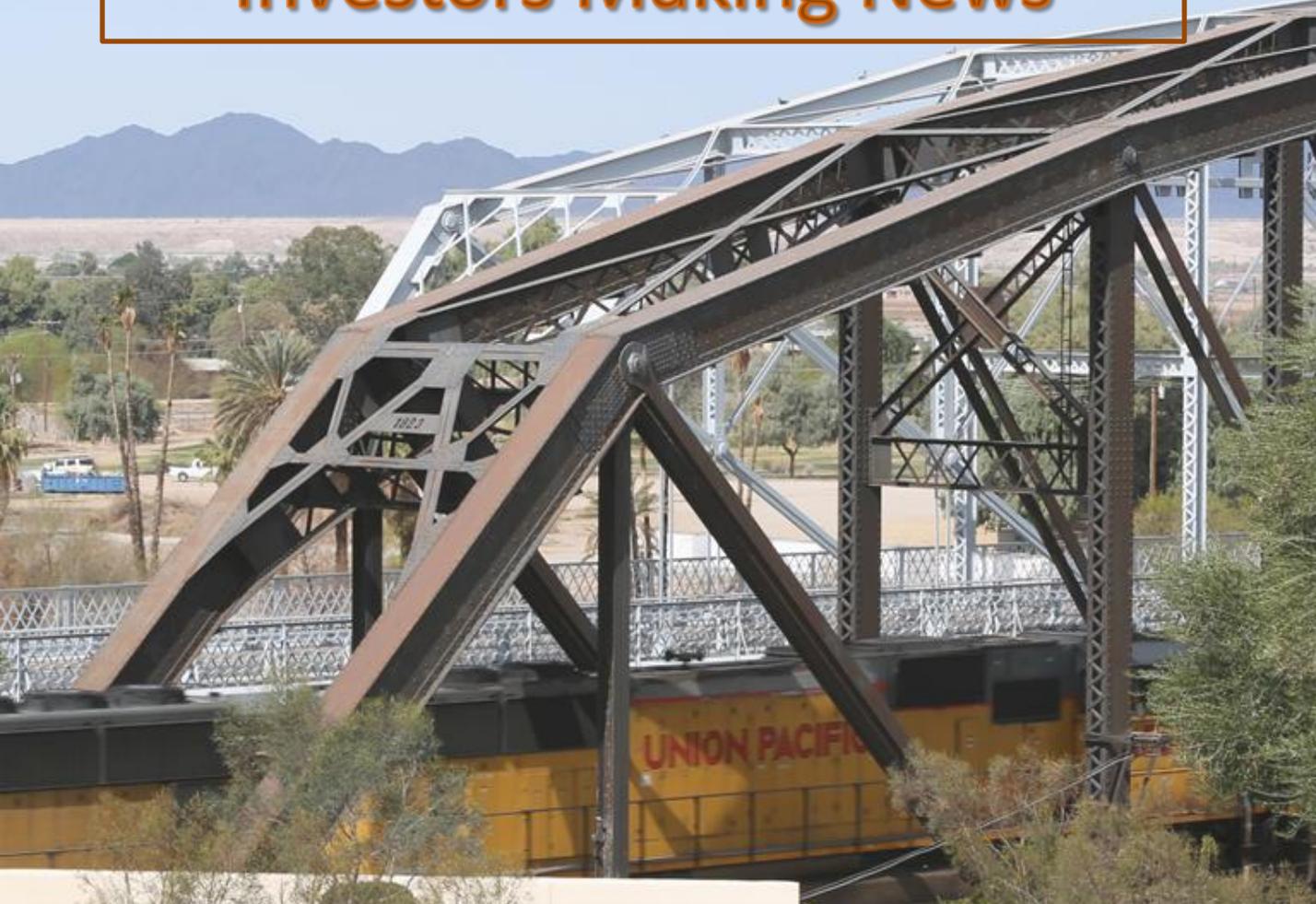


Greater Yuma EDC Investors Making News



March 22, 2016 Issue

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YUMA STUDENTS BRING HOME AWARDS FROM TUCSON SCIENCE FAIR

Posted: Sunday, March 13, 2016 3:05 pm | Updated: 10:01 am, Mon Mar 14, 2016.

