

# Sahuarita Farms News

May/June 2014

*An Update to our Neighbors in the Santa Cruz River Valley*

SUPPORTS BALLPLAYERS OF ALL AGES

## One Man's Passion for Sport Results in 1st Green Valley Park

The Chuck Catino Softball Complex, within the Canoa Preserve Community Park, is the product of the passion and love of sport of its namesake Chuck Catino.

Chuck is President and Founder of **Born Again Jocks Association** or BAJA as it is commonly known. This organization is committed to providing recreation opportunities to players of all ages, but particularly those that are, as we say, a bit more experienced.

Soon after BAJA started, it became clear to Chuck that there were simply not enough fields and facilities to accommodate the overwhelming interest among Green Valley residents to play organized sports, particularly softball.

That is when Chuck got into high gear and started the campaign to get this park built.

Thanks to Chuck, today there are two adult softball fields, covered bleachers, and a ramada with two picnic tables and a grill. Future plans call for two additional softball fields, a dog park, ramadas and picnic areas, a playground, restrooms, and parking.

Chuck raised almost \$2 million of in-kind contributions which were matched with

funding from Pima County and the Sahuarita Unified School District.

Caterpillar's Tucson Proving Grounds provided the earthmoving equipment to shape the land to accommodate this park.

Farmers Investment Co. (FICO) and Pima County are collaborating on an easement agreement that will lead to 1.9 miles of a trail that will connect the Canoa Preserve Community Park to the Anza Trail.

The easement would allow for a designated route through the FICO pecan orchards offering a safe, non-vehicular connection for hiking, cycling, and equestrian traffic between the park and the Abrego Trailhead.

With input from community stakeholders such as BAJA and the Santa Cruz Valley Bicycle Advocate Committee, the easement will be finalized soon given the recent ap-

proval of the Continental Farms Specific Plan by the Pima County Board of Supervisors (see article on page 3).

Our entire community, both today and in the future, will benefit significantly from the hard work and dedication of Chuck Catino ■



Chuck Catino

## Sahuarita Farms Land/River



### MASTER PLAN

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## Welcome

*Dear Neighbor,*

*The warm days and cool nights of an Arizona late spring and early summer are upon us.*

*We are seeing the buds of new growth and leaves again on our pecan trees and are getting prepared for our summer growing season.*

*It's also a time when the lure of good weather gets us outside and participating in many healthy activities; whether it's playing team sports or simply taking a walk on one of our many local trails and paths.*

*In this issue of our newsletter you will learn more about both the existing recreational opportunities and the potential for more in the future. We also want to share with you updates about our land planning efforts and tell you about an exciting education program in which we are participating.*

*Again, please do not hesitate to contact us if you have any questions or need further information.*

*Thank you for your interest.*

### Dick and Nan



Nan receiving the 2014 Udall Spirit of Arizona Award from Tohono O'odham Chairman Ned Norris, Jr. The Spirit of Arizona Award

recognizes groups and individuals who work to make the community a better place.

## Did You Know?

The Parks, Open Space and Trails Plan for Sahuarita Farms includes:

- A public greenway system with bike paths, walkways and trails along the Santa Cruz River on FICO properties from Canoa Ranch to Pima Mine Road;
- An integral segment of the Jaun Bautista de Anza National Historical Trail (Anza Trail);
- Parks for the greater community, as well as in the neighborhoods in close walking distance of residents;
- Recreational facilities integrated within the neighborhoods and shared between the community and public K-8 schools;
- A comprehensive and interconnected trail and pathway system that links parks with neighborhoods, civic spaces, employment areas and mixed-use activity centers;
- Developed residential recreation areas;
- Open space areas and recreational facilities uniquely programmed for all multi-generational residents within the community;
- Protected and enhanced riparian habitat, natural conservation and water resource / replenishment areas;
- Drainage tributaries designed to enhance wildlife movement, open space and trail connections;
- Community gardens where residents and community groups grow and care for their own fruits and vegetables.

# The Economics of Investing in Parks and Recreation

Communities with significant outdoor recreation opportunities typically have much healthier and more active populations. Healthier communities and levels of activity are, in many cases, directly related to the availability of park and recreation facilities.

Extensive research suggests that communities investing in park and recreation facilities generally have healthier residents and realize numerous other economic benefits, as well. According to the American Planning Association, these benefits include:

- Increased home values in proximity to parks and recreation facilities;
- Increased local government revenues resulting from higher home values and increased economic activity;
- More affluent retirees seeking an active lifestyle choosing to live in a healthier, more active community;
- More high-paying knowledge and tech-based industries gravitating to communities with ample outdoor recreation opportunities for their employees.

Source: American Planning Association

Recognizing these benefits, planning for a Healthy and Active Lifestyle is one of the key guiding principles of FICO's Sahuarita Farms Land and River Master Plan for both current AND future residents. That's why a comprehensive system of parks and open spaces, all interconnected by trails with the Santa Cruz River Park, is a major component of Sahuarita Farms.

Sahuarita Farms will include numer-

ous types of parks and recreational areas, ranging from pocket parks at the end of neighborhood streets to large community and district parks that will serve the entire community. These parks will be planned to accommodate the recreational demands from the project and uniquely designed for the anticipated demographic to served.

And recreation wouldn't be limited to just residential areas, either. Business and employment centers would also include walking and bicycling facilities to encourage daily activity by employees, visitors and other users in the community.

But Sahuarita Farms won't happen overnight. The project is planned to develop over a 50-year time frame. Near-term needs for recreational facilities for our area's

youth won't diminish anytime soon. Indeed, families with children continue to move to Sahuarita every day, and for good reason. This is a great place to live and raise a family!

In order to keep our high quality of life, however, near-term investments in recreational infrastructure by our greater community will be very important. As the research shows, these types of recreational investments generate extremely positive economic returns, community-wide, over the long term.

