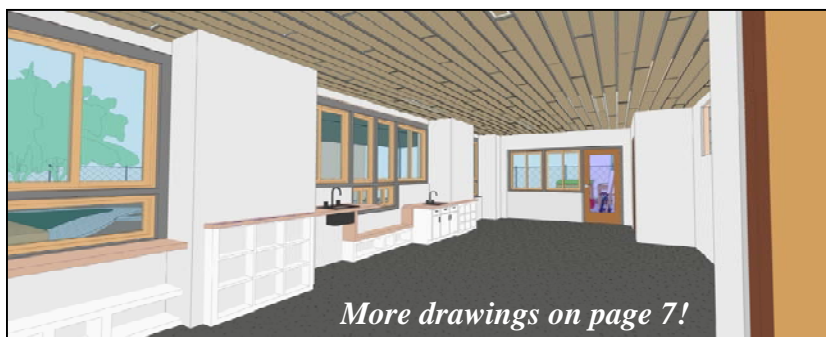


## Outdoor Classroom Project is a Step Into Nature

The architectural rendering seen here could soon replace the patio area at Los Niños del Valle. Just outside the doors, a re-imagined playground will be filled with natural materials and play stations that encourage exploration and creativity with an environmental twist. Thanks to a grant from the Freeport McMoRan Community Investment Fund and support from individual donors, Los Niños del Valle will have a certified “outdoor classroom.”

With gardens, a climbing wall, water features, art and music areas, the playground will be constructed to help children learn in an outdoor environment. Casa Director Bill McCreery told a group of interested

supporters recently that the outdoor classroom concept has been shown to help children’s physical health, brain growth, and contribute to cooperative play and appreciation for nature. Want to know more? See our PowerPoint at PosadaLife.org on the Los Niños del Valle page or call 520-625-2273.



*More drawings on page 7!*



*“Haunted Casa” appeared at the Country Fair White Elephant parade Oct. 31. Inside this issue read about the volunteers and staff who made it happen. The Country Fair White Elephant is a major contributor to Casa, supporting each of our programs. It was our pleasure to help make the Halloween-themed Country Fair a success.*

## Come to ‘Concerts for Casa’ for Great Music!

Were you dancing in the courtyard at Posada Java last year? Your chance to dance, or just listen to a variety of music is coming again each Saturday afternoon from Feb. 20 to March 26.

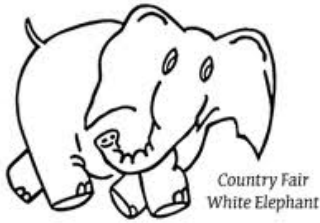
The concerts are free and brought to you by a number of great sponsors whose support helps raise funds for Casa. In addition, proceeds from all purchases made at Posada Java during the concerts go to Casa. So, come, enjoy coffee, ice cream and other treats while you tap your toes to the music. We’ll announce the list of performers in commercials on KGVY Radio and in ads in the Green Valley News. There are sure to be returning favorites!

Tip: The courtyard is set with folding chairs, but feel free to bring your own!

*Casa's ability to provide programs and services to the Green Valley community is strengthened by support from businesses, organizations, foundations and churches.*

***These are our Partners that Care.***

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**\$5,000 and More**



**FREEPORT-McMORAN  
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**Green Valley News**  
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- Long Realty Cares Foundation
- Masonic Charities of Arizona
- Patio Sales Group of Green Valley Community Church
- St. Francis-in-the-Valley Episcopal Church
- Southern Arizona Foundation

**\$500 to \$999**

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- ◇ Native Gardens of Green Valley
- ◇ Northwest Medical Center
- ◇ Ranchers' Mercantile of Amado
- ◇ Sunland Asphalt
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- ◇ W.F. Stevens Financial Advisors





# Volunteering

## Volunteer Time: Making the 'Haunted Casa' Happen

Casa Community Services utilizes volunteers in many different ways. One annual undertaking is the Country Fair White Elephant Parade.

The White Elephant has always been a staunch supporter of Casa and its programs—and we like to give back by supporting theirs.

From the date in August when the Parade invitation and theme letter arrives to the last Saturday in October, when the parade takes place, a lot of hours are spent on Casa's entry by staff and volunteers.

