



*San Luis Valley Regional  
Science Fair, Inc.  
2020 Annual Report*

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## **The San Luis Valley Regional Science Fair**

From start to finish, and at all levels of participation, the science fair experience is one not only of competition but also of camaraderie, creativity, cooperation, and education. This is the essence of the San Luis Valley Regional Science Fair.

Established in 1949, the San Luis Valley Regional Science Fair, Inc. is a private, non-profit organization, which holds a regional competition each year. More than 800 students from the San Luis Valley participate in Science Fair at their schools. The purpose of the fair is to stimulate student interest and encourage the students in science and engineering by recognition of their abilities and achievements.

This year's winners were chosen from among 279 exhibits presented by 306 finalists. These finalists represented seven public school districts, home-schoolers from the San Luis Valley, and students from two private schools. More than 300 judges, including professional scientists, engineers, medical professionals, mathematicians, and advanced Adams State University students, interview the students and evaluate their projects before selecting the winners. In addition, there were also businesses, professional societies, and government agencies that provide their own representatives to help judge exhibits based on their criteria. These judges confer the Special Awards, including scholarships, summer internships, cash, medals, and scientific calculators, which represents an aspect of the bestowing organization. Over 1500 people attended the Awards Ceremony this year which was held in Plachy Hall gym at Adams State University.

In addition, receiving the rare opportunity to speak with working scientists, SLV Regional Science Fair students participate in three grade level divisions for the grand awards in a number of categories: Behavioral and Social Science, Biomedical Science, Botany, Chemistry, Consumer Science, Earth and Space Science, Engineering, Environmental Science, Mathematics and Computer Science, Physics and Zoology.

Participating in Science Fair is one of the few activities that expect students to integrate virtually all areas of their academic development. They use the library for literature reviews, history and research; the students execute experimentation and generally complete mathematical analysis; they write reports; they utilize artistic styles in the preparation of their presentation boards; and they are expected to orally present their projects to the judges. Awards are also given for technical writing, oratory skills, display, originality, and overall projects. Winning Junior and Senior division projects are awarded trips to the Colorado Science & Engineering Fair, which is held in Fort Collins, Colorado. In addition, the two senior division students with outstanding overall projects are awarded an all-expense paid trip to the Regeneron International Science & Engineering Fair. Shortly after the regional fair was held, as we all know, all events came to a halt. Our students participated in a virtual fair for both the Colorado State Science Fair and the International Fair.

Many educational experiences are made available to students who participate in the San Luis Valley Regional Science Fair. Recent programs have included Science From CU; the Alamogordo Space Center; Mobil Ed Productions; Physics is Fun; the Denver Museum of Nature and Science; Visible Productions and Mike Mullane (Ret.), NASA Astronaut. Last year's program, "Bat Tales" in which students learned about the world's only flying mammals, about the diversity and natural history of these often misunderstood animals, and why bat conservation is important. Museum specimens gave students a close look at several species of bats native to Colorado

The judges' interviews and the educational programs allow the students to interact with professional scientists and engineers and with each other. Many students have said that having the chance to meet and speak with their peers about their science projects is the most beneficial aspect of the SLV Regional Science Fair.

Scholarships from Adams State University and other organizations are also presented. Adams State University awards \$3,000 in scholarships for outstanding science fair participants who have a desire to further their education at ASU. The San Luis Valley Research Center - Colorado State University, Department of Horticulture and Landscape Architecture - offers a \$900 summer internship to a San Luis Valley student, in grades eight through twelve, who shows excellence in the field of potato research, from the Botany category. A family scholarship was established several years ago that is awarded to a graduating senior student that will be attending Colorado State University and majoring in a field of science.

The San Luis Valley Regional Science Fair is devoted to increasing the academic involvement and excellence between all fourth through twelfth grade students in our region. Student winners from each category are presented monetary awards. There are also many local and national awards that are presented to deserving student participants. With the help of our local sponsors and contributors, the San Luis Valley Regional Science Fair is able to present \$28,000 (either in monetary awards, scholarships, all-expense paid trips to the international fair or material awards) to the outstanding students of our region.