We plan to do our part through Sahuarita Farms. We believe a robust system of trails, parks and recreational facilities in our project not only makes economic sense, just as the research confirms, but is just the right thing to do for the community and this wonderful area we call home. ■



Artist Rendering of Sahuarita Farms Community Park

## Updates:

### Pima County Approves

**Continental Farms Plan:** The Pima County Board of Supervisors unanimously approved the Continental Farms Specific Plan in March of this year. It covers the portion of FICO's property in unincorporated Pima County along the Santa Cruz River from Continental Road south to Canoa Ranch.

The Specific Plan received widespread public support, including unanimous endorsements from both the Green Valley Coordinating Council's Planning and Architectural Committee and the Pima County Planning and Zoning Commission. In fact, during its presentation to the Board of Supervisors, Pima County

staff noted the absence of any objections to the Specific Plan, which they said was unprecedented for a project of this size.

Consistent with the Sonoran Desert Conservation Plan, the Specific Plan keeps nearly two-thirds of the property as open space, while focusing future development on previously disturbed land that is adjacent to major transportation corridors and existing urban areas.

While the Continental Farms Specific Plan establishes the vision for the property for the long term, the existing pecan orchards will remain for many, many years to come. ■



### WATER NOTE:

## Farmers Water Company

Did you know that FICO has its own water company that delivers high quality drinking water directly to area businesses and residents?

Farmers Water Co. was started in 1959, to serve FICO employees living in housing provided by the farm. The Farmers Water Co. systems are completely separate from the FICO irrigation network used to water the pecan orchards.

Today, Farmers Water Co. serves over 2,800 customers in the greater Green Valley and Sahuarita areas. Customers include residents in the Sahuarita Highlands, Madera Highlands, Madera Reserve and Santa Rita Springs subdivisions, as well as Walden Grove High School, La Posada, the Green Valley Pecan Store and FICO's pecan shelling plant. In the future, Farmers Water Company will serve Sahuarita Farms and the Town of Sahuarita's proposed annexation areas to the east of town.

Matt Bailey manages the day-to-day operations of the water company. Matt is a hydrologist and water attorney and is committed to ensuring that the highest quality

drinking water and service are delivered to customers. Matt oversees the Farmers Water Co. staff that is responsible for planning, operating and maintaining the water delivery systems.

Farmers Water Co. serves its customers with groundwater from a series of production wells that is then fed through booster stations and transmitted throughout its distribution systems to the customer's faucets.



Because Farmers Water Co. pumps directly from the aquifer, minimal treatment is needed. Water quality is constantly monitored to ensure that customers receive only the highest quality water possible. Customers can access water quality reports on the Farmers Water Co. website.

## In the Community

FICO contributes to many local non-profit organizations focused on supporting public education. These include the Sahuarita Educational Enrichment Foundation, Continental School District Educational Foundation, NMSI (see article in this newsletter), the Military Officers Association of America (MOAA) and others.

Pictured below is Tim Campbell presenting the MOAA FICO Scholar – 2014 Award to Sahuarita High School senior Kaelyn Murphy. Kaelyn is the daughter of Tom and Lynn Murphy of Sahuarita. She was one of three recipients of MOAA scholarship awards as determined by the MOAA.

FICO is a proud sponsor of MOAA's scholarship program and supportive of the work it and many other organizations do to advance

public education opportunities in our community



**CDR Brad Roberson  
USN (Ret), Senior  
ROTC Instructor,  
Tim Campbell, FICO  
and Kaelyn Murphy**

Like FICO, Farmers Water Co. is committed to water conservation technology and best management practices. Go to the water company's website for many tips customers can take to conserve water. ■

## For More Information:

To learn more about Farmers Water Company, go to:

<http://www.farmerswaterco.com>

On the website, you can pay your bill, find water quality reports, connect or disconnect service, and tips about water conservation.

You can also call:

(520) 879-7474



# Sahuarita Farms Land/River



**Sahuarita Farms News**  
**1525 E. Sahuarita Road**  
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## For further information

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If you have story ideas such as a profile of a community organization or an event that you would like featured in our newsletter, please send us an e-mail at the address above.

## FICO Sponsors National Math and Science Initiative (NMSI)

This Spring, FICO joined with other regional companies to financially support the National Math and Science Initiative (NMSI) program in both Walden Grove and Sahuarita High Schools.

NMSI is a transformational program specifically designed to increase student achievement in science, technology, engineering, math (STEM), as well as english.

It works with school districts to provide teacher training, on-site coaching and incentives for students and teachers for successfully passing advanced placement (AP) exams.

NMSI addresses a critical deficiency in students' college readiness in STEM subject matters and english. This deficiency threatens the US competitive standing in technology and knowledge-based industries.

According to NMSI, only 44% of high school students in the US are ready for college-level math upon graduation. It is worse in sci-

ence with only 36% ready for college level courses.

This crisis is causing the US to lose its competitive edge internationally. Of the 35 leading industrialized nations, the US ranks 29th in math and 22nd in science.



In the 560 schools where NMSI has already been implemented, there has, however, been an average 72% first-year increase in math, science, and english AP scores.

The Sahuarita Unified School District is the first district in Arizona to implement NMSI.

FICO applauds Freeport-McMoran for its leadership in not only providing substantial funding for the program, but in challenging and organizing the local business community to raise all of the funding necessary to bring this game changing program to the Sahuarita Unified School District.

For more information about NMSI, you can go to: [www.nmsi.org](http://www.nmsi.org) ■

## Save the Date

THE NUTTIEST FESTIVAL IN ARIZONA!

**SATURDAY,  
NOV 8<sup>TH</sup> 2014  
9AM-5PM**

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