

# EMPIRE RANCH FOUNDATION NEWS

P.O. Box 842 \* Sonoita, Arizona 85637-0842 \* (888) 364-2829

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

## We Listen

I am proud to be continuing the Boice family legacy as President of the Empire Ranch Foundation. My heart and soul belong to this ranch. My main goal as President is to continue getting the word out about our preservation commitment to this ranch and this community. I would also like to see the Empire Ranch Foundation be more involved in other community events such as our own.

In 2015 the ERF conducted a membership survey to learn what programs and services members want, what we are doing well, and what we can improve. An article summarizing the survey responses will be included in the next issue.

The board recently approved an often requested change in our membership renewal procedures. Rather than asking everyone to renew in May, from now on annual renewal will be based on the month in which a member joined. Expect to receive a renewal request one month before your membership expires. We hope this will lessen confusion and encourage membership renewals! If you are one of our members who gives several times a year, you can still do so—it will be your choice. The board also voted to change the ERF fiscal year to be January through December.

Thanks to everyone who responded to our year-end appeal. As of the end of December, 44 members contributed over \$8,300 for ERF programs and services. If you are not a member please consider joining by completing the form on the enclosed envelope. Or join via the ERF website [www.empireranchfoundation.org/involved/donate/](http://www.empireranchfoundation.org/involved/donate/)

*Faith Boice, ERF President*



## 1880's to Steampunk Event a Big Success

The Empire Ranch's 140th year-long Anniversary celebration began with a fun-filled Saloon Party! Over 155 guests attended our **1880's to Steampunk** event at the Savoy Opera House at Trail Dust Town on January 30th! The handsome saloon was filled with gamblers, cowboys, dancing girls, some new faces, and some long-time, generous ERF members.

Brisk action at the gambling tables saw winners taking home Empire Ranch merchandise, and Doc Holliday dealing the age-old game of Faro. An exciting live auction, with special thanks to auctioneer Pat Chacon, of an original Johan Gericke painting, a handmade turquoise and precious gem necklace by Kim Yubeta, a MB200 dirt bike, and two ERF Trail Ride registrations with horse rental raised \$1,775 for the ERF!

Most guests sported their Western, Victorian and Steampunk finest. Congratulations to our contest winners for the Best Cowboy, Victorian, and Steampunk Costumes! The dance floor was the scene of some serious dancing to saloon songs from every era played by our Desert DJ. A rousing two-step got most everyone on the floor!

Faith Boice described her love of the ranch and how honored she is to be the new ERF president. Her dad, Steve Boice, shared stories of his special childhood on the ranch and his pride in his daughter. Carla and Ron Martin thanked all ERF volunteers and members for their generous and devoted support of the Empire Ranch. A guest exclaimed that he was "...now anxious to visit the ranch,

*(continued on p. 3)*

*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.*

## Departed Friends:

### Bob and Mary Bowman

Bob Bowman, a longtime member of the Advisory Committee, died on November 12, 2015. His wife Mary, who served on the ERF Board (1997-1998) and the Advisory Committee, passed away in 2014.

Bob and Mary moved to Sonoita in 1955 to raise Hereford cattle on the Backward B Spear Ranch. They became close neighbors and friends of Frank and Mary Boice, collaborating during roundups and enjoying each other's company socially.

Bob served as President of the Santa Cruz County Fair & Rodeo Association, and his extensive collection of photos, documents, oral histories, and memorabilia is now in the Bowman and Stradling History Center in Sonoita. Mary served in the Empire School District, in the Elgin/Sonoita Cowbelles, and the Santa Cruz County Cowbelles. Both were wonderful ERF supporters and were especially interested in the Foundation's history and archives and educational programs.



## Gifts in Remembrance

The Empire Ranch Foundation gratefully acknowledges gifts recently received  
*In Memory of:*

Bob Bowman • Snuff Garrett  
Earl F. Glenn, Jr. • Marion Hyland  
Ed Kay • Jack M. Layton, MD  
Christine Vail Shirley  
Margaret Vail Woolley

*In Honor of:*

Christine Auerbach  
Alison Bunting  
Susan Vail Hoffman

## 2016 ERF Leadership

The following officers and members of the Board of Directors were elected at the November 21, 2015 board meeting.

•**Faith Boice** of Vail was elected President and to her third term on the Board of Directors. She served as Treasurer from 2012-2013. Faith is the owner of Boice Bookkeeping, LLC. She is the great granddaughter of Frank and Mary Boice who managed (1929-1950) and owned (starting in 1951) the Empire Ranch.

•**Peggy Theibert** of Tucson was elected Vice President. She joined the Board in 2010 and has served four terms as Secretary (2011-2015). A retired attorney, she is especially interested in ERF's education and history and archives programs.

