



**Yucca Valley Sunset Rotary Club  
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**PRESS RELEASE**

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**Make Plans Now to Attend the Sixteenth Annual Morongo Basin Orchid Festival**

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**Festival Showcases Orchids, BBQ, Live Jazz, and Morongo Basin Charities**

“Wonderful additions to the food and entertainment at the Yucca Valley Sunset’s Morongo Basin Orchid Festival will make this year’s event better than ever,” announced the Yucca Valley Sunset Rotary President, Tom Dailey. Orchid tours, orchid classes, wine & cheese tasting, Willie Boy’s BBQ and Smoke Grill, the children’s free bounce house, and live jazz ensembles throughout the weekend from the University of Redlands School of Music will keep the Orchid Festival a much sought-after destination for tourists and local residents alike.

With buzz about the event already finding its way throughout the Coachella Valley, the Inland Empire, and the Hi and Low Deserts, the two-day festival, held this year on October 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> at Gubler Orchids in Landers, is expected to break all previously-set attendee and fundraising records. In addition to the wonderful orchids, superb food, lively entertainment, fun wine & cheese tasting, and unique art and jewelry vendors, the festival has become a showcase for participating non-profit organizations. “While enjoying all that the Festival has to offer, festival goers can browse the non-profit booths and learn about this area’s amazing non-profits and the programs that they provide,” festival founder Chris Gubler explained. “This year, all the non-profits reserved their spaces so far in advance that we ran out of spaces in August,” Gubler added.

With demand for the prestigious non-profit booth spaces at the Yucca Valley Sunset Rotary Club’s annual Morongo Basin Orchid Festival at an unprecedented level, the Club is reporting that all the spaces have been filled by sixteen well-deserving Morongo Basin charities. Several years ago the Sunset Rotary came up with the idea of “Rotary Bucks” as a way to let the public determine how the Rotary Club should distribute the over \$10,000 it raises at the Festival each year. Over the last three years, the Yucca Valley Sunset Rotary has developed a unique system to include festival goers in the all-important distribution of festival proceeds. Each person that attends the Orchid Festival is given a “Rotary Buck” when they enter the fairgrounds, and they also can earn more Rotary Bucks as they make purchases at the event. Festival goers then donate their “Rotary Bucks” to the charities of their choosing – with each festival attendee distributing their Rotary Bucks however they see fit among the non-profits’ donation jars. After the festival dust clears, the Sunset Rotary then gives each charity *at least* \$1 for each Rotary Buck the charity received from festival goers. Of course, each organization also always welcomes direct cash donations.

This year's Orchid Festival will showcase the following charities: Hearts of Yucca Valley, Panorama Ranch (Morongo Basin Mental Health), Unity Home, Hi-Desert Cultural Center, Hi-Desert Pregnancy Clinic, Morongo Basin Coalition for Adult Literacy, Morongo Basin Historical Society, Morongo Basin Citizens Emergency Response Team ( MB CERTS), Soroptimist, White Rock Horse Ranch Rescue, Morongo Basin Humane Society, Guide Dogs of the Desert, Morongo Basin Cultural Arts Council, Tortoise Rescue, Marine Corps YMCA, and American Food Bank.

With deep gratitude we thank our original sponsors that have supported this event for each of its sixteen years -- Gubler Orchids, Z-107.7 FM community radio, and Hi-Desert Publishing. Thank you to our additional Sponsors for this year's festival Willie Boy's Saloon and Dance Hall, Trader Joes, Pacific Western Bank, and Copper Mountain Broadcasting.

The Festival runs from 10 am to 5 pm on Saturday, October 1st and from 10 am to 3 pm on Sunday, October 2<sup>nd</sup>. The Festival grounds are at Gubler Orchids, located at 2200 Belfield Blvd. Landers, 92285. For more information or directions call (800)GUBLERS .

## Additional Information for the Media

### *History of the Morongo Basin Orchid Festival*

The Morongo Basin Orchid Festival was first held in October of 1996. Sponsored by the Landers Area Chamber of Commerce, Gubler Orchids, Hi Desert Star, and Z-107.7 Radio, the purpose of the festival was celebrate the orchid harvest and to attract out-of-town visitors. Proceeds from orchid sales were first used to finance productions at the Homestead Valley Park. Productions included a Concert from the Safaris, Polynesian Dances, and a fireworks show. The Homestead Park kept all the funds generated from the shows.

In 1999 the Sunset Rotary Club of Yucca Valley took over the management of the festival and decided to use the proceeds to benefit non-profit groups in the hi and low deserts. In 2009, over \$12,500 was distributed to non-profit desert organizations. In the past six years the Morongo Basin Orchid Festival raised and distributed over \$63,500 to charities.

Today, the Festival has grown in scope and diversity. Tours of the Gubler Orchid Greenhouses is still the cornerstone of the event. Orchid “How to” classes provided by the Arizona Orchid Society, Wine and Cheese tasting, music, entertainment, food, and beverages also play an important part in the making the festival a daytime destination for locals and tourists. The festival has become a showcase of participating non-profits organizations and festival goers can learn about all the wonderful agencies and the programs that they provide in the community.

Gubler Orchids donates all the sales from the weekend, less sales tax and wages to Sunset Rotary for distribution. This amount is added to the total proceeds that Yucca Valley Sunset Rotary generates during the two-day event. This year Sunset Rotary is expecting to top \$13,250 in profits to benefit desert charities.

### *Last Year's Media Sponsors*

**Radio:** Z-107.7 FM community radio

**Newspapers:** Hi-Desert Publishing (Hi-Desert Star and The Desert Trail)

**Television:** None

### *Who Covered the Orchid Festival last year -- that we know of?*

**Newspaper:** The Hi-Desert Star, The Desert Trail, The Press Enterprise, and The Desert Sun.

All press releases can be accessed through [www.SunsetRotary.org](http://www.SunsetRotary.org) .