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Season's Greetings!

December Celebrations

-By Helen H. Moore

Every year at just this time,
In cold and dark December,
Families around the world
All gather to remember,
With presents and with parties,
With feasting and with fun,
Customs and traditions
for people old and young.
So every year, around the world
In all lands and nations,
People of all ages love
December celebrations!

Neighborhood Ambassadors:

Don Langlois- Section 1 & 2
ph. 602-542-4159
dolangl@lib.az.us

Dale Xavier- Section 3 & 2
ph. 480-332-3253
DALE3132002@yahoo.com

Neighborhood Website:

www.neighborhoodlink.com/chandler/amberwoodnorth



City Services Academy: Spotlight On The Inner-Workings Of Our City Government

-By Judith Garner

Chandler's City Services Academy is a 10-week course, which was initiated by the Office of Neighborhood Programs in 2000. The City Services Academy provides an excellent opportunity for Chandler residents to learn about their city government. The purpose of the academy is to increase understanding between City departments and the community through education and interaction.

The City Services Academy is a free program intended for Chandler residents. Enrollment requires a commitment of one evening per week for approximately 10-weeks. Each class lasts an average of three hours. The academy is offered twice a year, typically in February and August, and it is limited to 30-participants. Participants need to be at least 18 years old to be eligible for the program.

I attended the City's Fall-2006 Services Academy (August 15th-October 24th). The experience was enjoyable and very enlightening. I highly recommend the course to everyone who wants to learn more about City services.

Curriculum includes:

City Clerk's Office

Boards and Commissions
Elections
Marriage Licenses/Passports
Records

City Manager's Office

Human Resources
Information Technology
Intergovernmental Affairs
Neighborhood Programs

Communications and Public Affairs

Cable Channel 11

Citizen Assistance
Internet Services
Media Relations
Publications

Community Services

Center for the Arts
Libraries
Parks
Recreational Activities

Fire

Emergency Medical Services
Fire Operations
Fire Prevention
Fire Support Services
Fire Training Facility

Law and Courts

City Attorney
City Prosecutor's Office

Management Services

Budgeting
Purchasing
Sales Tax and Licensing

Municipal Utilities

Environmental Resources
Solid Waste/Recycling
Water Conservation
Water Quality/Treatment

Planning and Development

Current Planning
Housing and Redevelopment
Long Range Planning

Police

Communications
Criminal Investigations
Detention Services
Forensic Science Unit
Neighborhood Services
Planning and Research

Public Works

Airport
Streets
Traffic/Transportation

Graduation--City Council Meeting

Graduation Standards

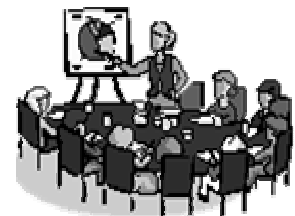
No more than three absences
Conduct conducive to the information goals established for this academy.

While attending this program, I met City staff who are absolutely enthusiastic about the work they do in Chandler. They gave us thorough presentations about each of their departments. I also met many interesting Chandler residents from all over the city and really looked forward to seeing everyone each week during the 10-week course.

Before the start of each class, we enjoyed a light catered-in dinner and were able to spend a little time getting to know our classmates. When our group graduated on October 26, 2006 we participated in a small presentation at the City Council meeting. Mayor Boyd Dunn presented each of us with a certificate and a group photo of our class which is a nice keepsake to have for remembering and sharing the experience with others.

The entire program was very informative and fun to be involved with. I now have a much better insight into how the City functions and operates behind the scenes. If you are interested in attending the next City Services Academy call the City Services Academy facilitator in the City Manager's Office at:

City Services Academy
55 N. Arizona Pl., Suite 301
Chandler, AZ 85225
(480) 782-2246.



Let's Start A New Tradition... A Message From The Dolin Family

Our family has lived on Nopal Place in Amberwood North for 23 years. We are both an Army and a Navy family and we feel certain that Amberwood North is home to other military families.

We would like to begin a tradition of honoring our neighborhood's service members and hope that you will notify all of us through the Neighborhood

News when your loved ones are due to come home.

Our son Nathan is a Specialist in the Army's 172nd Stryker Brigade. He serves as both a vehicle commander and as a team leader on the ground. He will soon be back at Ft. Wainwright in Fairbanks, Alaska after 16 months of service in Mosul and Baghdad, and he will be home in

December for his first Christmas with our family in three years. On December 16th, please join with us in saying welcome home by flying your flags or tying yellow ribbons. We hope to return the favor someday and when that time comes we will be honored to show our appreciation.

Thank you,
The Dolin Family

With Gratitude from All of Your Neighbors...

Welcome Home!