By Amy Crawford Sun Staff Writer

Two Yuma County students won first-place awards at the Southern Arizona Regional Science and Engineering Fair in Tucson last week. More than 30 other Yuma County students brought home awards as well.

Gowan Science Academy fifth-grader Hailey Chulamorkodt won first place among fifth-graders in the Earth and environmental studies division for her project “Surviving the California Drought with Shade Balls.” Chulamorkodt was also honored with the Excellence in Arizona Hydrological Research award.

“In California, there is a huge drought,” Chulamorkodt said as she explained her project. “So I had the idea to test shade balls. Shade balls are plastic balls similar to the ones you find at Chuckv Cheese.”

The shade balls Chulamorkodt is referring to are the 96 million balls placed into the L.A. Reservoir by the Los Angeles Department of Power and Water last fall. The project garnered media attention and scientific criticism from across the nation.

Chulamorkodt thought that the department should have used a different colored ball.

“The balls sit on top of the lake. The balls are black,” she explained. “To me, I think it’s a bad idea. Black balls absorb more sunlight, this creates more heat, and leads to more evaporation. My project tested to see if white balls are better.”

Chulamorkodt, who said she was surprised her project has made it this far, is the daughter of Dr. Diana Thant and Dr. Nash Chulamorkodt. After the Arizona Science and Engineering Fair in April, she said she hopes to advance to the Intel International Science and Engineering Fair 2016 in May. Her sister, Samantha, will also compete in the event.

“Obviously we are extremely proud of what Hailey and all of our other students have been able to accomplish,” said Crane School District Superintendent Robert Klee. “Our children are our nation’s greatest natural resource and the future leaders of our community and nation, I believe we are in very good hands.”

Desert View Academy, formerly known as Carpe Diem Academy, student Zeeshan Jawaid won first place in the high school division of Earth and environmental sciences category for his project, "Classification of warm-adapted El Golfo, Mexico squid specimens and evaluation of size differences in accordance with Bergmann's rule."

Jawaid, a senior, was also named a finalist for the Intel International Science and Engineering Fair 2016 in Phoenix from May 8-13. He was also honored with the APS: Arizona Public Service Excellence in Critical Thinking and the Naval Excellence in Science Research Award.

"We are extremely proud of Zeeshan's accomplishment," said Jon Larson, principal of Desert View Middle and High school. "He worked incredibly hard on this project by actually taking last year's award winning results and furthering his study of the subject material. His academic success is an excellent example of what individualized education can do. While attending Desert View Middle & High School, and earning high school credits, he has also carried a full course load at Arizona Western College for the past two years."

More than 30 students from Yuma public and private schools competed in the annual event in Tucson. The regional science fair is the precursor to the state science fair that is held in April, known as the Arizona Science and Engineering Fair. The AzSEF is open to first-place winners from school, homeschool, district, county and regional science fairs across Arizona.



Southern Arizona Regional Science and Engineering Fair Results for Yuma County SCHOOL STUDENT/Grade CATEGORY AWARDS

- Desert View Middle/High Zeeshan Jawaid, HS Earth and Environmental Sciences SARSEF Grand Award: 1st Place,
- APS: Arizona Public Service Excellence in Critical Thinking, Intel ISEF Finalist, Naval Excellence in Science Research Award
- Cibola High School Shaila Arce, HS
- Jaclyn Lee Barry Environmental Engineering SARSEF Grand Award: 2nd Place, Cox Excellence in Communication Award
- Cibola High School Alexis Azlin DeVries, HS Behavioral and Social Sciences SARSEF Grand Award: 3rd Place
- Cibola High School Rigoberto Meza Lara, HS Systems Software College Mathematics Honor Society Award
- Gila Ridge High School Olivia Peterson, HS Plant Sciences SARSEF Grand Award: 3rd Place
- Gowan Science Academy Jon Isaac Jordan, K Earth and Environmental Studies SARSEF Grand Award: 3rd Place, Tucson Water Early Elementary Excellent Water Project Recognition Award
- Gowan Science Academy Samantha Chulamorkodt, 2nd Medicine and Health Sciences SARSEF Grand Award: 3rd Place

For a complete list of winners please visit www.yumasun.com

YPG: Students Get Peek Into STEM Careers

Posted: Saturday, March 12, 2016 3:07 pm | Updated: 3:07 pm, Sat Mar 12, 2016.

