. Appropriate nearby soils had to be located to use in casting the new adobe bricks. Historically, soils for making adobe tended to be located near the construction site. Eventually, an area was located northeast of the ranch house that could be quarried for appropriate soils. After extensive testing of soils from the site and of historical adobes to be replaced, the site was approved.

Large quantities of soil were excavated and transported to a work area near the ranch house; potentially damaging salts were leached from the soil; and adobe forms were constructed. The adobes were then cast and quickly covered to prevent them from cracking.



## Foundation Board Elects New Officers

At the November 17 Empire Ranch Foundation Board of Directors meeting and annual election, the following officers were unanimously elected to one-year terms:

*President*—Marion Hyland, of Sonoita AZ. A board member since 1997, Marion is our previous board Vice President, and has managed the Foundation's highly successful Western Art Shows. Her background is in children's education.

*Vice President*—Laurel Wilkening, of Elgin AZ. A board member since 1998, Laurel is our previous board Secretary, and managed the Empire Ranch Fall Roundup in 2000. Her background is in higher education.

*Treasurer*—Susan M. McDonald, of Sonoita AZ. A board member since 2001, Susan has been particularly involved in publicity and fundraising. She is active in the Sonoita business community.

*Secretary*—Billie Donaldson, of Sonoita AZ. A board member since 2001, Billie managed preparations for the ERF Fall Roundup in 2001. She is active in the Sonoita ranching community.

Working together with the above officers are the members of the board of directors, as follow: Steve Boice, Susan Ingram Hughes, Jake Kittle, Gerald Korte, George A. Masek, Jacquie McNultie, Richard T. Schorr, Chuck Stockton, Lea Ward, and Jane Woods.

We express our sincere thanks to former treasurer Sherry Boice Buzzard who elected to retire from the board after many years of exceptional service. Thank you, Sherry, for your untiring efforts.

## A Word from the Winner of the Empire Chair 2001

Jacque Clark was the lucky winner of the Empire 2001 Chair Raffle drawing on December 1. We are delighted that indeed the chair found a good home for the holidays, and that the winner was kind enough to send us a note and some inspiration:

*I wanted to thank everyone at the Empire Ranch Foundation for the chance to win the beautiful chair. I say 'chance' because I never win anything and to have succeeded by winning this chair makes me speechless and so very lucky. Shel and I*

## Thanks Again!

Muchas gracias, and a thousand thanks to all of our loyal and supportive donors who responded to the Foundation's November 2001 annual appeal.

Over 90 of you contributed to the Foundation last quarter. These funds were needed more than ever as we went about the work of reviewing and awarding this phase of our restoration contract, and planning for the next.

We were delighted to see some new donors among our long-time friends, and we look forward to introducing all of you to the work that is being done to restore the twenty-two room ranch house and out buildings.

The forced cancellation of our Fall Roundup, due to the tragic events of September, prevented us from presenting our most exciting open house event ever! Many of you however, continued to support us, and we know you will be gratified by the work that can be accomplished as your funds allow us to go forward.

We also were honored to receive donations in memory of Carey Ingram, past president of ERF; Julia S. Ruch, niece of Walter Vail; Wag Schorr, engineer, rancher and beloved member of the Sonoita community; and William Banning Vail, Jr. (Bill), who was born on the Empire in 1916.

We are acutely aware of the scope of our project, and the funds that must be raised. Each donation of whatever size is welcomed and needed, and we assure you will be well used.

