



The Turning Point Monthly

“The Bridge Is Out – But We Are Open for Business” Celebration

Exit 297 on I-10, July 30 J-Six Ranch/Mescal Community

Take a quick look at your paycheck or income statement, now cut it in half. This is exactly what most businesses are experiencing in the J-Six /Mescal neighborhood just outside Benson on I-10.

One small business has already been forced to close, but others are determined to stay. Bobby Joe’s Pub hired a former White House Chef in order to augment their operations and offer delicious cuisine choices hard to find outside a metro area.

Food, fuel and fun await everyone who attends the July 30 J-Six Mescal Celebration.

There will be live entertainment starting with *Nowhere Man* and a *Whiskey Girl*, the always exciting 3-D GameBox mobile game emporium. (Complete with a climate controlled, limousine-style travel trailer outfitted with monitors, all the most popular video games, and state-of-the-art equipment.)

Watch the [Announcement Tab](#) at www.seago.org for a list of entertainers and activities.

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Thank You Firefighters

According to the Global Language Monitor there are 988,968 words in the English language, all of them combined are insufficient to properly thank the firefighters who faced the Monument Fire and slew that Dragon without a single loss of human life.

Oh, and they squelched the nearby Antelope Fire during high winds on a dry day in just

a matter of hours.

The Horseshoe 2 fire is rapidly approaching ‘closed’ status, thus the three most dangerous wild fires challenging Cochise County are nearly ready for the history books.

And what a story they will tell! Scores of stories about local residents, Cochise County and Sierra Vista officials, hundreds

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ADOT to begin I-10 overpass work at J-Six/Mescal Road on July 5

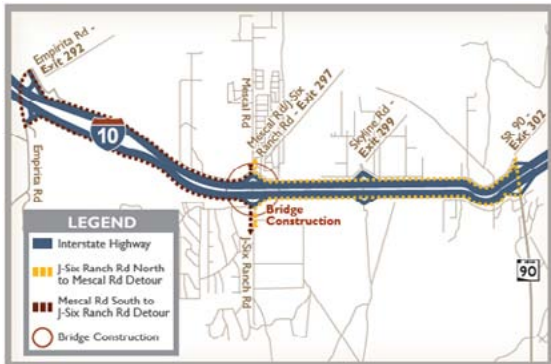
Crews will replace the highway overpass at I-10 Exit 297 lost after a fiery crash in March. The Arizona Department of Transportation will break ground on reconstructing the fire-damaged J-Six Ranch Road/Mescal Road bridge following the Independence Day weekend.

In preparation of the construction, signs and traffic control equipment will be posted on I-10 approaching the project site beginning Monday June 27).

The first phase of the \$955,588 project is scheduled to begin July 5 when crews will complete the demolition and removal of structural concrete from the old overpass, a process expected to take about 10 days.

The project will continue with construction of new support columns to replace those damaged by the fire, the addition of pier caps and construction of part of the bridge, followed by setting of the new bridge girders.

[Read full story here.](#)



[More about overpass story](#)

[Check out our June issue to see how the overpass problem is impacting local businesses.](#)

[ADOT has created a great video that shows the problem and the solution.](#)

[More about Title VI story](#)

Anyone with ideas on how SEAGO may improve its outreach methods to Title VI populations is encouraged to contact Randy Heiss at 432-5301 X202 or (rheiss@seago.org).

[More about ICD-10 story](#)

[Read the complete article at magazine's website.](#)

Plan Nearing Completion SEAGO Soliciting Ideas To Reach Disadvantaged

By Randy Heiss

Like other Local Government Agencies, SEAGO is required to carry out its transportation planning duties and obligations in accordance with all applicable Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) requirements.

Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 requires that "No person in the United States shall on the grounds of race, color, or national origin be excluded from participation in, denied the benefits of, or subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance." (42 USC 2000d).

Other groups protected from such discrimination include qualified handicapped individuals, individuals who are discriminated against because of their sex, age, or limited English proficiency, and persons who may be displaced as a result of Federal-aid programs and projects.

In response to FHWA's increased focus on Title VI requirements, SEAGO is in the process of developing a Title VI Implementation and Public Participation Plan.

The purpose of this plan is to describe how SEAGO intends to ensure that Title VI protected populations are provided meaningful opportunities to become involved in the transportation planning process within the SEAGO region.

ICD-10 Switch Could Cost Hospitals \$2-\$5 Million Each

Transitioning over to ICD-10 could cost large hospitals between \$2-5 million and up to \$20 million for large systems, according to James Swanson, director of client services at Virtusa, an IT services and consulting company, in a *ComputerWorld* article.