•**Kimberly Patterson** of St. David who became a board member in 2014 was elected Secretary. Kimberly has an online education program focusing on developing training programs for the hospitality and tourism industries. She is an ERF docent and loves to share the history of the ranch house and its families.

•**Gene Raymond** of Elgin was elected to a third term as Treasurer. Gene is a retired U.S. Army Lieutenant Colonel who held supervisory and engineering positions in the military and the private sector. He has extensive expertise in managing the finances of non-profit organizations.

We are pleased to welcome one new Board member, **Kathie Schindel** of Vail. A retired Veteran Affairs mental health nurse, Kathie specialized in substance abuse and vocational rehabilitation counseling. She is an artist (oil & clay) and an active ERF volunteer, helping out at the Roundup and the Empire 100 Art Show.

Steve "Bunker" De France and Bill Schock were elected to second and third terms, respectively, on the Board. Steve Boice, Emil Franz, Carla Kerekes Martin, Ron Martin, Sally Reichardt, Anthony Sedgwick, Tim Vail, and David Yubeta will also be continuing on the board.

We bid a fond farewell to three board members:

Lucinda Iverson (2011-2015) chaired the Roundup committee for several years, was instrumental in developing the "stick horse" activity for children, and led ERF's participation in the Tucson Rodeo Parade.

David Steele (2011-2015) and his company SIMG helped sponsor Western Movies at the Loft and will continue to provide graphic support for ERF events.

Judith Williams (2009-2015) was an avid supporter of, and judge for, the Empire 100 Western Art Show and Sale.

Last, but not least, we extend special thanks to Ron Martin, ERF President from 2013-2015. During his tenure the Adobe Haybarn was seismically strengthened, the Feed Barn roof was replaced, and the interpretive information available to visitors at the Empire Ranch House was enhanced. We are grateful that he is continuing as a board member.



*Retiring ERF President Ron Martin receives a Heart of the Foundation award from board member Lucinda Iverson. (photo: S. Reichardt)*

## Gift of Vail Materials

The Empire Ranch Foundation's archives were recently enriched by a generous gift of documents and photographs from Whitney Wilkinson, great grandson of Walter Vail, and grandson of Mary Vail Wilkinson. The research materials donated include Total Wreck Mine maps, correspondence and agreements; Vail & Co. correspondence, stock certificates, and land and legal documents; two Edward "Ned" Vail photo albums; Walter Vail's personal ledger book and journal (1882-1886); and the Empire Land & Cattle Co. Calf and Colt Branding Log (1907-1928).

The branding log lists, by date, cowboy, and ranch location, the number of calves and colts branded. A handwritten log tally reveals that from 1907 to 1928 (the year the ranch was sold to the Boice family) a total of 94,599 calves & colts were branded, an average of 4,500/year.



*Empire Mining and Development Co. stock certificate, dated September 17, 1907.*



## Preservation Happenings

In early November, contractor Pat Lioy of Lioy Custom Builders, Inc., began work on the replacement roof for the Feed Barn. The work entailed removing the remaining original joists and rafters; installing new trusses; decking the trusses with plywood for strength and durability; and sheathing it with corrugated metal roofing to replicate the historic look and feel. The metal used was salvaged from the original Feed Barn roof, along with material from the barn at the former Heart S Ranch on Curly Horse Road.

Additional work included replacing and re-attaching structural supports anchored to the west wall; removing and replacing the large rolling door on the north (front) side after strengthening the support track above it; and sheathing the wall vertically in order to better carry the weight of the door. The project was collaborative funded by ERF and BLM.



*Stages in roofing and strengthening the feed barn. (photos: B. Young)*

Departed Friend:

## Marion Hyland



Marion Hyland, a very special member of the ERF family, died on January 28, 2016, at her home in Sonoita. She grew up in Ft. Worth, TX. After a teaching career in Chicago and Detroit, she came to Arizona in 1987 as principal of Agua Caliente School in the Tanque Verde school district. She and her husband Bob moved to Sonoita in 1998.

Marion was elected to the ERF board in its founding year, 1997, and served successively as ERF Secretary, Vice President, and President, from 1998 to 2003. In 2000 she conceived and introduced a western art sale at the ERF Roundup. In 2001 she expanded it to Tucson, and thus established ERF's highly successful annual *Empire 100 Western Art Show & Sale*. Marion personally managed the *Empire 100* until 2008, and organized related artists' photo shoots to inspire artworks featuring the Empire.

After retiring from *Empire 100* chairmanship, Marion continued to give invaluable support as an Advisory Committee member. Her charm, smile, and vivacious personality were captivating, as was her passion for preserving the Empire. We deeply appreciate Marion's vision, determination, and dedication that so benefitted ERF and Empire Ranch.