*have it next to our fireplace and it is stunning. I am totally in love with horses (three of my own), and the beautiful inlaid design is perfect. I took a chance by participating in the drawing because of all the wonderful and hard work your group has done to keep the Empire alive. Most drawings do not get my attention! Keep up the great job you are doing, and I promise that Shel and I will help in any way we can. Thank you.*

*Jacque Clark, Elgin, Arizona*



*Roping calf in Empire Ranch upper corral, 1920s (Photo: L.V.Ingram)*

## Ain't Dead Yet

There's a look of longing  
In the old man's eyes,  
As thoughts of the old times  
Go drifting through his mind.  
Times when to be a cowboy  
Meant you had to be a man,  
And when you hired out to ride  
You were riding for the brand.  
You rode your colts  
With a rawhide bosal,  
And it weren't every day  
You got to go to town.  
There was a purpose in the hoolihan  
throw.  
And thinking ahead a yer cattle  
Was what you was paid to know.  
You could tell where fellers was from  
Or where you was at,  
By the way they sat a horse  
And the way they creased their hat.  
Your saddle was built by hand  
Just like your boots, bits, and spurs too,  
And there weren't no quittin'  
Til the work was through.  
But don't be fooled by the old man's  
look,  
'Cause it ain't sadness you see.  
For he knows there's still many a  
cowpuncher  
Runnin' wild and free.  
Among the deserts, grasslands,  
meadows, and the high mountain range.  
There's plenty a good cowboy  
Earning an honest cowboy wage.  
Now, he may be hard to find,  
But don't call him dead.  
He's just busy trying  
To help keep America fed.

*Sam Donaldson (2001)*

*[Editor's Note: Sam, age 23, works on a ranch north of Patagonia, AZ.]*

## Strategic Plans Focus on Membership

At the same time that the underpinnings of the Empire Ranch House are being exposed and reinforced, big plans have gotten underway to strengthen the ERF's underpinnings as an organization.

At several planning meetings held during November through January, the critical importance of formalizing and developing a broader base of membership in the Empire Ranch Foundation quickly became clear, and placed this goal high on the list of objectives for 2002.

Volunteers and donors have always been the life blood of the Foundation. However, our numbers have been relatively few during these beginning years. Now, as we step up to expanded goals, we need to expand the number of interested, contributing members to provide a continuing source of funds for preservation and outreach programs, and to participate in Empire Ranch Foundation programs and activities.

The membership drive for our 2002/2003 fiscal year will officially commence with the coming May newsletter, offering stepped membership levels as follows:

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

An annual membership extends from July 2002 through June 2003. All members will receive the quarterly *Empire Ranch Foundation News*, and will be listed in the May 2003 issue. We also plan special recognitions for each higher level of membership—details to be announced in the May issue.

We look forward to your participation at whatever level you can afford, and hope you will share the membership opportunity with a friend who may not be on our mailing list!

To sign up now, please use the membership reply form on the back of this page.  
**THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT!!**



To volunteer for events or projects,  
please call (520) 455-5590

## Saddle Up This May 4 — Your Ponies or Ours!



Last Spring's riders mounted up to hit the trail. (Photo: L. Wilkening)

Be sure to mark **May 4** on your Calendar, and join us for our **Empire Ranch Spring Trail Rides and Barbecue**.

Similar to last year, the day will offer two separate trail rides (starting at 8:00 AM and 1:00 PM, respectively); hamburgers and hotdogs for lunch at Noon; and a grand finale beef BBQ dinner at 5:30 PM.

Each trail ride excursion, guided by Steve Boice, will include breathtaking views of some of the most beautiful parts of the Empire Ranch. Expect to see cottonwoods of Empire Gulch, Oaktree Canyon and Oaktree Windmill, the north canyon ridge and the rolling hills of the north pasture.

Participants may bring their own steeds or reserve rental horses, available on a limited basis. Ride both in the morning and the afternoon or choose between the two rides. Experienced and novice riders are welcome. (Costs: \$10.00 registra-

tion to join either or both rides; \$75.00 horse rental for the day.)

For folks relaxing around the headquarters during the day, there will be great company; free house tours and exhibits; and hamburgers and hotdogs lunch and other refreshments and Empire Ranch souvenirs for purchase.

The day's grand conclusion—a real western all-you-can-eat beef barbecue dinner—will be replete with plenty of side dishes and dessert. Surprise entertainment also will brighten the evening. (Costs: \$25 adults; \$15 children 12 years and under.)

Advance reservations are required for both the Trail Rides and the Barbecue. Deadline for reservations is April 22, so don't delay!

