

16 Valley Telecom named Smart Rural Community Provider



Cynthia Meyers, outreach coordinator for the Cochise County Superintendent of Schools office, spoke with Valley's PR Specialist Heather Floyd on the potential of the SRC designation.

BY HECTOR ACUNA
hector.acuna@myheraldreview.com

WILLCOX — The Rural Broadband Association has named Valley Telecom Cooperative Inc. a Smart Rural Community Provider for the communities of Willcox, Safford, Thatcher and Sunsites.

Valley invited members of the Willcox community to learn more about the SRC designation at a luncheon held Nov. 1 at the Valley office in town.

Valley is a local telecommunications company that provides high-speed internet, phone and business services to Southeast Arizona and southwest New Mexico. It has been in business since 1962 and have offices in Clifton, Safford and Willcox.

SRC is a national network of communities with innovative rural broadband providers that help achieve brighter prospects in smaller townships and rural areas. It promotes rural broadband and its role in supporting innovative economic development, effective education, efficient energy distribution and use, state-of-the-art healthcare and other important issues for rural areas.

The Rural Broadband Association is an association representing more than 800 independent, community-based

telecommunications companies that are leading innovation in rural and small towns across the country.

To receive recognition Valley was required to affirm that it offered 100 Mbps broadband to at least 50% of its service area, that it had broadband subscription rates of at least 50%, and that it is committed to program principles of collaboration and innovation.

NTCA Chief Executive Officer Shirley Bloomfield recognized Valley for this achievement, saying, "We are so excited to welcome another Smart Rural Community provider into this growing network of innovative broadband providers delivering the internet's fastest speeds in some of the most remote and rural communities of our country. I applaud Valley and the communities for their commitment to enabling cutting-edge technologies that drive innovation and promote economic development in their region and nationwide."

At the luncheon Valley's Business Sales Executive Corina Pino-Reyes highlighted their new partnership with local internet provider Fiber Homes, the nation's first fiber internet search service. Their service allows anyone looking to buy or rent a home to de-



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Valley Telecom business sales executive Corina Pino-Reyes, left, and PR specialist Heather Floyd presented details of Valley's Smart Rural Community designation.



Valley Telecom CEO Steven Metts engaged attendees of Tuesday's presentation of the Smart Rural Community designation and new partnership with Fiber Homes.

termine the quality of internet available at any given address in an area they serve.

Locally Valley said it certified over 5,000 fiber serviceable addresses with Fiber Homes, joining a cross-country real time database of more

than 100 fiber providers with over 1.8 million certified fiber addresses.

"Reliable broadband internet is no longer optional for homebuyers; it's become a basic requirement for anyone wanting to fully participate in the mod-

ern economy. Our goal with Fiber Homes is to make sure that anyone looking to buy or rent a home has access to this crucial information," said Robert Gilbert, CEO of Fiber Homes.

Heather Floyd, Valley PR specialist, interacted with guests from

various arenas of the community, from business, education, and spoke about the advantages of Fiber Homes and the current projects in Willcox.

Speakers noted that Fiber Homes have become a boon for real estate agents looking to add a competitive amenity to their listings. The database is actively working with MLSs around the country to add this crucial information to the property listings.

Homes with fiber broadband internet capabilities can provide a critical service for those people working from home, online education, or medical care communication, and modern homes are more heavily reliant on streaming for their television and entertainment services.

Valley will be hosting a second luncheon on Tuesday, Nov. 15, in Thatcher, to provide an overview of SRC and Fiber Homes and their benefit to that community.