Regulated by the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS), healthcare providers and insurance payers are required to change from the ICD-9 to ICD-10 coding system by Oct. 1, 2013. ICD-10, aimed at tracking diagnoses and treatments, affects 15,000 existing codes and adds 68,000 new ones.

Even though the deadline is two years away, massive

implementation has been reportedly slow and cumbersome for hospitals and health systems.

ICD-10 affects institution-wide systems, including electronic health records, billing, reporting, and decision-making.

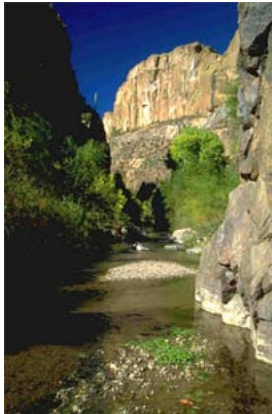
Smaller hospitals, in particular, are at risk for not meeting the deadline, according to Jim Whicker, principal technology consultant for health IT strategy and policy at Kaiser Permanente's information technology division, notes *ComputerWorld*. Whicker urged CMS to provide more guidance on implementation of ICD-10.

Public Review Sought on Water-Quality Plan

By **Randy Heiss**

Interested parties will soon have the opportunity to review and comment on a new plan to assist in the management of water quality in the SEAGO region.

As a federally designated planning agency, SEAGO is charged with maintaining a regional water quality management plan (WQMP) as required under the Federal Water Pollution Control Act Amendments of 1972 (P.L. 92-500), commonly referred to as the Clean Water Act (CWA).



The current SEAGO WQMP was adopted in 1994, and although it has undergone numerous amendments relating to wastewater facilities in the region, the strategies and

procedures within the existing plan have remained unchanged over the years.

The current SEAGO WQMP is primarily an inventory of then-existing wastewater treatment facilities in the region and the 20-year capacity projections for those facilities.

As new facilities were proposed or capacity projections needed modification, a “plan amendment” was required to update the regional plan.

The plan amendment process is both time-consuming, costly and of questionable value, especially when it involves a city, town, or sanitary district.

Expansion or development of a public wastewater treatment facility requires multiple public processes including planning and zoning hearings and approval of capital expenditures by the governing body for design and construction.

The requirement for a separate 208 amendment often resulted in a large amount of expended effort with little to no public participation because the project was already well publicized and approved through other processes.

[Click here to read full story.](#)

For More Information

Interested parties may contact Randy Heiss at 432-5301 X202 or (rhheiss@seago.org) for more information about the WQMP.

To reach Danielle Flink, Director of Service Programs at Volunteer Southern Arizona, send her an [email](#) or call her at (520) 881-3300 ext. 143.

To learn more about the Ombudsman program, call Maggie McQuaid at SEAGO/AAA, (520) 432 5301, ext. 204.

Volunteer S. Arizona Sponsoring AmeriCorps State Program

Volunteer Southern Arizona is proud to sponsor the Youth Now Collaboration AmeriCorps State program.

The Youth Now Collaboration places AmeriCorps members in nonprofit organizations and



schools to engage youth in volunteer and service activities.

We are pleased to offer your organization or school the opportunity to host AmeriCorps members from October 2011 through September 2012 in Cochise, Pima, and/or Santa Cruz Counties.

Please review the background information and carefully read the instructions to complete the application.

[Click here to read full story.](#)

Advocating for the Elderly: Long-Term Care Ombudsmen

By **Maggie McQuaid**

“They say that old trees just grow stronger, Old rivers grow wider every day. But old people, they just grow lonely, Waiting for someone to say, Hello in there, Hello.”

— John Prine

Loneliness and isolation are too often a feature of growing old. The problem can become even more pronounced for elderly residents of nursing homes or assisted living

facilities. Even in well-managed facilities, elders may be at increased risk of feeling forgotten, overlooked, and ignored.

The Long-Term Care Ombudsman program, a part of SEAGO’s Area Agency on Aging, exists to address this problem.

SEAGO’s Long-Term Care Ombudsmen are a group

[continued on page 4](#)

Cochise College Researcher Offers Look at Benson Economy

By Robert Carreira

Benson's retail sales tax collections saw strong growth in 2007 as a result of Walmart opening. From January 2008 through the middle of 2009, there was a general downward trend due to the recession.

We then saw a general upward trend until about the middle of last year.