### **Organization**

The San Luis Valley Regional Science Fair would not be possible without the dedication and tremendous efforts of many committed individuals, as well as public and private organizations, school districts, Adams State University, government agencies, corporations, professional associations, and local businesses. These groups sustain the Fair through their financial and resource support, special awards, and most importantly, through providing dedicated volunteers to serve on the Fair's working committees and/or Board of Directors. Many of these businesses not only make monetary donations, but also allow their employees to serve as judges for the San Luis Valley Regional Science Fair. Prior to this regional event, many local school fairs are conducted throughout the region. Each of these fairs is supported by hardworking and dedicated educators at the local school level. Before a student's project is accepted at the Regional Fair, it requires the encouragement and support from individual teachers, science fair coordinators, and parents to help the student see their project from conception to the finished exhibit. The success of the San Luis Valley Regional Science Fair is dependent on all of these dedicated individuals.

To organize and stage the Fair every year requires a great effort by many people, but it also offers many personal challenges and rewards. To witness the level of achievement, pride, and excitement of these bright young people in their scientific endeavors is one of the rewards that all volunteers of the Fair share. It also speaks of the high level of students' aptitude and enthusiasm for science in the San Luis Valley.

## Mission Statement

The San Luis Valley Regional Science Fair is an organization that:

- Honors winners from local San Luis Valley school fairs at an annual Regional Science Fair
- Sends finalists from the Regional Science Fair to the Colorado Science and Engineering Fair (CSEF)
- Provides two overall winners at the Regional Science Fair with an all-expense paid trip to participate in the Intel International Science and Engineering Fair (ISEF)
- Encourages students to pursue careers in science, technology, mathematics, or engineering
- Provides a forum for developing academic skills, such as conducting an independent scientific investigation, writing a research paper, speaking, preparing an organized display, and becoming familiar with the scientific method.

The San Luis Valley Regional Science Fair supports local school fairs by:

- Providing a forum where local fairs can influence policies, rules, and by-laws of the San Luis Valley Regional Science Fair
- Providing rules and requirements for participation in all fairs – Regional, State, and International.
- Coordinate mentors
- Provides judges and critique at local school fairs.

## Impact Statement

The following represent some of the impacts the San Luis Valley Regional Fair has had on the San Luis Valley:

- Awareness, appreciation, and recognition of the importance of science in our society, livelihoods, academic achievement and lifelong success
- An increased awareness of academic competition and the importance of science among Valley educators
- An increased quality of educational activities in all schools in the region
- An increased usage of libraries and the Internet
- An increased exposure to robotics, holography, pathology, space art, moon geology, and the scientific method to the general public.

\* \* \*

*All these years later, I still love that butterfly logo as it symbolizes discovery, growth and change. Years later, I still follow the science fair (through the Valley Courier mostly) and actively participate as a judge at the Ohio State Science Day (Ohio's State Fair). Over the years, I have judged fairs in Texas and Massachusetts as I reside there. I have always been impressed that the SLV Regional Science Fair does a great job with the number of awards and acknowledgment it gives to its participants; our future. The quality and depth of work the students do is amazing. I feel fortunate to have been able to be a part of the SLV regional Science Fair; and again, the fair does an exceptional job of providing students with the opportunity to show that science is alive and done extremely well even in rural areas of the world.*

*Congratulations to all the participants and thank you to all the enthusiastic science teachers, volunteers and those who donate to keep this as a vital way of giving students the opportunity to challenge themselves to be curious about science and expand their ability to stretch their imagination.*

*-Cliff Pearcy, Monte Vista High School Alumni*

# Top Winners of the 2020 San Luis Valley Regional Science Fair

## COLORADO AWARD WINNERS

The following students were chosen to represent the San Luis Valley Regional Science Fair at the Colorado State Science Fair:

