

# EMPIRE RANCH FOUNDATION NEWS

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

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

## Meeting our Challenges

I am so humbled. I think about all generations that have lived and worked on the Empire Ranch. Mary Grantham Boice, my great-grandmother, who worked the cattle as well as any cowboy. My grandmother, who raised four children here. My mother, who worked alongside the cowboys. I'm proud to be President of this fine organization, a heritage I am honored to continue.

Why do generous people like you give their time and money to support the preservation and interpretation of this historic ranch? I believe it is because the Empire Ranch, through its buildings and landscape, tells a beautiful story. It is the story of perseverance during challenging and changing circumstances, of overcoming obstacles—the story of America.

Our challenges this year included the Sawmill Fire and providing programs and services without the use of the Ranch House. We have kept going and are thriving. Once stabilization of the Ranch House is complete we will provide improved and enhanced interpretation of the history of the Empire Ranch within its walls.

Our members' support allows us share the story and preserve the legacy of the Empire Ranch. I am so thankful for your encouragement and participation, and your continued investment in the Empire Ranch.

If you are an ERF member please watch your mail for our end-of-year giving opportunity. If you are not yet a member consider joining today and lend your support to our efforts.

*Faith Boice*

*ERF President*



(photos: C. Sparfeld, T. Rogos)

## A Very Open, Open House

What do you do when the main building featured at your biggest event of the year is unavailable due to construction? Put up a few more tents and rearrange the outdoor venues! Adjustments made, the 17th annual Roundup & Open House on November 4th took on a new look while retaining the excitement and enthusiasm of previous events. Over 1,300 guests, hosted by 300 presenters and volunteers, enjoyed a wide variety of western activities and performances, wonderful music, great food, and western vendors.

The main arena featured demonstrations by Joel Eliot (cattle handling) and the BLM Wild Horse and Burro Program. The dancing horses of Charros y Modelos de Tucson captivated everyone watching. B Troop, 4th U.S. Cavalry (Mem.) and the Tombstone Ghost Riders provided fast paced riding and shooting performances in the Field Arena. The Tombstone Vigilantes' skits were enjoyed by all.

The ever popular Cowboy Conversations included talks by Marty Freese, Bunker DeFrance, Scott Dyke & Russell True (In Front & Behind the Camera); Van Fowers (History of Old Tucson and The Story of Walter Vail); Gary Turner (Thomas Jefferson Turner); Marty Freese (Movies In/Around the Empire); Russell True (Dude Ranching in Arizona); Ian Tomlinson (Ranching at the Empire Today); Eric Means and Chris Schrager (The Empire Ranch House Stabilization Project); Gerald Korte (My Working Cowboy Life on the Empire—1940s);

(continued on p. 2)

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## Open House (Cont'd)



*Handy wagon rides roll between parking and the Roundup. (photo: F. Boice).*

Betty Barr (Arizona Cattlewoman. The Remarkable Life of Carrie Swigart Fraizer); and Steve and Faith Boice (The Boice Family Legacy).

In the corral adjacent to the South Barn guests enjoyed the toe-tapping musical performances of Scattered Grass (bluegrass) and Cowboy Way (western) and got a bite to eat from R\*B\*Cue BBQ or Las Vigas Steak Ranch. At the Adobe Haybarn nearby, the Silent Auction was a wonderful opportunity to bid on unique items to support ERF's preservation and education efforts. Seven non-profit partners and six western authors fielded

### Roundup Sponsors

**Cash Donations:** AJ's Concessions • Adam D Technology • B-D Cowboy Supply • Branches Event Services • Barker Steel Construction, Inc. • Susan Barrable • Bogutz & Gordon, PC, Estate & Trust Law • Steve Boice • D & S Custom Leather • Capital Wealth Management, Michael Guidroz • Circle Z Guest Ranch • Empire Ranch Foundation Board of Directors • Hamstra Heating and Cooling, Inc. • Home Projects, LLC • J.W. Shaffer Electric • Las Vigas Steak Ranch • Bob & Jan Lyon • Mouth of the South Salsa Co. • Osuna Boot Co. • Paul Ash Management Co., LLC • Rachel B. Tierra Antiqua Realty • Bill Radcliffe • RBCue BBQ • Roberts Alexonis Group • Schouten & Sullivan PLLC • SIMG, Inc. • Sulphur Springs Valley Electric Cooperative • TC Show • Totally Uncorked • Untamed Confections • Vera Earl Ranches