Since then, retail tax collections have trended downward, likely due to the opening of the new Walmart in Sierra Vista, which lures customers from the Benson store.

We can expect city-wide sales to be down 5 to 10 percent for the year due largely to the lost market share to the new Sierra Vista Walmart store.

Instability in restaurant, bar sales

At the county level, there has been instability in restaurant and bar sales over the past few years, but the net effect is that sales have been basically flat.

In Benson, restaurant and bar sales saw strong growth in 2009 due to the opening of Gracie's station.

Ombudsmen . . .

of specially-trained volunteers who regularly visit assigned facilities, get to know the residents, and advocate for their needs and rights.

This advocacy can range anywhere from addressing a resident's complaint about food or desire for additional activities, all the way up to identifying and obtaining help when a resident is being mistreated or overlooked.

For further information about the Long-Term Care Ombudsmen program contact coordinator Maggie McQuaid at SEAGO/AAA, (520) 432 5301, ext. 204.

Read full story here.



For More Information

Robert Carreira, Ph.D., is director of the Center for Economic Research at Cochise College. He can be reached at (520) 515-5486 or via e-mail.

The Benson Community Profile can be found at the SEAGO EDD online CEDS document.

Find out what Benson is doing by visiting the website of the City of Benson, the Visitor Center or the Chamber of Commerce.

The initial spike was short-lived and the trend since then has been generally downward.

Since late last year, restaurant and bar sales countywide have been generally in positive territory with a flat trend at moderate growth; in Benson, the trend has been generally flat since late last year but in negative territory.

Accommodation receipts (hotel, motel, RV park, and other lodging stays of less than 30 days) were mostly in positive territory last year both in Benson and countywide.

Military exercise causes sales spike

Sales spiked last summer as a result of the Empire Challenge military exercise, which boosted sales in Benson and Sierra Vista, pushing up countywide numbers.

After the exercise, the countywide trend in accommodation sales was downward, due to steep declines in the tourism areas of Tombstone and Bisbee.

In Benson there was a generally downward trend after the Empire Challenge exercise, but this year there has been some growth.

This year's Empire Challenge exercise should lead to modest growth in county-level accommodation sales for the year.

Read full story here.

The Turning Point Monthly

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To subscribe, visit www.seagoedd.org

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Gary Dillard, copy and graphics editor

Items for publication are welcomed from SEAGO member entities and strategic partners. Copy must be submitted at least 7 business days prior to the end of each month.

Thank You, Firefighters . . .

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of volunteers and those courageous firefighters who battled the perfect storm of dry weather, high winds, low humidity and in many cases topography suitable for National Geographic magazine.

In future editions of this newsletter SEAGO will endeavor to point the spotlight on the successes, the people behind the scenes and bring attention to the outpouring of support from throughout the County and around the State.

It is a marvelous story.

Mega Kudos to Cochise County authorities as they organized and coordinated this emergency with support from virtually every agency in the area.

Likewise, enough cannot be printed to praise the efforts of the City staff in Sierra Vista by keeping the public informed, gathering emergency supplies and sending prayers and good wishes towards the heav-



ens to guide and protect the fire fighting warriors — and on that note we are issuing fair notice that in the weeks to come watch for front-line stories of this incredible chapter in the history of Cochise County.

By Akos Kovach

Photo on page 1 is from www.inciweb.org and the above photo is from Vicki Gilbert, Hereford business owner.

After Fires, Next Concern: Erosion Control

By Cado Daily

First, my thoughts go out to all who have been impacted by Arizona's fires. Now that the burns are under control, in anticipation of monsoon rains a main concern is erosion control (click here to reach our erosion resources on the Water Wise website). Also, please don't hesitate to call us if you would like specific information and/or an on-site visit.

Water harvesting

Reduce on-site erosion by harvesting water: By catching rain and using it to conserve groundwater supplies, you can reduce the amount of water flowing onto your land, meter out the collected water as you need it throughout the year *and* have water if the electricity goes out, the pipes freeze or the well runs dry (I used water from my tanks when the pipes froze this winter — it was great!)

Sierra Vista tour

To learn about water harvesting systems,

come join us on Saturday, July 9, for the Sierra Vista Rainwater Harvesting Tour (click here for flyer). The guided tour begins 8 a.m. at 5139 S. Calle Encina (Hwy 92, west on Yaqui, south on Calle Encina). This 3-hour tour will visit 5 residential water harvesting systems including two of the RainScape Challenge Contest winners!