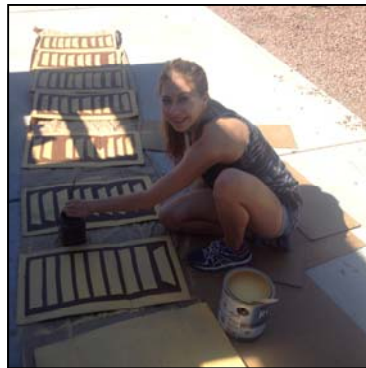
The 2015 Parade Committee included Alya Verdugo, Los Ninos Summer Program teacher, Stephanie and Dave Peterson, Los Niños parents, Rosanna Nelson, Adult Day Services Director, Aimee and Steve Schmidt, Los Niños parents, Diane Stanard, Casa Administrative Assistant, Carla Castaneda, Senior Lunch Program Coordinator, Bill McCreery, Casa Community Services Director and Ellen March, Community Center Director.

Early meetings determined how we would interpret the Parade theme. The committee embraced all the tasks with great enthusiasm: Alya would design the float and Stephanie and Dave would build it. Aimee and Steve supplied the trailer and hay bales, Carla and Bill were in charge of music, Diane and Ellen took charge of the cauldron and bubble-making as well as the hundreds of little Halloween bubble

souvenirs we would hand out to children along the parade route. Aimee organized the other Los Niños parents. Diane designed and ordered the banner. Ellen kept track of everything and everybody so nothing was forgotten.



*Dave Peterson, wielding a drill to put finishing touches on the float.*



*Alya Verdugo painting the 'haunted' float.*



*Rosanna Nelson with parade participants Mike and Brenda Chase.*

The day of the parade (a beautiful Green Valley day), more volunteers stepped forward to be a part of the effort. Float riders and walkers included: Michelle Moholt and her daughter Layla Courtney, Claudia Villegas and her daughter Gisselle Villegas, Holly Diaz and her son Dante Arnold, Pamela Alvarez, with daughter Michelle and son Miguel, Aimee Schmidt with

son Scott, Stephanie Peterson with sons Riley and Devin and daughter Austyn, Carla Castaneda, Diane Stanard, Ellen March, Claudia Ortega, Carolina Minjares, Susie Simmons, Mike and Brenda Chase, Rosanna Nelson, Bill McCreery. Float driver was Dave Peterson, and photographer was Barbara Averill.

We can't wait for next year's parade!



*Parade participants Ellen March and Diane Stanard dressed for their parts.*



# Casa Community Center

## What is 'Senior Lunch'?

This program offers educational presentations, entertainment and Day Trips throughout southern Arizona in addition to a nutritious lunch served five days a week. The Bavarian Brass Band pictured below is one example of a pre-lunch event.

The cost is low, the benefits high—lunch is served Monday through Friday for a suggested donation of \$3. Free transportation is provided by Pima Council on Aging through the Sun Shuttle. Each month's menu is listed on the [www.posadalife.org](http://www.posadalife.org) website and in the Green Valley News.

To register or for more information, call Carla Castaneda at 393-6814 or email her at: [ccastaneda@casagv.org](mailto:ccastaneda@casagv.org)



## Day Trips and Special Events

A bonus for the members of Casa's Senior Lunch Program is the opportunity to visit area attractions twice a month. Another popular monthly outing is having lunch in a restaurant. Participation in these Day Trips is on a first come, first served basis so check in at the Community Center often!

In December, we plan to enjoy the music of True Concord Voices and Orchestra as well as visit the Gaslight Theatre for melodrama. Trips under consideration for the first quarter of 2016 include Basha's Gallery of Western and Native American Art in Chandler, movie locations in Santa Cruz County, Roadhouse Cinema in Tucson, Kartchner Caverns and several more.

## AROUND THE WORLD...

...will give us a glimpse of life in China on December 9 and a tour of Greece and Italy on January 20. The destination for February's Around the World to be held on the 17th, will be announced. These half-hour presentations provide a fascinating look at other countries and customs. Each begins at 11 a.m. on the third Wednesday of the month. **PLEASE JOIN US—NO REGISTRATION NEEDED**

## BUNCO AT CASA

Our new venture was off to a great start in October and will continue each second Sunday afternoon at 2 p.m. We play this old dice game from 2 p.m. until 3:30. Everyone is welcome—but please register in advance so we know how many to expect. The sign-up sheet is available in the Community Center or call Barbara Sidick at 332-2444. The cost to play is \$5 and many prizes are available to win. Casa supplies refreshments so plan to join us.



