



Winds of Wellness

A Monthly Publication of Wellness Connections Phone (520) 452-0080 • Fax (520) 452-0090

www.wellness-connections.org

Reaching Out to the Community

“When you love life passionately, a cloud of beauty floats above, adding an array of wonders to even the worse of days.”
~ Avra Amar Filion



Volunteers from Wellness Connections helped provide commodities to hundreds of people in need

where recipients often had to stand outdoors for hours.

The decision was made to move to a site at the Stone Complex, behind the Oscar Yrun Community Center, to accommodate vehicles instead.

Hundreds of low-income individuals and families take advantage of the service, which provides dried goods, Gatorade, fruit, vegetables, and bread.

The truck comes in on the first Wednesday of each month from the new Willcox Distribution.

Regina was delighted that so many people agreed to participate in this important community event, and she plans to make it a regular occurrence.

“We’re going to be coming here every month,” she said. “It feels great to be helping and our members are excited to give back to the community.”



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When the call for help went out from the Community Food Bank of Southern Arizona, Wellness Connections answered.

During 2015, the non-profit food bank struggled to get volunteers to hand out commodities to the three to four hundred people it serves in Sierra Vista once a month.

The situation became dire in December when only three people turned up to help.

And so regular volunteer Emma Melo turned to Wellness Connections to ask if they would be interested in pitching in.

“We said absolutely,” said

program manager Regina Autry.

Around 16 staff and members stepped up to participate in handing out commodities in January.

Their help allowed the Community Food Bank to give food to hundreds of people in need, and kept the long line of cars moving on what was a bitterly cold day.

“It has made such a difference for us this month,” said the food bank’s distribution coordinator Homero Gomez.

Up until August last year, the food bank operated from St. Vincent De Paul on Bartow Drive,



Health Corner - American Heart Month



Did you know that February is American Heart Month?

Heart disease is the leading cause of death for men and women in the United States. Every year, one in four deaths is caused by heart disease.

The good news? Heart disease can often be prevented when people make healthy choices and manage their health conditions.

Take steps today to lower your risk of heart disease and heart attack.

To prevent heart disease you can:

- ✓ Eat healthy and get active. Aim for two hours and 30 minutes of moderate aerobic activity every week.
- ✓ Watch your weight. If you are overweight or obese, losing just 10 pounds can lower your risk of heart disease.

- ✓ Quit smoking and stay away from second hand smoke.
- ✓ Control your cholesterol and blood pressure.
- ✓ If you drink alcohol, drink only in moderation. Limit your drinking to no more than one drink a day for women, and two for men.
- ✓ Take steps to prevent Type 2 Diabetes.
- ✓ Manage stress.
- ✓ It is important that you know your numbers.
- ✓ Get your cholesterol checked at least once every five years. Talk with your doctor about getting it checked.
- ✓ Get your blood pressure checked at least once every two years. High blood pressure has no signs or symptoms.

For more information about heart disease and American Heart Month, visit the American Heart Association website at www.heart.org



Fun in Photos



Mind & Movement Group at Sierra Vista Wellness Connections



Benson Mobile and Nogales Wellness Connections Program's outing to Patagonia Lake



Liz, Susan, Lona & Walter in Sierra Vista WC's garden



Douglas WC member, Juan, works with a local volunteer to pour in mesquite beans while Douglas WC member, Greg, operates the hammer mill.

Member Spotlight: SV's Felicia & James

She has only been a member for a few weeks, but Felicia is already getting involved in the many activities that Wellness Connections has to offer.

Among them was the chance to volunteer at the monthly Community Food Bank, where she helped hand out commodities to hundreds of people.

"Giving back makes me feel good," Felicia said, when asked why she volunteered. "I think this brings up

our spirits when we've been down, to see a smile on the people's faces."

Felicia arrived in Sierra Vista from Kentucky in October.

And although she has been with Wellness Connections for a short time only, she believes the organization is already providing her with the help she needs.

"It's been a very good support system for me, especially for my PTSD," she said. "I feel like I can talk to anyone and they have really encouraged me to deal with everything and to be myself."

James likes to keep busy. He says it helps keep him out of trouble.

That's one of the reasons he decided to volunteer at the Community Food Bank of Southern Arizona.

James decided his time would be put to better use by keeping the site clean on a blustery day.

"Coming here gives me a productive place to be," he said. "It's good to occupy my time for people who appreciate it.

"I like to help everyone by keeping the area looking nice. It's good for the Earth. For me, this is more about doing something for the environment around us."

James has been a member of Wellness Connections for about a year.

He believes the activities he can participate in helps to keep him on the right path.

"Being a part of Wellness Connections gives me something to do," he said.



Member James bags some apples and helps to keep the Community Food Bank site clean



New member Felicia helps to give out healthy vegetables at the Community Food Bank

News & Notes



Manny, Nogaes Wellness Connection's member has recently been released from ICU where he'd been since shortly after Christmas. He told Kari, "I'm doing better. I just can't wait to see you guys." Nogaes members were able to make the trip to Tucson to see Manny at

the end of January. He was glad to see them and looks forward to returning to the program as soon as he is able.

Employment Tip

The Arizona Workforce Connection is a local resource that could help you find employment.

Services at their One Stop Centers in Cochise, Graham, Greenlee and Santa Cruz Counties include:

- Job search assistance
- Job listings
- Access to phones, the Internet, printers, fax copy machines
- Workshops
- Information on wages and trends
- Community resources
- Referrals to other services

And more...

To find out more, and how they can help you find a job, visit www.seazworkforce.org or www.santacruzonestop.org



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Wellness Connections' Mission Statement & Overview

Mission Statement:

"Wellness Connections is committed to providing peer-led, life-enhancing opportunities for mental health recovery and wellness."

Overview

Wellness Connections is a peer-run organization providing peer-run behavioral health and addiction recovery services since February 2002.

Wellness Connections maintains a qualified staff of Peer Support Specialists and Behavior Health Technicians.

The expected outcome for all Wellness Connections' program members is a significantly improved quality of life. Programs are funded through service contracts with Cenpatico, the Department of Veteran's Affairs, Bridgeway and the DES Department of Vocational Rehabilitation. Fundraising and grant funding are also pursued in support of Wellness Connections' mission.

Newsletter Editor: Kari L. Ferrell

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