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At the Bend in the River

Semiannual Newsletter February 2026

Dated Material



RillitoBend Neighborhood Association (RBNA)

We are 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: Stephen Brigham

President@RillitoBendNA.org

Vice-President: Mary Bird

Vice-President@RillitoBendNA.org

Treasurer: Terry DeCarolis

Treasurer@RillitoBendNA.org

Secretary: Lindy Brigham

Secretary@RillitoBendNA.org

Becky Good

Estelle Stern-Eilers

Pat Mulrow

Vicky Stromee

John O'Hare

Linda Turner

Noreen Slater

Sketches by Stephen Brigham: Maynard Dixon home, Valley of the Moon, Rillito watch tower, horses, Rio Vista aerial

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!

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	
Bennett Bernal, Community Liason, bbernal2@cox.net	520-791-4711 (mobile)

President's Message

Welcome new and long-term residents to the RillitoBend Neighborhood! We also welcome Becky Good and Noreen Sleator to the RBNA Board. Other Board changes include my stepping back into the President's role while Lindy, our former President, is taking on the Secretary's role replacing Catlow Shipek. Thanks to all our Board members, current and past, who have volunteered to make RillitoBend a special place to live.

In this issue, we've included a brief history of our neighborhood. Documenting and sharing our history is a long-term project, so if anyone wants to help, please let us know. We've also included a few quotes from residents about why they like living here, accompanied by some sketches, reflecting how special this place is to so many.

On March 7th we will have an Ice Cream Social with an opportunity to meet neighbors and to learn more about RillitoBend.

We urge you to support the RTA Next campaign to fund the next 20 years of regional transportation projects. This new plan is especially important because it includes improvements to our section of Prince Road. So please read the RTA article—and vote!

Of course, if you have any questions or want to get more involved, please contact me or any of the other Board members.

Stephen Brigham, President
RillitoBend Neighborhood Association (RBNA)
President@RillitoBendNA.org
www.RillitoBendNA.org



Why I Love It Here

The natural environment in the center of town, and the people...Dark skies, ecologically aware, great neighbors, fun gatherings, easy access to river walk and other natural resources...View of the Catalinas, great neighbors, good sense of community, quiet, and I feel safe...Its proximity to restaurants, shopping and services, to the U of A and to downtown...For all the wonderful neighbors, the rich rural and artistic history...Neighbors who are actively involved in the neighborhood are very reliable and fun to work with...Walking and seeing what comes my way—neighbors, equestrians, roadrunners and red tails, spade foots after a rain...Our neighborhood has a small-town feeling; neighbors are friendly, caring, talented, helpful people who are committed to making our area a safe, pleasant, attractive place...Walking Cactus to bike path with hopes of seeing Red-tailed hawks nesting in Sycamore tree...The vast amount of wildlife, conservation efforts, and the beautiful RioVista park...The natural environment in the center of town, and the people

Valley of the Moon (VOM)

Valley of the Moon, tucked away right here in our neighborhood (on Allen Road), is nationally recognized by the Historic American Landscapes Survey (HALS) for its unique whimsical design and historic significance. Come check it out!



Ice Cream Social is Back!

Saturday, March 7, 2026

2:00–4:00 p.m.

Valley of the Moon

2544 E Allen Road

Free ice cream!

Come mingle with and meet your neighbors! Neighbors' creations will be for sale! And the RillitoBend Band will play!

Vote for RTA Next (Props 418 and 419)

Regional Transportation Authority (RTA), is a state-established agency responsible for our regional transportation plans and projects. RillitoBend has an important project in the proposed 20-year plan: to upgrade Prince Road! The plan will provide safe pedestrian and bicycle paths, improved bus shelters, median and roadway edge landscaping, lighting, and stormwater mitigation—without impacting taxes.

Visit the RTA Next website, sign up for updates and vote on March 10th to approve the RTA Next plan. **Both** Propositions 418 and 419 need approval for RTA to be passed. Let's be sure improvements to Prince Road will get funded.

RTA Next website:
<https://rtamobility.com/who-we-are/rta-next/>



Development of RillitoBend: A Short History

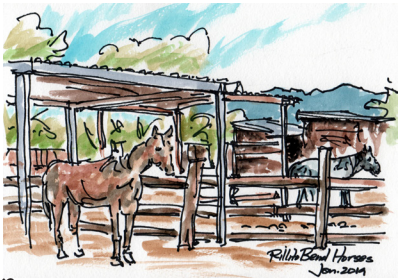
The earliest modern reference to the neighborhood was on June 30, 1946 when neighbors petitioned the Pima County Board of Supervisors to pave Prince Road between Campbell and Country Club. There were concerns about dust, traffic, and ruts. The petition concluded: "to this end, the undersigned subscribe the sum of \$3,500 as their share of the cost of such a project."

In 1979 the City annexed the neighborhood which resulted in additional housing being developed. The City created a Master Plan for the area in 1987. The Northside Area Plan provided a vision for the area acknowledging the Campus Farm, Tucson General Hospital, the Racquet Club, and defining historic washes running into the Rillito River.

Catastrophe struck in 1983 when tropical storm Octave dropped nearly eight inches of rain over a few days causing major flooding and bank erosion of the Rillito. As a result, Pima County constructed soil cement banks to channel the river. The pedestrian/bicycle path on top later became the Loop.