Please use the form on the following page to sign up and be included. Call (520) 455-5590 for more information.



A great beef barbecue on the Ranch House zaguan is the perfect finish to any day. (Photo: L. Wilkening)

# Preservation Projects Summary

Preservation is a primary mission of the Empire Ranch Foundation. Preservation projects recently completed, underway, or scheduled are noted below. This list omits projects previously shown as "complete."

- Complete emergency stabilization of ranch house chimneys (*complete*)
- Remove contaminated soil above ceilings (*complete, except for one small, inaccessible area*)
- Manufacture adobe for *Action Plan* preservation projects (*complete*)
- Improve drainage conditions around Victorian Addition foundations (*complete*)
- *Action Plan* roof system repairs to the ranch house (*>60% complete 12/31; complete by 3/31*)
- *Action Plan* wall system repairs to the ranch house (*>60% complete 12/31; complete by 3/31*)
- *Action Plan* foundation system repairs

to the ranch house (*>60% complete 12/31; complete by 3/31*)

- Emergency stabilization of stone corral (*plan complete and under review*)
- Emergency repairs to adobe haybarn foundation (*a priority item to plan and fund*)
- Repair ranch house windmill (*funded; in planning phase*)
- Create plan and repair/replace lintel over south entry of zaguan (*Spring 2002*)
- Create plan and stabilize the Ranch Hand's House (*a priority item once funds are raised*)
- Repair concrete wall near the adobe haybarn (*a priority item once funds are raised*)
- Repair floor framing of the Children's Addition (*a priority once repair plan complete and funds are raised*)
- Plan for adaptive reuse of ranch buildings (*ongoing through 2002*)

## Working Calendar

### March

- 9 Ranch house "under construction" tour (to sign up, call 520/455-5590)
- 16 Board meeting
- 31 *Action Plan* repairs complete

### April

- 20 Board meeting
- 30 Due date for draft report on *Action Plan* repairs

### May

- 4 Spring Trail Ride at the Empire (see sign-up form below & article p.5)
- 18 Board meeting

### FOR FUTURE PLANNING

### September 2002

- 14 Empire Ranch Roundup & Open House with Western Art Show

### February/March 2003

- "The Empire 100" Western Art Show & Sale, in Tucson (dates to be determined)

## EMPIRE RANCH TRAIL RIDE & BBQ RESERVATION for May 4, 2002

Mail to: Empire Ranch Foundation • PO Box 842 • Sonoita, AZ 85637 • For more information call: (520) 455-5590

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: Day (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ Eve (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

TRAIL RIDERS: Total # \_\_\_\_ @ \$10 registration per person . . . . . \$ \_\_\_\_\_

(# who plan to ride: \_\_ 8:00 AM; \_\_ 1:00 PM; \_\_ Both Rides)

# \_\_\_\_ Horse rentals @ \$75 per day . . . . . \$ \_\_\_\_\_

BBQ DINNERS: # \_\_\_\_ Adults @ \$25; # \_\_\_\_ Children @ \$15 . . . . . \$ \_\_\_\_\_

TOTAL ENCLOSED . . . \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Trail Rides 8-11 am & 1-3 pm • BBQ 5:30 • House tours & more all day long

**Reservations  
Deadline:  
April 22**

## Empire Ranch Foundation 2002/2003 Membership Reply

Yes, we want to join the ERF and help its mission to protect, restore, and sustain the historical buildings and landscape of the Empire Ranch as an outstanding western heritage site and educational center. Our check is enclosed in the amount of: \_\_\$25 Homesteader; \_\_\$50 Total Wreck Miner; \_\_\$100 Wranger; \_\_\$250 Vaquero; \_\_\$ 500 Jefe; \_\_\$1,000 Patron; \_\_\$5,000 Cattle Baron; \_\_\$10,000 Territorial Governor

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Street/P.O. Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City, State, ZIP : \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ FAX: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

I wish to make a donation of \_\_\_\_\_ but do not wish to be a member

I do not wish my name to be given to like-minded groups

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

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