### Senior Division

Carlos Ochoa-Marquez- Monte Vista High School    Urianna Acosta - Monte Vista High School  
Madison Miller - Monte Vista High School        Blaine Gillespie - Monte Vista High School  
Keaton Gregg- Monte Vista High School        Camille Rawinski-Mont Vista High School  
Sara Nehring - Monte Vista High School        Anikah Roybal -Sierra Grande High School  
Gurleen Kaur - Alamosa High School            Andres Villa - Monte Vista High School  
Chinmay Jayanty - Sargent High School

### Junior Division

Katie Pacheco - Monte Vista Middle School       Emma Sewell - Sargent Middle School  
Amoree Lopez - Ortega Middle School            Jessica Buser - Sargent Middle School  
Corbyn Wright- Sargent Middle School        Saige Hostetter - Sargent Middle School  
Jordan Rockey - Sargent Middle School  
Naylie Velasquez & Autumn Gallegos - Del Norte Middle School  
Ada Pence & Ayden Yund - Centauri Middle School  
Giovanni Aguiar & Brooke Hoffstaetter - Sargent Middle School

### Regeneron/ISEF WINNERS

The following two students were chosen to represent the San Luis Valley Regional Science Fair at the Intel International Science and Engineering Fair:

Andres Villa - Monte Vista High School        Urianna Azita Acosta - Monte Vista High School

### Alternate Regeneron/ISEF WINNER

Chinmay Jayanty - Sargent High School

### Junior Observer Award

Jessica Buser - Sargent Middle School

### TEACHER AWARDS

The following teacher was chosen to attend the Regeneron International Science and Engineering Fair:

Loree Harvey - Monte Vista High School

### SCHOOL AWARDS

The following School Awards are based on the total tabulations of all Grand Awards received by their students:

Small Elementary School	Sierra Grande Elementary
Large Elementary School	Bill Metz Elementary
Small Middle School	Sargent Middle School
Large Middle School	Monte Vista Middle School
Small High School	Sierra Grande High School
Large High School	Monte Vista High School

## **WORKING COMMITTEE MEMBERS**

Fair Director: Lucy Adams

The Fair Director is actively involved in all working committees hereto mentioned and is also an ex-officio member of the SLV Regional Science Fair Board of Directors.

Awards Ceremony: SLV Regional Science Fair Board of Directors  
Joy DiCamillo  
Judy Prester  
Tayler Rocha

Display and Safety: Dr. Curtis Crawford

Finance: SLV Regional Science Fair Board of Directors

Publishing: Joy DiCamillo and Judy Prester

Registration: SLV Regional Science Fair Board of Directors

Regular Judging: Diana Jones - Judge Coordinator

Room Setup: SLV Regional Science Fair Board of Directors  
Monte Vista High School  
MESA/Science Club  
ASU Facilities

Scientific Review Committee: Dr. Larry Sveum - Chair  
Curtis Crawford- DVM  
Ms. Jody Oaks  
Dr. Neil Rigsbee  
Dr. Marty Jones  
Ms. Loree Harvey

Website Committee: Julie Messick  
Chad Chavez  
Tayler Rocha

## **Highlights of the San Luis Valley Regional Science Fair for 2020**

2020! What a year it has been. The San Luis Valley Regional Science Fair had its 71<sup>st</sup> birthday. This regional science fair is one of the oldest in the country. Thank goodness for the foresight and intuition that Adams State professors and community people had so many years ago.

Two students were awarded an all-expense paid trip to attend the Regeneron ISEF at Anaheim, CA this past spring. For the 1<sup>st</sup> time since the fair has been awarding the Student Observer Award, the person who was awarded that award in 2019, was chosen to represent our fair again last spring.

The 2020 Regional Fair had a total of 306 students that participate this past spring. This number breaks down to 143 males and 157 females attending fair. There were a total of 279 projects at the fair. Six public high schools, 12 middle and 11 elementary schools participated in the fair this past year. Two private schools participated in the junior and elementary divisions this year along with four home school students.