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**Silent Auction Donations:** Anonymous • Anonymous (In Memory of Marilyn Sundt Isaacks) • Arizona Cabinets & Counter Tops • Arizona Theater Co. • Irene Baker/Mosaic Madness • Briar Patch Marketplace • Jerry Bokowski • Murray Bolesta • Lahsha Brown • Kimberly Brundage • Byrd's Custom Bits & Spurs • Wade & Alison Bunting • Jose Calderon • Callaghan Vineyards • Camden's Crosses • Chris & Glen Dickens • Dos Cabezas Retreat Bed & Breakfast • Dos Cabezas Wine Works • Becky Easton • Connie Engard • Deborah Fellows • Flemings Steakhouse • Gadabout Salon, St. Phillips Plaza • Randy Gilmore, Reflections in Metal • Haley Faith Boutique • Susan and Ronald Hoffman • Jon Wolf Photography • Keif Joshua Vineyards • Kim Yubeta Designs • Lightning Ridge Cellars • Orlando Jewelers • Carol and Raymond Patrone • Philabaum Glass Gallery & Studio • Glenn Powell • Adam Puckle, The Café • Doris Rickard • Red Door Salon • Cheryl Rogos • Santa Cruz County Fair & Rodeo Association • Sherry & Nelson Secor • Tim Sinclair, Chase Bank • Sonoita Vineyards • Stage Coach Bags • Deb Stephenson • Chip Travers • Louis Valenzuela • Vera Earl Ranches, Inc. • Vineyard Café • Westin La Paloma • White Stallion Ranch • Wild Chewz

questions through out the day.

Opportunities to learn about ranching skills and animals abounded. Rex Dalton's chuckwagon camp provided coffee and a taste of roundup cooking. Western skills demonstrators included Chris Schrager, David Yubeta and Carla Martin (adobe brick making); Casey Abbs (blacksmithing); Osuna Boot Co. (boot making); Bill Schock (branding irons); Ben Claridge (leather carving); Brad Faulkner (saddle making); Byrd Moss (silversmithing); and Louis Valenzuela (Yoeme woodcarving).. The livestock displays of Horse'n Around Rescue Ranch (Theresa Warrell & Steve Boice); Jabez Ranch Horsemanship (Bruce Norton); Rio Rico Future Farmers of America; and S & N Ranch miniature horses were enjoyed by all.

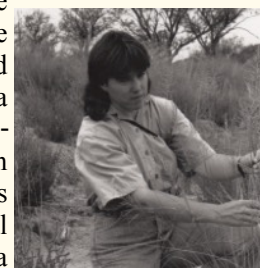
Special thanks to the presenters, the BLM, and the volunteers, including the girls and parents of Sierra Vista Girl Scout Troops 104, 419, 1224, who make this annual event possible. We are especially grateful for the generous financial and in-kind support of the sponsors and raffle donors listed below.

## Karen Simms Retires



Karen Simms, Tucson Field Office Assistant Field Manager and LCNCA Manager, retired from the BLM on September 30th.

Karen's involvement with the Empire began in 1988 (see photo below) when she was hired by the Tucson Field Office as a cooperative education student, with the proviso that she live at Empire Ranch Headquarters. She and another student were responsible for inventorying the resources on the newly acquired Empire-Cienega Resource Conservation Area, which became Las Cienegas National Conservation Area (LCNCA) in 2000.



Karen played a key role in the development of the LCNCA Resource Management Plan, working closely with local stakeholders, an effort recognized as a model and case study for collaboration and adaptive management for the BLM. This work also prompted a career change for Karen, from a field biologist to a series of increasingly responsible management leadership roles (ecologist, planner and manager) with the BLM.

ERF deeply appreciates Karen's backing and involvement. She steadfastly supported ERF's mission and programs and was always ready to assist in any way she could. We wish her the best in her new responsibilities as Natural Resources Division manager for Pima County.

### Dedicated Gifts

The Empire Ranch Foundation gratefully acknowledges gifts recently received

*In Memory of:*

Mary Vail Boland, Marion Hyland,  
Dusty Vail Ingram, Joseph Loblillo,  
Travis Cody Kerekes Martin,  
Joel McCrea, Don Odenweller,  
Wagner & Marie Schorr, Linda Tuck,  
Ed & Mary (Browning) Vail,  
Edward Newhall Vail

*In Honor of:*

Faith Boice (Birthday),  
Voices of the West



## ERF Outreach

Throughout 2017 ERF volunteers have staffed information booths at local events to spread the word about the ranch and foundation programs and events, to encourage new members and visitors. Events have included the Cochise County Cowboy Poetry Gathering; the Sonoita Rodeo; the Santa Cruz County Fair; National Public Lands Day, San Pedro Riparian National Conservation Area; and the Patagonia Fall Festival.

