

MEET OUR 2025 HERITAGE DAYS PRESENTERS



KEYNOTE ADDRESS: Dr. Erinanne Saffell — “Putting the Drought in Perspective”

Dr. Erinanne Saffell is Director of the Arizona Department of Climatology and serves as Associate Professor in the School of Geographical Sciences and Urban Planning at Arizona State University. She develops courses and seminars in Physical Geography, Meteorology, and Climatology. She is currently co-chair of the Arizona Drought Monitoring Technical Committee. Dr. Saffell’s goal is to serve Arizona by helping communities, agencies, and public understand Arizona’s weather and climate.



Dr. Neha Gupta — “Regional Overview of San Simon Valley Groundwater”

Dr. Gupta is an Assistant Research Professor within the Arizona Institute for Resilience, and an affiliate faculty member with the Department of Hydrology and Atmospheric Sciences at the University of Arizona. Her work focuses on interdisciplinary approaches to linking hydrology, water resources management, and community and stakeholder engagement. She is affiliated with many professional societies and collaborative networks, including the American Geophysical Union, Arizona Hydrological Society, and the Arizona Cross-Watershed Network.



Craig McEwan — “The Forgotten History of the San Simon River”

Craig is the directing editor of the *Cochise County Historical Journal*, a biannual publication of the Cochise County Historical Society. He is also that organization’s vice president. He is a board member of the Chiricahua-Peloncillo Historical Society and a current member of the Rodeo Community Association, Cochise County Corral of the Westerners, and Douglas Historical Society. Craig lives south of Rodeo, New Mexico, near Apache, in Cochise County.



Reed Peters, Margaret Wilch—“Cave Creek Canyon Updates”

Reed has owned Cave Creek Ranch in Portal since 1998, and is the current President of Friends of Cave Creek Canyon (FOCCC), the primary sponsor of Heritage Days. FOCCC staffs the Portal Visitor Information Center, formerly the Ranger Station, and has been instrumental in rebuilding and reopening many Chiricahua Mountain Trails. Margaret Wilch is FOCCC’s Education Coordinator, overseeing numerous community education events and classes.



Mike Anderson—“The Electrification of Cochise and Hidalgo Counties”

Mike has been interested in Borderlands history for as long as he can remember. A former newspaper reporter and managing editor, he taught Arizona and world history as a high school social studies teacher and is the author of *Warren Ballpark: Images of Sports*. His numerous articles on southern Arizona have been published in the *Journal of Arizona History* and *Cochise County Historical Journal*. Mike lives in Bisbee.



Michael Hensley — “Keeping Our Dark Skies Dark”

Michael is a founding member of Dark Sky New Mexico, a privately owned remote telescope hosting site with clients from seven countries and twenty one states. He is also a founding member of New Mexico Dark Sky, an advocacy organization that lobbies state and local governments to maintain New Mexico’s natural dark skies. Michael was a professor of urban and regional studies at Virginia Tech, where he also served as the university’s economic development director. He has also been the Director of the Noble Center for Advanced Technology at Oklahoma State University, and holds a doctorate in technology education from Virginia Tech.



Chris McCreedy — “Southwestern Birds: a Declining Population”

Chris is the SW Bird Recovery Manager for the American Bird Conservancy. He has a BS degree from the University of Michigan and after graduation worked on Bell’s Vireos in the New Mexico desert. Before joining ABC, Chris worked with Point Blue Conservation Science as its desert program lead for over 20 years, implementing research projects addressing a wide array of avian conservation issues. He is fascinated by drought impacts on bird populations, and spends much time searching for bird nests.



Roberto Wolf Webels — “Borderland Jaguars: A Survival Story”

Roberto is Mexico General Manager for the Northern Jaguar Project. He has worked at the Chapultepec Zoo in Mexico City, and held curatorial positions at several large zoos in Mexico. Roberto has participated in advisory groups for the Mexican and U.S. governments related to Mexican gray wolves and ocelots. With an emphasis on wolf reintroduction, he worked for Mexico’s Federal Wildlife Agency and Natural Protected Areas Commission. Roberto continues the Northern Jaguar Project’s work to create cooperative solutions for the conservation of jaguars.

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 20 — Geronimo Event Center, Rodeo, NM

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