Twenty six junior and high school students were awarded the honor of attending the Colorado State Science and Engineering Fair. The CSEF was held as a virtual fair this past spring. In the senior Grand Awards, two first place, two second place, one third and one honorable mention awards were received by our students. At the junior high level, we had a student take first place.

Seven of our students placed in the special awards. There were seven different special awards which were given in the form of certificates, gift cards and an invitation to enter the Broadcom Program.

The website, SLVRSF.org has material for our teachers, parents and students linked on it. There is also a registration form for our judges. Student registration for the 2021 fair will be available at a later date. One may also find the Board of Directors, the mission statement and history of SLVRSF on the website.

*New contributors and visitors to the site are able to view information on how to donate/contribute to the fair. Additional support to the SLV Regional Science Fair can be given by using GoodSearch, GoodShop, Razoo and AmazonSmiles. Links may be found by visiting our website at:*

**SLVRSF.org**

**Another great year for the San Luis Valley Regional Science Fair!**



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*At this time I would like to personally thank each and every one of you for supporting our valley students with their science discoveries, over the years and encourage you to continue.*

*Thank You- Lucy Adams*



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### *My Experience as an ISEF Finalist in the time of COVID-19*

*Competing at ISEF has been my dream since my first year doing science fair as a freshman. It has always been the "ultimate goal," and seeing other people that I knew and was close to, go to ISEF, and succeed academically was always a driving point for me. I have always known that it was difficult to get a spot for ISEF, and I always assumed people went because their projects were good, which is partially true. However, now that I have had the opportunity to go, now that I have "achieved" my dream of gaining a spot to one of the most prolific scientific competitions in the world, I see it a bit differently, through the eyes of the experimenter rather than the observer so to speak.*

*I believe that people do things for different reasons. People do research and do science fair for different reasons. I like to think that I did my most recent research project, the project that sent me to ISEF as a finalist, for the ultimate goal of research and not personal gain or accolade. Of course, no one works for free, so we always keep in mind the successes that may come from our hard work, however, I think that once we find a passion in something we then become fully willing to pursue that passion to its most extreme limits. I was deeply passionate about my project, and I had very personal and deep meaning behind the work that I was doing, which made the reward of ISEF much more significant for me. I think that passion is the real driving force for our success. Someone once told me that people think people change the world, but it's not true, passion changes the world.*

*When I went to ISEF in Phoenix as an observer I was elated. I had become one step closer to achieving my goal of competing at ISEF. I took information in like a sponge, learning wherever I could, and appreciating the sheer amount of passionate research that occurs at that level of competition. It was one of the single most rewarding and significant experiences of my life and will always be something that I remember fondly. But it only made me hungrier to succeed. It left me with motivation to go back, and experience ISEF through the lens of a finalist, and to be a part of the mass of intellectual achievement from around the world.*

*When I heard the news that ISEF was cancelled I was not surprised, but I was heartbroken. At the moment, I thought that all the work I put in, the hours in the field, analyzing data, pursuing my research as much as I could, went to waste. I had finally achieved my dream, only for it to be ripped away from me. It took me a long time to come to terms with what had happened and the situation the world was in. It was not only me that had their dream ripped away from them, it was every single other finalist that qualified, it was all the sponsors that were excited to see their students compete, it was the parents that wanted to see their kids succeed, it was everyone, not just me. I came to realize that people don't do things that are hard because they want to get an award, they do it because they're passionate. No one really cares about the awards; they care about what you did and why you did it. That was my realization as an ISEF finalist in the time of COVID-19. I came to learn that if we focus on how we succeed instead of what we are doing to succeed, we lose the reason we started in the first place, we lose meaning behind our work, and we lose our passion. Without it we can never change the world.*

