

## City of Willcox Newsletter July 2010

### **Be a Part of Willcox History!**

Pat McCourt, City Manager

The history of Willcox starts with the Railroad – that is not to say Cattle and Farming are not and were not part of the development of Sulphur Springs Valley and the City of Willcox. Willcox started as a railroad construction camp known as Maley Camp; it was transformed into a town with the construction of the Southern Pacific Railroad Depot.

The Community has worked hard to maintain our identity as a western railroad community. Part of that effort is keeping visible signs of the Railroad in our town. The Mascot and Western Rail Car located on Railroad Avenue is one of those signs. The City has some grant money to restore the rail car. We want to make this a better symbol of our community's past. The rail car is rapidly deteriorating. We want to restore it to its original condition, preserve it, and make it available for visitors, future generations and for ourselves to enjoy.

The City is looking for partners who can help us in this project; the help can be in the form of materials, labor, money, or ideas on how to best get this piece of our history restored and preserved.

The current plan calls for repairing the exterior in the original style, building a platform so that the car can be viewed, and the platform itself can be used to emcee events downtown. We would like to construct a cover over the entire Rail car to protect it from the elements.

The City has looked for grants to help pay for the preservation and has not located any to date.

If you would like to help, please contact Jeff Stoddard at 766-4225.

## **Make Reading a Priority This Summer!**

Gary Clement, Library Programming Technician

The annual Summer Reading Program for all ages is in full swing at the newly-renovated Elsie S. Hogan Community library.

“**Make a Splash — READ!**” is the reading program theme this summer.

The 2010 Summer Reading Program opened to all ages beginning June 3, with programs, prize drawings, story hours, a teen program, and more. The reading program emphasizes fun reading for all ages. Children are exploring the world of water and water fun through stories, songs, games and other activities about oceans, rivers, lakes, and pools, and the creatures that live in them. However, just because school is out, it does not mean that reading and learning should stop. Teachers know that many children cannot afford to take such a long break. Young readers who do not continue to read over the summer — especially those who are reluctant or at-risk — are likely to lose crucial ground. One summer off can sometimes mean a whole school year of struggling academic performance. Children need to read outside of school. Research clearly shows that the key to stemming summer reading loss is finding novel ways to get books into the hands of children during the summer break. The more children read, the better their fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension. It is less clear *how* to motivate children to read. Put simply, children whose reading skills are not strong — who have a history of less-than-successful reading experiences — simply are not as interested in voluntary reading as are those children with a history of successful reading experiences.

Lower-achieving readers are typically asked to read books that are too difficult. Without books that can be read easily with good comprehension, these less-skilled readers will not improve. All of their cognitive energy is devoted to trying to figure out unknown words — which produces a dysfluent, word-by-word reading with little understanding of, or engagement with, the books in their hands.

These disjointed reading experiences fail to help children consolidate skills, and perhaps most significant, such experiences make children feel unsuccessful. They offer little incentive to persevere and, ultimately, participate in the world of readers. Children do not just need books; they need the *right* books. Providing children with books that fit — books that match their skill levels and their interests — is an important first step in encouraging voluntary reading. We here at the Elsie S. Hogan Community Library are committed to making the summer fun *and* educational at the same time. Come on in and enjoy a good book!

## **LIBRARY OFFERS NEW EQUIPMENT FOR VISUALLY IMPAIRED!**

Tom Miner, Library Director

Greetings Citizens! We have some exciting news to share with you! Just recently, the Northern Cochise Nursing Home, via Mrs. Doris King, donated a very expensive piece of equipment to the Library – one designed **especially** for our visually impaired and special needs customers.

It is a slightly used, but in excellent condition, **Optelec 20/20 Plus** low-vision desktop computer/ video magnification system. The hardware is designed for tough use in the classroom, or at work. It is useful for reading books, mail and newspapers, magazines, checking prescriptions, writing letters, or paying bills. The 20/20 series can connect to IBM or IBM clone computers. The Optelec 20/20+ has a large 20" screen for viewing larger documents like newspapers or spreadsheets. It magnifies from 5 to 60 times and has 20 background/image color combinations. A color-kill switch provides contrast black and white viewing. The equipment would cost anywhere from \$2,000 - \$3,100 at today's prices. All in all, it is a wonderful addition to the Library, and we are most happy to provide this new equipment as a *free* service to all of you!

### **From the Office of the City Clerk...**

Cristina G. Whelan, CMC

### **City Council Meetings**

Monday

Aug 2, 2010

&

Monday

Aug 16, 2010

7:00 p.m.

City Council Chambers

300 West Rex Allen Drive