## Victory Volunteers

*Victory Volunteers meets weekly on Thursday mornings to complete tasks provided by the Coordinator. Members stuff envelopes, assemble booklets and packets, clip coupons for our troops overseas, fold bags for the Country Fair White Elephant—whatever the community needs. Pictured, two of our volunteers, Vera and Bernie Schuler. Call Ellen to join (393-6840) or just come on over on Thursdays at 10 a.m.*



# Casa Community Center



*Freddie Freeman, winner of the first annual Vicki Heppner Memorial Blackjack Tournament, accepts her award from Vicki's sister Melodye Cooke. Vicki was a longtime Casa volunteer who loved working in the Senior Lunch Program.*

## Health & Wellness

***A Course in Miracles Book Study***—Mondays,  
3:30 p.m. Admin. Bldg. Conference Room  
Call Page for info: 303-5982

***Alcoholics Anonymous***—Mon. & Sat., 7 p.m.

***Blood Pressure Checks***—Mondays, 10:30 a.m.  
Thursdays, 11:30 a.m.

***Elder Circle***—3 p.m., Dec. 21, Jan. 25, and  
Feb. 23

***GV Meditation Group***—Sundays, 10:30 a.m.

***Nutrition Talk***—3rd Wednesday, 11 a.m.

***PCOA Matter of Balance Class***—Jan. 5, 7, 12,  
14, 19, 21, 26 and 28 from 1:30 p.m. to 3:30  
p.m.—Pre-registration required. Call  
PCOA at 520-790-7262

***Tension Release Exercise***—9:30 a.m., Dec. 5,  
Jan. 2, Feb. 6. Call Diann for info: 520-625-8312

***Victory Volunteers***—every Thursday, 10 a.m.

***Weight Watchers***—Wednesdays, 8 a.m.

**Call 520-393-6840 for more information.**



February and  
March are  
application months  
for the next  
Dreams Come  
True awards.

Please download the application on the  
[www.posadalife.org](http://www.posadalife.org) website or contact Ellen at  
393-6840.

Deadline is March 31. The committee will meet in  
April and the award presentation will be on May 2.

APPLY for your Dream or that of your neighbor or  
family member to come true!

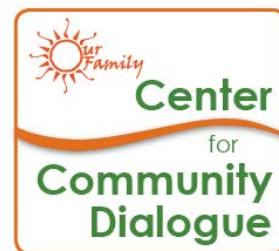
## Elder Circle Continues

*Join us on the wisdom  
journey!*

Elder Circles are held at  
Casa in partnership with  
The Center for Community  
Dialogue in Tucson.

This once a month discussion group meets with a  
trained facilitator to discuss important topics and  
share stories.

2015-2016 meetings will be on December 21,  
January 25 and February 23 at 3 p.m. in the Casa  
Community Center. Call Ellen to reserve your place  
in the Circle at 520-393-6840.





# Adult Day Services



*An outing to the Cow Palace in Amado brought smiles under the watchful eye of a "moose." Our trips to restaurants and area attractions are always popular.*

## Caregiver Support Group Expands

The Casa Caregiver Support Group has a new home and new time. The group, open to the community, meets at 12:30 p.m. every first and third Thursday in The Pavilion on the La Posada campus. Call Rosanna Nelson at 520-393-6835 for information.

## Play Ball!

T-shirts, bobble-head dolls and lots of cheerings for the Arizona Diamondbacks made for an exciting day. The items were generously provided by Diamondbacks Southern Arizona representative Mike Feder. The group viewed famous baseball plays, enjoyed Cracker Jack and sang "Take Me Out to the Ballgame" and other baseball themed songs. Pictured, Lois displays a bobble-head of A. J.



Pollock. Marie shows off a commemorative shirt.



## The Science Behind Life-long Learning

"You learn something new each day." Have you heard that saying? It's important to challenge your brain with new information. Research studies show that as a brain ages, other parts of the brain can compensate for what is being lost and actually grow additional tissue to balance the changes. Even in later adulthood the brain can stay productive and active when stimulated to use these other areas. This is good news! Your neurons can adapt to the changes brought by aging when they are stimulated by socialization, learning new things, or exercise.

To maximize this stimulation that improves your brain, the study shows learning new skills are the best path. A community-based research project at the Park Center for Brain Health in Dallas had people learn a new digital photography skill, which they compared to learning advanced techniques in quilting. People who learned an entirely new skill

had the most improvement in their brains.

