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At the Bend in the River

Semiannual Newsletter

March 2025

Dated Material



RillitoBend Neighborhood Association (RBNA)

As a City of Tucson recognized neighborhood association, we are committed to protecting and enhancing this special place with its rich artistic heritage and unique riparian environment.

An interactive color version of this newsletter can be found on our website, www.rillitobendna.org.

RBNA Board

Board President: Lindy Brigham
President@RillitoBendNA.org
Vice-President: Mary Bird
Vice-President@RillitoBendNA.org
Treasurer: Terry DeCarolis
Treasurer@RillitoBendNA.org
Secretary: Catlow Shipek
Secretary@RillitoBendNA.org
Pat Mulrow
John O'Hare
Estelle Stern-Eilers
Vicky Strome
Linda Turner
Rich Young

Who To Call

Important Contacts for the City of Tucson

Suspicious activity, police emergency	911
Police non-emergency	520-791-4444
www.tucsonaz.gov/Departments/Police	
Community Service Officer (CSO)	520-837-7428
Ramon Silvas: Ramon.Silvas@tucsonaz.gov	
SeeClickFix – Service Portal	311
www.tucsonaz.gov/Residents/311-Service-Request-Portal	
Cars parked in City's right-of-way	520-791-5071
Garbage cans left out at the curb	520-791-3171
Graffiti removal hotline	520-791-2489
Junk vehicles, excessive yard sales, weeds	520-791-5843
Mosquitoes	520-724-7908
Pima Animal Care Center	520-243-5900
Potholes	520-791-3154
Shopping cart pick-up	1-800-THE-CART
Water main break	520-791-4133
Ward 3 Office, 1510 E. Grant Road, Tucson, AZ	520-791-4711
Ward3@tucsonaz.gov	
www.tucsonaz.gov/Government/Mayor-Council-and-City-Manager/City-Council-Wards/Ward-3	

Glass recycling now at Rio Vista Park

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The City of Tucson has paid for the printing and distribution of this newsletter. Thank you, Tucson!

President's Message

We have much to celebrate: our newly renovated Rio Vista Park and our much-anticipated RillitoBend Spring Festival!

Our Restoration Celebration of Rio Vista Natural Resource Park was a heartwarming experience. We enjoyed good weather, fantastic music from our friends and close neighbors John and Jeanne Ronstadt and a park that has a chance of surviving.

We are looking forward to another RillitoBend Spring Festival. Please consider contributing your talents! We also need volunteers to help set up. Contact us at social@rillitobendna.org.

To get more timely information of concern to the neighborhood, please sign up for our email service. Scan the QR code or go to our website (www.rillitobendna.org).

Lindy Brigham, President
RillitoBend Neighborhood Association
(RBNA)



RillitoBend Spring Festival 2025

Saturday, March 8, 2025

11 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.

Valley of the Moon, 2544 E Allen Road

Please do not bring your dogs.
In the event of rain, the festival will be cancelled.



Sonoran Fantasy

Artists to enjoy

RillitoBend neighborhood has historically been an enclave for artists. Today, the area still draws many artists who love the rural, desert environment. At the Festival, artists will show their work, some of which will be for sale. Weavers, photographers, painters, authors and more will be part of the festival.

Music for all

Featuring the RillitoBend Neighborhood Band led by Shanti Foster who has organized our musical neighbors. The Band will play classic folk songs we all know and love.

Spring Festival 2025, cont'd

Fun activities for kids

There will be special activities for children such as painting rocks, making friendship bracelets, creating sun prints and drawings.



Valley of the Moon (VOM) is an enchanted historic fairyland that promotes kindness and imagination.
www.tucsonvalleyofthemoon.com



Valley of the Moon storytelling

You'll find out more about what and how Valley of the Moon came to be a precious neighborhood feature.

Food

Amelia and Hugo's food truck will be in Valley of the Moon's parking lot for your eating enjoyment.



You will also see:

- + Works of Pete Martinez who lived here. (His work is on display in the lobby of the Hotel Congress.)
- + A neighborhood map showing where former artists lived
- + Exhibits curated by Stephen Brigham and Katherine Kellner that will include famous artists from the RillitoBend Neighborhood such as Maynard Dixon and Al Romo.
- + The artist for the RBNA tea towel sketches, Stephen Brigham will be showing his work.

A fun time is planned, so bring your friends and be part of the action and learn about our rich artistic heritage.

Restoration Celebration of Rio Vista Natural Resource Park

On January 25th, 60+ guests gathered at the Park to celebrate the completion of the latest renovation of Rio Vista. Good vibes were had by all!



Left: John and Jeanne Ronstadt serenaded the guests as they were arriving, setting the scene for a lovely event.