By Chuck Wullenjohn, Yuma Proving Ground



Loaned photo by Mark Schauer

About rocket pods

Local high schoolers listen to U.S. Army Yuma Proving Ground Test Officer Noe Caro (center) discuss a rocket pod used in testing as YPG engineers Ross Gwynn and Quang Ho (right) look on.

Career success in today's world involves grit and determination, as in past decades, but many modern careers require education and skill achievements never before necessary. In an effort to expose Yuma's young people to careers in the technical fields of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM), four busloads of local high school and college students made a four-hour visit to U.S. Army Yuma Proving Ground this week.

An intensive tour took them to multiple workplaces to meet with technical workers in a variety of skill fields, from engineers and scientists to electricians and data gathering specialists. Students were able to see and touch a wide variety of things, from sitting at the controls of helicopters and examining inert models of rockets to viewing video taken with multi-million dollar high speed cameras.

Though engineering is an important aspect of YPG's mission, event organizers were careful to introduce the students to YPG personnel from a wide range of STEM positions. "It's important to teach young people that there is more to STEM than just engineering," said Col. Randy Murray, YPG commander. "We have environmental scientists, folks who do resource management and information technology work. It was also important to point out women in STEM fields and highlight the females we have in those areas."

Growing The 'Fruit of Kings' In The Low Desert

Lee Allen, Contributing Writer | Western Farm Press Mar 9, 2016

Valentine's Day has come and gone, but here's to DATES. They're more than a romantic rendezvous or an appointment on a calendar — they're a big business, and continuing to grow even larger in the low desert commercial production areas in Yuma, Ariz., plus Imperial and Riverside counties in California.

There's seldom a quiet moment on Medjool date farms, no matter on which side of the Colorado River they are grown. From the first work of the year, dethorning at the end of the dormant period, to early spring pollination, followed by training the fruit arms, ringing, and bagging, and ultimately, an always crazy fall harvest, there's always work to be done.

While the date palm (*Phoenix dactylifera*) has had many uses over its 5,000 year history, it's most popular use is providing shelter, fuel, and materials for construction-weaving-basket making. But it's most important reason for existence is the food it provides.



Bagged dates thrive in the continual sunshine found in Bard Valley, Calif.

Photo by Bard Valley Date Growers

And for the 100 growers in California, plus a growing number in Arizona, the public's increasing recognition of this healthy food means a rapidly-expanding fresh date industry, particularly for the Medjool variety.

According to the Bard Valley Medjool Date Growers Association (BVMDGA), a consortium of family growers responsible for producing more than 60 percent of Medjools grown in the U.S., 11 million pounds of this particular Fruit of Kings was produced last season.

This unique microclimate is the right place to grow the right product, according to BVMDGA marketing efforts, which say, "Bard Valley, nestled where California and Arizona meet, lies in a sun-drenched corner of the Southwest where Medjool date gardens are nourished by the Colorado's high water table and ever-present sunshine."

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And while the Coachella Valley, located southeast of Indio, is still the largest overall date growing district, the geographic dateline is shifting eastward into the Yuma area, following the footsteps of pioneer Gusmar Nunez of the Imperial Date Gardens, who boldly began expansion planting there in the 1990s.

“There are 5,000 acres already planted in Arizona, and a good rule of thumb is you get 10,000 pounds of production per acre,” says Dave Mansheim, manager of Bard Date Company, custom growers and packers, and current BVMDGA president.

“It’s safe to say that the industry, in total, represents in excess of 40 million pounds annually, representing something north of \$140 million,” says John Haydock, chief executive officer of DatePac (owners of the Natural Delights brand).

Lorrie Cooper is manager of the California Date Commission (CDC) at Indio, where they predict another volume increase this year and throughout the decade ahead. “Growers have seen lots of new growth coming on board — perhaps a little at a time, but there is a constant uptick, and it’s a good time to be in the industry,” she says.

33 Different Types

According to CDC statistics, 33 different types of dates are grown in the Coachella Valley. The majority of date palms are the Deglet Noor variety, which like hotter and dryer conditions, while the Medjool variety prevails in the Yuma Valley’s humidity.