Bisbee tour

Our Bisbee tour will be Saturday, July 16, Bisbee Rainwater Harvesting Tour (click here for flyer). The guided tour begins at 8 a.m. at City Park, Brewery Ave, Old Bisbee (just up canyon from St. Elmo's Bar, on the left).

This 2-hour guided tour will visit 4 residential water harvesting systems in Old Bisbee. A 170-gallon "rainwater trough" will be raffled off at the City Park site (must be present to win. Raffle ticket price is not considered tax deductible).

For a look at an example of erosion after a recent forest fire in Arizona, [click here to go to the SEAGO EDD blog.](#)

For More Information

Email jwilliams@cals.arizona.edu.

In Sierra Vista, Water Wise is at University of Arizona Cochise County Cooperative Extension, 1140 N. Colombo Ave., phone (520) 458-8278 x 2139.

In Bisbee, Water Wise is at 66 Brewery Ave., phone (520) 366-8148. Office hours are Tuesdays and Fridays from noon to 6 p.m.

The organization's website is www.waterwise.arizona.edu

Study Positive about Future of U.S. Industry

From the June 21, 2011 issue of [Agurban](#)

The Boston Consulting Group (BCG) recently released part of an ongoing study they are undertaking on the future of global manufacturing. Their research is very positive for the future of manufacturing in the United States. Their report, in part, follows:

Within the next five years, the United States is expected to experience a manufacturing renaissance as the wage gap with China shrinks and certain U.S. states become some of the cheapest locations for manufacturing in the developed world.

With Chinese wages rising at about 17 percent per year and the value of the yuan continuing to increase, the gap between U.S. and Chinese wages is narrowing rapidly. Meanwhile, flexible work rules and a host of government incentives are making many states-including Mississippi, South Carolina, and Alabama-increasingly competitive as low-cost bases for supplying the U.S. market.

[Read full story here.](#)

Innovative Thinking on Importing Produce

By [John Halikowski](#) and [Lance Jungmeyer](#)

This guest opinion was published June 21 in the [Nogales International](#).

Arizona is a key point of distribution for much of the nation's fresh fruit and vegetables, with produce moving through the Arizona Department of Transportation's ports of entry before heading north into the United States.

But there was a bottleneck. Outdated facilities and restrictive policies were causing produce to go bad before reaching the distribution centers a few miles north of the border. Long lines at inspection stations and different weight requirements presented two challenges that some innovative thinking could solve.

Arizona, the U.S. Department of Homeland Security and the Federal Highway

Administration have invested millions of dollars to upgrade our ports of entry and adjacent highways into the U.S. to ease congestion and speed the process of necessary inspections.

At the Mariposa Port of Entry, for example, more than \$200 million is currently being invested to rebuild the port and make roadway improvements.

As a result, the throughput of freight traffic bringing produce and other goods into Arizona is being greatly expanded.

[Read full story here.](#)

ADOT Praises Benefits of Border Permit

From the [Nogales International](#), June 21

The Arizona Department of Transportation says a pilot program it initiated a year ago for commercial vehicle permits is "proving to be an effective way to improve both the speed and security of bringing fresh fruits and vegetables from Mexico across the border into Nogales."

ADOT says it created the Single Trip Overweight Border Permit, which increases the weight limits for trucks transporting produce from Mexico through the Mariposa Commercial Port of Entry to Nogales warehouses, in response to industry concerns that time-sensitive produce was not moving across the border quickly enough.

[Read full story here.](#)

Pathways success

By [Alison Van Gorp](#)

Vincent Schneider joined the Pathways Program in April of 2011. When Sarah Montoya, his Pathways Case Manager met him, he was in search of some direction in life.

He said he had nothing holding him back and he was ready and willing to give the Pathways Weatherization Program his best shot.

[Read full story here.](#)



CEDS Now an Online Living Document

The new online version of the [SEAGO Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy \(CEDS\)](#) is ready for fulltime use, research and reference.

While the CEDS is wholly reviewed and restructured every five years, the actual hands-on work never ceases. Annual updates are mandatory, but SEAGO goes a few steps further, updating our online CEDS as we move forward through the new fiscal year.

In fact our first update has just been posted as a recently compiled Excel [spreadsheet depicting population statistics](#) for each member entity in the SEAGO Region. This information was generated for the Title VI Plan Executive Director Randy Heiss has been working on in order to maintain SEAGO's high standard of timely reporting.

More about Pathways

For more information about the Pathways' programs, contact [Alison Van Gorp](#).