Below, the ribbon cutting, left to right: Jeff Seligman; Parks & Rec Director Lara Hamwey; RBNA Board members and advisors John Kovacic, Estelle Stern-Eilers, Linda Turner, Sue Ann Breems, Murray DeArmond, David Tiers, Lindy Brigham, Mary Bird, Justin Turner and Sue DeArmond; and Ward 3 Council Member Kevin Dahl

Photos courtesy of the Parks and Recreation Department



Above: Parks & Rec Director Lara Hamwey and Councilmember Kevin Dahl greet the guests. Below: Tony Figueroa (Tucson Audubon), Lindy Brigham, Mary Bird, Matt Kopec, Commissioner Maurice Roberts, Linda Turner

Photos courtesy of the Parks and Recreation Department



Below: longtime resident and park advocate Murray DeArmond poses behind the homemade cake that features him and some of the volunteers who helped plant. And there were many!

Our Artistic Heritage

Our neighborhood has an incredible artistic heritage of famous artists including:

Ettore "Ted" DeGrazia (1909–1982)

Artist

Described as "the world's most reproduced artist," DeGrazia had a studio and a family restaurant on the south side of Prince Road (at the intersection with Campbell). His colorful images of Native American children of the American Southwest and other Western scenes continue to be popular today.



DeGrazia with "Los Niños," circa 1960

Maynard Dixon (1875–1946)

Artist

Dixon's house and studio were on the former Ronstadt property north of Prince Road (now part of the Lanterra development). He is often referred to as the "master painter of the American West" (MaynardDixon.org). His "Home of Tucson" (below) shows the corner of his house and the Ronstadt house with the Catalinas in the background.



Maynard Dixon, "Home of Tucson," 1945
Tucson Museum of Art
Gift of Drs. Mark and Kathleen Sublette

Dixon's wife Edith Hamlin (1902–1992)

was an accomplished artist in her own right. A WPA artist and muralist, she married Dixon in 1937. Here, she and Dixon pose for a photo while Dixon completes his painting "Sahuaro, Tucson, AZ" in 1940.



Edith Hamlin and Maynard Dixon, 1940
photo by Chuck Abbott

Linda Ronstadt (b. 1946)

Singer

Before Linda went on to international fame, her childhood home was in RillitoBend. Her grandfather Frederick A. Ronstadt and his wife Lupe (Dalton) Ronstadt had an 80 acre ranch located at the northwest corner of Prince Road and Tucson Boulevard. They had four sons: Bill, Edward, Gilbert (Linda's father) and Alfred.

Gilbert and Edward ran the family's business, the F. Ronstadt Hardware Company (demolished in 1991 and now the site of the Ronstadt Transit Center). Although portions of the Ronstadt ranch were sold off, this was Linda's childhood.

Future Neighborhood Meetings

Our meetings are scheduled quarterly on the 3rd Saturday of the month unless there are necessary changes to date and time.

May 17	(Neighborhood)
August 16	(Board)
November 15	(Annual Meeting)

Be sure you are on the RBNA mailing list to receive agendas and any changes. Go to www.rillitobendna.org for more information.

Lend A Hand (LAH) Senior Assistance

Lend A Hand Senior Assistance offers support for seniors to help them stay in their homes, allowing them to live independently and remain a vital part of their community.

We do this by providing free services, including transportation, errands, social activities, fresh produce delivery and other assistance. All of our services are offered free and are done by our trained volunteers. Visit www.lahseniorhelp.org.



Above: young Linda Ronstadt (on her horse) with her family in their backyard
www.BittmanProject.com

Right: Ronstadt in front of her family's downtown hardware store



Tea Towels and Notecards Available at Spring Festival

In keeping with the festival's "arts" theme, the tea towel and notecards are products of some very creative people. The tea towel contains watercolor sketches of neighborhood sights drawn by Stephen Brigham. The set of 13 notecards are photos by Vicky Strome and highlight details of the stunning Neighborhood Mural, a creation of Sue Ann Breems.

Each cost \$20 (cash or check). Proceeds help defray RBNA costs. Since we do not have dues, RBNA expenses (such as the website and neighborhood enhancements) are funded from donations and the sale of our notecards and towels.

Melanie Campbell-Carter is a botanical illustrator who contributed much to our neighborhood before recently returning to Texas.

She has donated several pieces of her art for the benefit of the neighborhood association. So come to the festival or visit our website to see her work.

Tumacacori Series



Any Ideas?

We are always looking...

For creative neighbors to help with all the fun projects and events throughout the year, please consider joining the board, being on a committee, helping with the website.

Email us at rbna@RillitoBendNA.org.

Thank you.