Often what we do in Adult Day Services seems like simple fun but it can have scientifically proven benefits! In one corner, the men might be preparing wood blocks to build a bird house. In another area, a table of colorful beads is being turned into sparkly jewelry in the hands of talented crafters. Together with children from Los Niños del Valle, the group learns a new song. We dig out a computer version of Jeopardy to enhance trivia knowledge.

We have many other opportunities to try new skills such as leather or copper tooling or physical games. "Brain Games" are a daily part of our program. Participants use iPads to assist in learning.

Come see it for yourself! If you would like to arrange a tour of Casa Adult Day Services, please call Rosanna Nelson at 520-393-6835.





# Los Niños del Valle

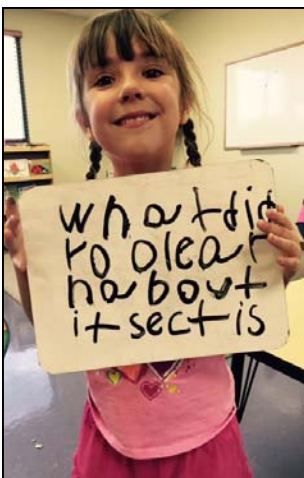
## Our Outdoor Classroom Plans are Taking Shape!

*Clockwise, from top left, here is a view of the elements of our planned Outdoor Classroom. The first image is a birdseye view of our playground showing the shade structures, trees and layout of our plan. Next is the toddler play area. Below that, the swings and climbing wall. At bottom right, see our deck and garden areas. Last, our storage area and view of the enclosed patio.*



## What Has Eight Legs and Inspires Natural Curiosity?

The fall weather has made it possible for the children to be outside most of the day and the enthusiasm for the natural world is bubbling over! Our 4- and 5-year-olds are mesmerized by the study of insects! A full six weeks of investigations into



this tiny world has revealed a specific interest...SPIDERS! Supporting this study is our Lending Library filled with information for examining what we know, what we don't know, and what we want to know about spiders!

Our appreciation goes out to Helen Hanselmann and Ruth Gosman, retired librarians and residents of La Posada,

for their commitment to the organization of our large book collection. We now have quick access to titles organized under specific themes.

The children and teachers will be able to spend afternoons outside under the shade of the Aleppo Pine tree observing, drawing, and reading stories about the sights and sounds of the wonder of nature.

Our 3-year-olds are also intrigued by nature and specifically the food we eat! Where does it come

from and how does it grow? We'll be exploring "how does our garden grow" with Instructional Specialists, Jennifer Parlin and Jacqui Stork from the U of A

Cooperative Extension. Our teachers will gain valuable information for maximizing the garden's potential!

Science inquiry and math concepts as well as social cooperation, communication, and problem-solving will be some of the skills the children will practice and learn managing the school garden. The learning opportunities will be bountiful, as will the harvest!



## Staying in Touch With a Touch of Tech

To provide our families, teachers, and administration with an all-in-one tool for real-time communication we have signed on with "Parent Square." This interactive website is a private and secure platform for teachers and staff to communicate with parents. Group emails, posting events, messages, photos, and volunteer sign-ups are simple. The response to this streamlined tool has been overwhelmingly positive. We look forward to more efficient communication and we are excited to invite our families to a greater participation in their child's early education.



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## Foundation News

*By Mark N. Dugan,  
Vice President, Posada Life Foundation  
520-648-7910*



### **The Envelope Inside**

The envelope insert in this issue of the Casa newsletter is designed to make it easy to help us keep our goal to serve the entire community in ways that connect each person with a better life.

All gifts make a difference. At the Casa Community Center, it means helping keep people make and keep social connections, enjoy nutritious meals and broaden their horizons with trips and speakers. At Los Niños del Valle, it means making quality child care available to working families and helping their

children prepare for a life of learning and success. In Adult Day Services, it means giving a caregiver respite while their loved one enjoys a day filled with meaningful activities, fun events and the supportive care they need.

Please take a moment to consider a tax-deductible gift using the pre-addressed envelope we've provided. We promise that your contribution will make a difference!

To learn more about Casa's programs or the Posada Life Foundation, visit [www.PosadaLife.org](http://www.PosadaLife.org).

**Adult Day Services • Counseling • Casa Community Center  
Los Niños del Valle Preschool and Child Care • Volunteer Opportunities**