Emphasizing that dates are not a get-rich-quick scheme, but a long-term that may take a dozen years to reach a break-even point, Mansheim is optimistic about the industry’s future. “We’re on a double-digit growth curve, and I anticipate a 15 percent to 20 percent increase in volume over the next 5 to 10 years,” he says.

Once new trees enter commercial production, date palms can continuously bear fruit for decades. The average lifespan for a date palm is 200 years. When it grows to a height of 80 feet, it is no longer economically feasible to harvest.

But if it were that easy — plant, produce, pick — everybody would be a date farmer. In real life, problems exist, ranging from water to labor supply issues, along with changing climate conditions that can bring pests and disease.

Lots of gallons of water (200 gallons a day per palm in Yuma, according to a recent article in the Los Angeles Times) have allegedly affected local aquifers.

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Taking a page from the avocado industry playbook when it comes to marketing a healthy product, area date producers and packers want to expand their domestic market and further increase exports.

“Of our total production, about 40 percent is exported outside of North America and, of that number, nearly two thirds goes to, or through, Australia. The rest goes to Europe and Asian markets, so our international growth looks strong,” says Mansheim.

Cooper adds, “It’s sometimes difficult, price-wise, to sell California dates to Europe because they can get them cheaper from the Middle East. Our current export markets are Australia, New Zealand, and Japan, but we expect as production volume continues to increase that expansion of exports will be on the table for discussion.”

Looking to emulate success rather than reinventing the wheel, the BVMDGA is seeking to include more of industry players in an effort to build strength through unity.

“We can be much more productive by pooling our money to market the health benefits of our product, replicating the success of the avocado industry, which grew consumption of their product by focusing on health issues,” Mansheim says.

“Our focus is to drive consumers to our product, which will expand consumption,” says Haydock. “We’re investing heavily in advertising online, in print, and in social media.”

While price may be an issue, the ability of dates to act as a power fruit goes without question. Fresh and moist Medjools (other dates come dried) contain 16 vitamins and minerals, with 50 percent more potassium by weight than bananas, and are a good source of dietary fiber. Medjools also contain natural sugars, are cholesterol- and fat-free, and are certified heart healthy by the American Heart Association.

In fact, when the association came out with an article about sweetener additives, food manufacturers who make protein and snack bars started purchasing Deglet Noor paste as a substitute for processed sugar.

“We’re on an upward growth curve, with a repetitive double-digit increase that should continue as new groves add to our base,” Mansheim predicts.



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COMMUNITY DAY OF ENGAGEMENT AT GOODWILL



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Here are 3 ways your team can give back with Goodwill
March 20 – 26, 2016

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To learn more, please call (602) 535-4050 or e-mail volunteer@goodwillaz.org

Cemex Reinforces Busy Ship Channel

Edited from source by Joseph Green
Worldcement.com
Published on 03/03/2016

Cemex, in the USA, recently contributed to the reinforcement of the Houston Ship Channel, a main maritime trade route between Houston-area terminals and the Gulf of Mexico. Cemex provided a special concrete and logistical solution that aims to enhance the structure of one of Houston's most important economic assets.

As one of the United States' busiest seaports, the Houston Ship Channel has undergone several improvement projects. In 2010, Cemex first contributed to this seaport by providing protection for an electrical tower that was vulnerable to accidental collisions from barges. The installation of short-term barriers made from 40 cubic yards of Cemex concrete worked so well that the tower's owners decided to invest in a more sturdy and permanent solution in 2015.

The special barrier system called for 650 cubic yards of concrete and required six pours, two trips per day, two times a week, and up to six trucks per trip. During each trip, Cemex had to place its ready-mix concrete trucks on barges for transportation to the pour site in the middle of the ship channel.

The one-and-a-half hour trip out to the pour site also posed the challenge of designing a mix that could go the distance without losing slump. The resulting mix provided up to seven hours for the team to complete the pour before setting.

Extensive pre-planning with the customer enabled the teams to complete each pour without a hitch. "Our team's customer-focused approach to this project was the key to success. We are proud to have completed this unique and challenging project safely and successfully," said Scott Ducoff, Cemex USA Regional President, Texas and New Mexico.

