

**Yucca Valley Sunset Rotary Club**

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**PRESS RELEASE**

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### Yucca Valley, California

**19th Annual Morongo Basin Orchid Festival**

**16 Nonprofit Organizations are showcased**

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**Festival showcases thousands of blooms, Morongo Basin charities,**

**Local live jazz, wine & cheese tasting, and hands on orchid classes**

The 19th Annual Morongo Basin Orchid Festival will be held on October 4th and 5th at Gubler Orchids 2200 Belfield Blvd. in Landers. “We gained a lot of new festival goers last year.” Yucca Valley Sunset Rotary President Tami Montgomery said. “Last year the Joshua Tree Park was closed because of the government shutdown Visitors in the basin were looking for alternative things to do. People were amazed what they discovered at the Orchid Festival” Montgomery explained. Complimentary orchid tours are conducted every 15 minutes. Attendees are urged to bring their cameras and take as many photos as their sim cards will hold. Proceeds from all orchid sales, less sales tax, are donated to the nonprofits participating in the Festival.

Once again the Orchid Fest is supporting the local musicians in the Morongo Basin. Joshua Tree Community Jazz Band will be preforming for the duration of the festival... The Yucca Valley High School Cheerleaders will be performing in support of the community and to be role models for young girls. There will be plenty of shaded seating to enjoy the event.

This is the 16th year that the Orchid Society of Arizona (OSA) has participated in the Orchid Festival. OSA President Julie Rathbone said “The last festival many people enjoyed the different orchid classes that we decided to do it again.” Rathbun said “OSA is delighted to hold a variety of Orchid Classes”. There will be two Dendrobium classes, two Phalaenopsis classes and one Orchid Arrangement class. For a nominal charge, attendees may register for one of six orchid classes are held during the weekend where participants keep a blooming orchid upon graduation. A free children’s class held Saturday morning. Sign up on line at [www.SunsetRotary.org](http://www.SunsetRotary.org)

The Festival will be holding the ever popular Wine and Cheese tasting. There will be a great selection of wine & cheese for tasting. Enjoy your favorite selection after the tasting in a new 2014 commemorative Orchid Festival wine glass as you find a seat to enjoy the music and food.

In addition to the wonderful orchids, superb food, lively entertainment, fun wine & cheese tasting, bounce house, one of a kind pottery, and unique art and jewelry vendors, the festival has become a showcase for participating non-profit organizations.

Sixteen well-deserving Morongo Basin charities will be showcased at the festival this year. They include Armed Services YMCA, Theater 29, Boys & Girls Club of the High Desert, Johnson Valley Improvement Association, Homestead Valley Park and Recreation, Joshua Tree Tortoise Rescue, Morongo Basin Community Emergency Response Team, Morongo Basin Ambulance, The Orchid Society of Arizona, Reach Out 29, Soroptomist, The Joshua Tree Sportettes, Yucca Valley High School Cheerleader Booster Club, Unity Home, Reach Out Morongo Basin, and Relay for Life. These fine organizations will be on hand to explain what they do and who they serve.

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The Yucca Valley Sunset Rotary Club came up with the idea of using “Rotary Bucks” as a way to have the public determine how the Rotary Club should distribute the $10,000 plus profit it raises at the Festival each year to the participating Non-profits. Rotary Bucks is a voting 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 give their “Rotary Bucks” to the charities of their choice. After the festival dust clears, the Sunset Rotary then gives each charity a minimum of $1 for each Rotary Buck the charity received from festival goers. Organizations that garner more rotary bucks get a larger percentage of the total proceeds of the festival. Each organization always welcomes direct cash donations in addition to their Rotary Bucks donations.

For directions call (800) GUBLERS or visit [www.SunsetRotary.org](http://www.SunsetRotary.org) for all the information on the Orchid Festival.

#### Additional Information for the Media

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

The Morongo Basin Orchid Festival was first held in October of 1996 and was sponsored at that time by the Landers Area Chamber of Commerce, Gubler Orchids, Hi-Desert Star, and Morongo Basin Broadcasting;Z-107.7 Radio. The purpose of the festival was to 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 high and low deserts. In 2013 a record breaking $15,200 was distributed to non-profit desert organizations. In the past eight years the Morongo Basin Orchid Festival raised and distributed over $99,800.0 to 31different nonprofit organizations.

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 add to the Orchid excitement. The Yucca Valley Sunset Rotary club organizes the Wine and Cheese tasting, jazz music, food, and beverages which 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 to the Yucca Valley 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 raise over $14,500.00 to benefit desert charities.

***This Year’s Media Sponsors***

**Radio:** Copper Mountain Broadcasting (Country KX 92.1/96.3, and KQ 95.5 FM), and

Morongo Basin Broadcasting Corp (Z107.7 FM)

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

**Television:** CBS Local 2 Palm Springs