In 2001 Tucson General Hospital transitioned to University Medical Center, featuring a stand-alone building for the Arizona Cancer Center and leased land for the development of the Ronald McDonald House. Neighborhood advisors contributed to the planning and development.

The neighborhood association changed its name from the major street names surrounding the neighborhood to "RillitoBend" in 2013 reflecting the river that defines the area as a relatively isolated peninsula. Neighbors continued to protect the remaining open desert land, emphasizing the rural character of the area.



In the 1980s residents fought a proposed Rillito-Pantano Parkway designed to be an alternative to I-10 connecting IBM and SE Tucson with the Northwest—that would run right through our neighborhood. In 1984 voters rejected the \$15 million bond to fund studies for the proposed 13-mile Parkway although the plans to widen

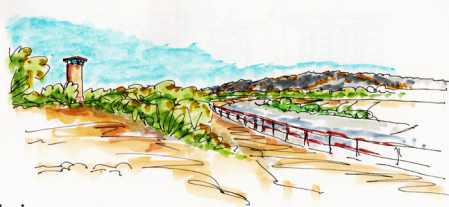
Prince Road to a bridge over the Rillito remained on the City's Transportation Plans for many years.

In the 1990s neighbors actively promoted Rio Vista Natural Resource Park, one of the first natural resource parks in the City. Finally in 2018, the City approved Proposition 407 which provided funding for an updated Master Plan based upon input from RillitoBend and culminating in a celebration event in January 2025. Our engagement for our community is never-ending!

Neighborhood Communications

Throughout the year, we have regular Neighborhood and Board meetings. Our Annual Meeting is in the Fall.

This year, we are starting an E-Newletter to get information to you more quickly. To sign up, scan the QR code or go to our website, RillitoBendNA.org.



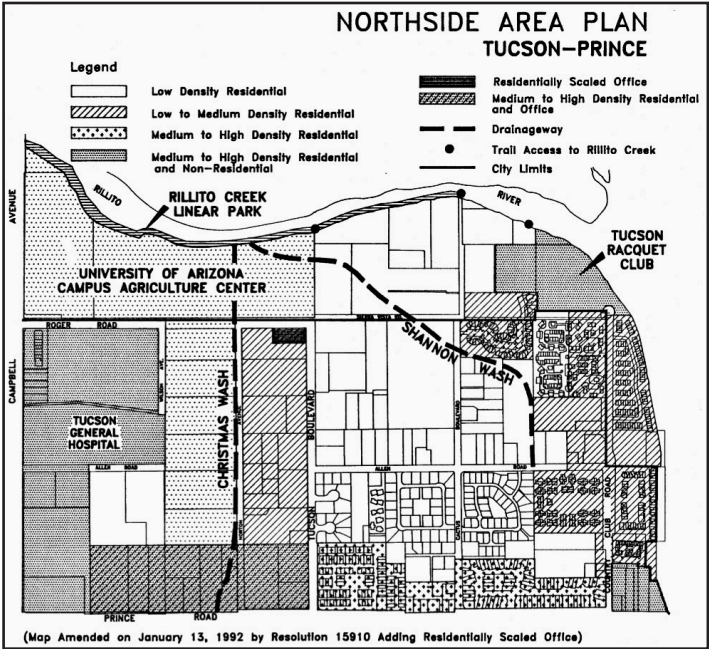
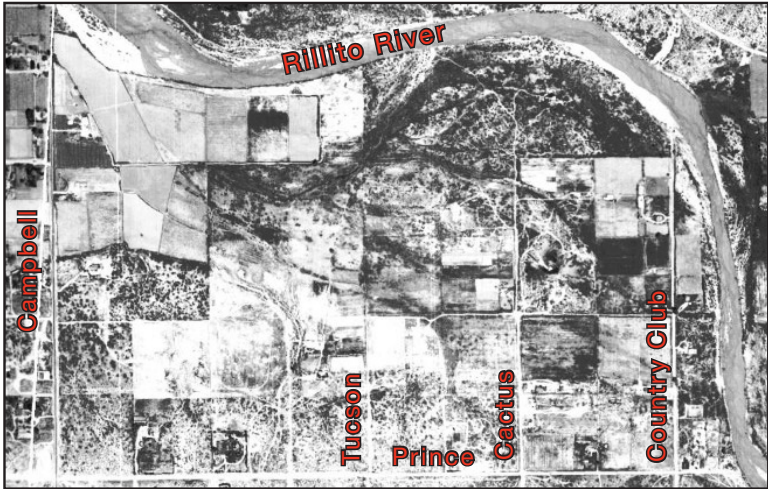
We do not sell or share email addresses other than to send out RBNA news.



Northside Area Plan, 1987

Flood control project: Rillito River at Country Club, 1935 from the collection of the History and Archives Division Arizona State Library azmemory.azlibrary.gov

Aerial view of RillitoBend, 1941



What A Year Can Do

Rio Vista Natural Resource Park is looking great...thanks to the recent rains, a lot of volunteer help and support from Tucson's Department of Parks & Recreation who provided funding for an updated Master Plan. RillitoBend and other neighbors provided valuable input to ensure appropriate priorities were put in place.

Verdant view of the Park



RBNA adopts the Park.



A pair of Harris' hawks Volunteers taking a break from planting



Photo by Mike Shaw