*Andrés Villa - Monte Vista High School*

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Last year I participated in the science fair. I really, really liked my science fair project. My science fair project was called "Wood it Burn." My project dealt with wood Lichtenberg figures. Lichtenberg figures are patterns formed by electricity. They can be made on electrically charged plates of resin with dust, in blocks of electrically charged acrylic, or with a transformer and wood. I used a neon sign transformer and different kinds of wood. The goal of my project was to determine which wood out of Oak, Mahogany, Pinewood, Basswood, Cedar wood, and Plywood would create the best Lichtenberg figure. I defined best as the one with the most branches off the main scar, number of curves on the main scar, and the length of the main scar. I found out that Oak is the best wood to make a Lichtenberg figure on. My project originated as a simple class assignment. I was researching a small project that would work for the assignment and I came across Lichtenberg figures. I originally tried doing it with a microwave transformer but I ended up blowing the fuse. I didn't really want to give up so I made it my science fair project. I thought it was really fun. I was really surprised when people seemed to be interested in it. I really loved my board and my graphs too. To make my graphs I had to hand count the branches on each piece of wood, then count the lengths of the main scar until it came to a curve, every time it came to a curve that would be one curve. At the end of that I added the lengths I measured for each piece of wood. Then I put all that information into a spreadsheet and made my graphs. I loved my board because I had a really fun time making it. I had cut out all of my information and construction paper borders and was rubber cementing them together. It took a really long time so I was up to about 3:00 am making my board. I was also about to run out of rubber cement so had to ration the amount I used. I was jamming to my music and gluing paper to a foam board. I had so much fun at the science fair.

Before last year I didn't know what I.S.E.F was but then my class watched the documentary, *Science Fair*. All of us were instantly infatuated with the idea of getting to go. I didn't know that you could get to go from our regional science fair. When we were at the awards ceremony my friend and I were making jokes and laughing and then the I.S.E.F awards came up and right before the observer one was announced my friend said "Watch it be you" and then they said my name and we looked at each other in disbelief. Maybe the shock wore off faster for her because she pushed me out of my seat to go up to the stage. I couldn't believe it. I walked up to the stage and apparently my face portrayed my emotions because I was told later that the look on face was "priceless." After that it was pretty much just following the directions of people who were in charge. My teacher, Mrs. Paulson, told me she was proud of me. My parents told me they were proud of me. Then we did the paperwork on the computer and all that jazz. I was really excited about going, the documentary made it look like so much fun. I was really excited about the things the observers got to do, they sounded super cool. I had also researched a little bit about I.S.E.F on the computer and that only made me more excited. All the things the observers got to do sounded like so much fun.

In conclusion, I was so excited to go and it probably would have been really fun. I understand that a global pandemic changes circumstances, but it still sounds fun and I plan to work hard to get to go this year.

*Jessica Buser - Sargent Middle School*

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In my experience science fair is one of the most, if not the most rewarding thing a person can do throughout their school years. I have been participating in science fair for six years and my passion for science has grown with each project. My seventh grade year I was at Shriners Hospital for Children in Philadelphia undergoing many procedures so I would be able to walk. While in Philadelphia I saw that many of the patients there were unable to feed themselves due to physical challenges. This is when I realized I wanted to engineer a device to bring independence not only to others but to myself.

My freshman year of high school I was able to begin the engineering of my device with help and support from two special teachers. The engineering of the first prototype took months and was still not perfect but needed to be tested because the Regional Science Fair was approaching quickly. It was finally time to present my work to the judges, presenting to the judges took all day and the awards ceremony took place a few hours after. At the ceremony we went through the awards as usual first special awards, then placement and state awards and at the end of the ceremony best project of the year award and the people representing the valley at ISEF was announced. My friend got best project of the year award and then the observers for ISEF were called, at this moment everyone knew that my friend and someone else would be participating in ISEF. First his name was called then to my surprise I heard my name! I was filled with honor and excitement that I would be joining my friend at ISEF.

Over the next few weeks we registered for ISEF and were preparing for the State Science Fair. While preparing for the State Science fair as it was approaching quite quickly word of a new and scary virus was going around, it was in China and at this point no one expected it to reach the United States. To everyone's surprise there was a case of the virus in Denver, Colorado. The virus was now known as COVID-19. One case quickly turned into twenty and twenty turned into one hundred until eventually the cases got so bad that the State Science fair was held virtually and not long after that ISEF was cancelled and only speeches were held virtually. When word had got out that ISEF was cancelled I felt so disappointed and heartbroken but I hope to return this year because doing scientific research and being able to represent our small but amazing community would be an honor.