ERF speakers are also available to make presentations about the history of the Empire Ranch and other related topics. In October Board members Harry Alexander and Bunker de France spoke at a meeting of the Pima County School Retirees' Association. We welcome requests for presentations from local groups. For more information call (888) 364-2829 or email [admin@empireranch-foundation.org](mailto:admin@empireranch-foundation.org)



*ERF booths at Patagonia Fall Festival (above) and Sonoita Rodeo (below) (photos: S. Reichardt)*



*(photo: A. Bunting)*

## Discovery in the South Yard

The Ranch House stabilization contract includes re-contouring the yard south of the Victorian Addition to improve drainage for runoff from a nearby slope. As the contractor began to remove soil in the area he uncovered a circular feature comprising a curb wall of fired (red) brick capped with mortar. BLM archaeologists Kim Ryan and Chris Schrager subsequently exposed approximately two-thirds of the circumference of the feature's wall and exterior stone work.



*Chris Schrager making notes in the bowl of the uncovered feature. (photo: K. Ryan).*

The feature's design suggests that its intended use was originally as a pond or fountain which was eventually converted to a planter. Photos taken in the 1930s by the Boice family show a round planter at that location (see below). Steve Boice recalls that the planter was in use until 1975, and was backfilled sometime between then and 1988, when the BLM assumed management of the property.



*Flower bed (far left) and garden south of the Ranch House Victorian Addition about 1950.*

## Public Restrooms Open

The public restrooms at Empire Ranch have re-opened after completion of ADA and other improvements to provide two paved, ADA-accessible parking spaces at the building's front, and a hard-surfaced pathway that leads down to the start of the Heritage Discovery Trail. In the future, volunteers will reconstruct a hand-washing and drinking station nearby.

## Preservation Progress



*Worker on scaffolding (top left) repairs Victorian Addition's south wall adobe (photo: A. Bunting)*

Behind the chain-link construction fence that temporarily surrounds the Ranch House, contractor Statistical Research, Inc., has made progress on several components of this stabilization project. Current work includes construction of the roof-wall connection system; preparations to build supporting walls under the floor of the Children's Addition; and repairs to the adobe walls of the east and west walls of the original 4-room E.N. Fish house and Rear Addition and the south wall of the Victorian Addition.

Next the shingle roof on the Victorian Addition will be removed and replaced with corrugated metal. This change replicates historic material from an earlier era – over the years since its construction, different portions of the house have had multiple layers of earth, metal and wood shingle roofs.

Volunteers at the August workday concentrated on mowing, corral repairs, and clearing one of the bedrooms in the Huachuca House to make it ready for an Eagle Scout project. Jacob Abelowitz, Troop 774–Tucson, led a team who removed an old carpet and repaired and refinished the beautiful wood floor underneath. The October volunteer workday focused on preparing the Headquarters for the Roundup. Plan to join us for the 2018 volunteer workdays, starting on February 17th.



*Restored Huachuca House floor (photo: C. Rogos)*



## Working Calendar

*Location: Meet at Visitor Contact Station, Empire Ranch Headquarters, unless otherwise noted. To volunteer, or for more information, call (888) 364-2829 or email [admin@empireranchfoundation.org](mailto:admin@empireranchfoundation.org).*

### January 2018

**13&27** *Docent-Led Tour of the Empire Ranch, 11am-12pm, free, open to all, no reservations req.*

**20** *ERF Board Meeting, 9am-12pm, call 888-364-2829 for location. All welcome!*

### February 2018

**10&24** *Docent-Led Tour of the Empire Ranch, 11am-12pm, free, open to all, no reservations req.*

**17** *Volunteer Work Day, 8am-12pm. To volunteer call 888-364-2829, email [admin@empireranchfoundation.org](mailto:admin@empireranchfoundation.org)*

### March 2018

**10&24** *Docent-Led Tour of the Empire Ranch, 11am-12pm, free, open to all, no reservations req.*

**17** *ERF Board Meeting, 9am-12pm, call 888-364-2829 for location. All welcome!*

### April 2018

**7** *Spring Trail Ride - Save the Date!!*

## 2017 Roundup — Hope you were there!



(photos: K. Cudney, C. Sparfield, G. Swinney, F. Boice)