## Coming in April!! Spring Trail Ride, Saturday, April 2, 2016

Come out and ride with us! One of our long-standing traditions will be held on Saturday, April 2, 2016. Choose a morning or an afternoon 3 hour ride with a cowboy grill lunch included! Have your own horse? Great! Don't have a horse? No problem, you can rent one from us. Don't want to ride a horse? No problem, we will have western heritage activities, tours, music, crafts and more while you "hang out" at the Ranch.

Rides around the ranch lands will be led by our own historian, Steve Boice, who was born and raised on the ranch. Travel around some historic areas, archeological sites, and beautiful scenery! During the rides there will be stops for some conversation, history lessons and updates on "what's happening here?"

Registration forms are included in this newsletter and are due no later than March 28, 2016. Morning ride starts at 9am. Afternoon ride starts at 1pm. Cowboy grill will be served from 11am to 1pm. Activities at ranch headquarters will be available from 10am-3pm. Once you register an information packet will be mailed to you.

So come on —come Ride With Us!!



## Steampunk Event (cont'd)

after hearing the stories," and added, "I had too much fun at this event!"

We are so grateful to our sponsors and auction donors: Boot Barn, Nelson and Sherry Secor, Johan Gericke, Kim Yubeta, Del Bac Whiskey, Pat Chacon and one anonymous donor. Special thanks to Van Fowers as Doc Holliday, Sally and Doug Pyne, registration table, and everyone who helped make this event such a success. Our 140th Anniversary is off to a wonderful start!



*Steampunk dancers, gamblers, and strutters fully enjoyed the night. (photos: S. Reichardt, B. Young)*

## Working Calendar

*Location: Meet at Visitor Contact Station, Empire Ranch Headquarters, unless otherwise noted. To volunteer, or for more information, call (888) 364-2829.*

### February

- 13, 27** *Docent-Led Tours of the Empire Ranch House, 11am-12pm, free, open to all, no reservations req.*  
**20** *Volunteer Work Day, 8am-noon. All welcome! RSVP 888-364-2829.*

### March

- 12, 26** *Docent-Led Tours of the Empire Ranch House, 11am-12pm, free, open to all, no reservations req.*  
**19** *ERF Board Meeting, 9 am to noon. All welcome!*  
**28** *Spring Trail Ride registration deadline.*

### April

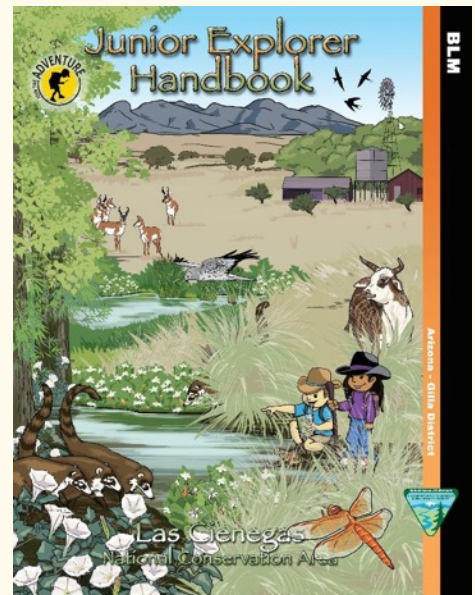
- 2** *Spring Trail Ride, 9am-4pm. Ride the rolling hills of Las Cienegas NCA. (see article on p. 3)*  
**9, 23** *Docent-Led Tours of the Empire Ranch House, 11am-12pm, free, open to all, no reservations req.*  
**16** *Volunteer Work Day, 8am-noon. All welcome! RSVP 888-364-2829.*

## LCNCA Junior Explorer Handbook

The BLM Tucson Field Office is pleased to announce the publication of the Junior Explorer Handbook for Las Cienegas National Conservation Area.

BLM's Junior Explorer program helps youth learn about the lands and resources managed by the BLM. The handbook features information and activities about the flora and fauna of the LCNCA and the historic Empire Ranch.

Copies of the handbook can be picked up at the BLM Tucson Office, 3201 East Universal Way, Tucson, (520) 258-7200 or from the Visitor Contact Station at Empire Ranch Headquarters.



### May

- 14, 28** *Docent-Led Tours of the Empire Ranch House, 11am-12pm, free, open to all, no reservations req.*  
**28** *ERF Board Meeting, 9 am to noon. All welcome!*

### June

- 11, 25** *Docent-Led Tours of the Empire Ranch House, 11am-12pm, free, open to all, no reservations req.*  
**18** *Volunteer Work Day, 8am-noon. All welcome! RSVP 888-364-2829.*