*Urianna Acosta - Monte Vista High School*

## 2020 Contributors

### ALAMOSA

1st SouthWest Bank  
Ace Hardware  
Alamosa Dental Lab  
Alamosa Elks Lodge  
Alamosa Kiwanis  
Alamosa Optimist Club  
Alamosa Rotary  
Alamosa State Bank  
Alpine Veterinary Hospital  
Arby's  
AS&F Members  
Asphalt Construction  
Bill Clark Truck Lines  
Biophysical Society  
Blanca Peak Dental Center  
Bob and Lois Kirkham  
CFWC Woman's Citizenship Club  
Chaparral Tires  
Chapter DP P.E.O.  
City Market  
Colorado Field Institute  
Colorado Realty & Land  
Colorado Rio Grande Headwater Restoration  
CO Wildfire Management Academy  
Davis Engineering  
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Pester Marketing Co  
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Rock Creek Family Medicine  
Rocky Mountain Eye Center  
San Luis Valley STEAM Shop  
Erich Schwiesow & Julie Waechter  
Sherwin-Williams  
SLV Behavioral Health Group  
SLV Brewing Company  
SLV Builders  
SLV Building Components  
SLV Ecosystem Council  
SLV Federal Bank  
SLV Health  
SLV Principals Assn.

SLV Trout Unlimited  
Sky High Hospitality Valley Motel  
Soil & Water Conservation, Colorado Chapter  
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Super 8 Motel  
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### ANTONITO

Imerys Perlite USA, Inc.

### BLANCA / FT. GARLAND

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### CENTER

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Biel Crop Consulting  
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Center Kiwanis  
Central Pump  
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Rio Grande Watershed Conservation District  
SLV Research Center  
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### CREEDE

Holy Moses  
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### DEL NORTE

Del Norte Bank  
Del Norte Napa Auto Parts  
DMRC  
Jack's Market  
Linda Owsley

### Denver

Walter & Frances Goodman Johnson Foundation

### LA JARA / MANASSA

Cactus Hill Ag Consulting  
Conejos Co. CD  
Conejos Co-La Jara Rotary  
Manassa Market  
Dr. Pence and Family

### MONTE VISTA

Alpine Veterinary Hospital  
Alpine Veterinary Hospital  
Brian Roberts, DDS  
C & L Container  
Clifford Percy  
Colorado Potato Admin. Committee  
Dirk Oden  
Dr. David & Vonda Holm  
Farm Credit of Southern Colorado  
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SLV Rural Electric Coop  
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Tom & Donna Templeton  
Top Value  
Walter S. Fullwood, CPA  
Wenta Nip & Sanitizing  
Wilber Ellis  
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### MOSCA / HOOPER

### MOFFAT / CRESTONE

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Great Sand Dunes Lodge  
Mosca/Hooper CD  
Mosca Pit Stop  
Orient Land Trust  
John & Bonnie White  
Andrew Valdez

### SAGUACHE

American Legion Post 110  
Fenton Pottery  
Mountain Valley Lumber Co.  
Olive Branch Lodge  
Southerland Ranches  
Saguache Crescent

### SAN LUIS

Costilla Co CD  
Mr. & Mrs. R. Maestas  
R & R Supermarket

### SARGENT

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Christensen Farm  
Douglas & Julie Messick  
Gunnel Farms  
Haugen Mtn. Grown Lamb  
Hi-Land Potato Co.  
Lyle & Liz Hood  
Mr. & Mrs. Curt Kaiser  
Rick & Brenda Schnaderbeck  
River R Ranch  
Sargent Education Assn.  
Sargent School PTO  
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### SOUTH FORK

Rainbow Grocery  
South Fork Kiwanis

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ASU Security Office  
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Courtney Butler  
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Judy Prester  
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