Nathan Dolin
Army Specialist
172 Stryker Brigade



Garry Wilmore Photographs Hoopes Park And It's Never Looked Better -By Judith Garner



"Photography has long fascinated me, but, only recently have I taken up the pastime in earnest, said Garry Wilmore during a chat I had with him about his stunning photography. I contacted Garry after discovering his beautiful photographs of Hoopes Park

posted on the internet. It was interesting to learn that a neighbor in Amberwood North, took these pictures. While we talked, Garry mentioned that he has had this hobby for less than one-year and a half. However, his photographs look like the work of a seasoned pro!

As we talked, I learned that Garry didn't pursue his long-time interest in photography until digital cameras came along. "Digital cameras has eliminated the need for expensive film processing," he says. Garry estimates that he has now taken

over 4,000 pictures. "About half get deleted right away and about one in ten make it to Flickr," he commented.

Flickr (<http://www.flickr.com>), is a popular photo website on the internet that offers the best way to store, search, sort and share photos. Currently there are 831 of Garry's photos available for viewing at Flickr. Log onto the site and check-out his pictures of Hoopes Park. In addition there are also hundreds of his lovely nature photos.

(continued on page 5)



Holiday Home Fire Risks Increase

-Information from the No Burns! Project

Believe What Firefighters Say About Fire Safety. Here's a short reminder list of fire safety things to think about.

It's not difficult to understand why this is a painful time of year for firefighters who respond to home fires. Not only do they frequently get called away from their own family celebrations, they see the destruction first-hand.

Firefighters know all too well that our minds are usually preoccupied with far more festive thoughts than fire safety. But, they keep telling us to take better precautions. Take their warnings seriously.

Let's be specific. What are the kinds of things we often do at this time of year that makes the threat of fire go up? Well, for starters....

- Curling up by a blazing fireplace.
- Lighting our tables, windows and bedrooms with glowing candles.
- Festooning our landscapes and interiors with twinkling electric lights and decorations.
- Filling our holiday environments with highly combustible materials like Christmas trees and wrapping paper.

It sounds normal and safe enough, right? But...

- A stray ember from a still glowing log that jumps the fire screen after your family has gone to bed, could cause a lethal ending to your beautiful day.
- Unattended candles look for ways to keep the fire alive, whether the fire starts on your tablecloth, bedroom curtains or other bedside materials. Never

leave candles unattended.

- Overloaded electrical circuits are considered the prime source of the hundreds of Christmas tree fires that start each year. Follow manufacturer's instructions for how many light strands to plug together. Look for U.L. rated electrical lights.
- A stray spark may be all it takes to ignite wrapping paper or dry tree needles.

Here is a Holiday Fire Safety Checklist from the No Burns! Project (www.NoBurns.org)

___ Test all smoke detectors at the start of the holiday season.

___ Buy a fresh live tree that doesn't drop needles when you shake the limbs.

___ Using a pruning saw, trim off one to two inches from the base of the tree trunk before placing it in a stand. The fresh cut will help the tree absorb water, which will help it retain its needles longer.

___ Use a heavy-duty tree stand designed to not tip over.

___ Position the tree at least 3-feet away from any heat source.

___ Don't block an exit with the tree.

___ Position the tree close to an electrical outlet to avoid needing extension cords to plug in tree lights.

___ If old strings of lights have broken or worn wires or loose bulb connections- **THROW THEM OUT** and purchase new ones.

___ Look for tree lights that carry the UL label, which indicates

that they have been tested by Underwriters' Laboratories.

___ ALWAYS follow the manufacturer's instructions when using new U.L.-approved strings of lights on your house or tree.

___ If you buy an artificial tree, be sure it is clearly marked 'Fire Retardant'.

___ NEVER use tree lights on a metallic artificial tree.

___ Give your fresh tree water daily.

___ Assign someone the task & be SURE they fill the reservoir daily.

___ ALWAYS turn off the tree lights while you are away from home or before going to bed at night.

___ NEVER use real candles to decorate the tree.

___ NEVER leave candles unattended in a room.

___ Don't put candles in a location where children or pets could knock them down.

___ Never throw wrapping paper into the fireplace.

Since 1998 the No Burns! Project has conducted public awareness campaigns using innovative products to help deliver memorable burn prevention messages. It also maintains an educational website. No Burns! educational services, products, and programs have been used to help raise burn safety awareness for members of the media, hospital patients, students, parents, company employees, homeowners and renters, maternity ward and other hospital administrators, new mothers, children, grandparents, fire services and other professional or non-profit organizations, which often use its products for fundraising.

For more information on fire and scald safety, visit www.NoBurns.org.

The Streets Report



Chandler's Busiest Intersection Overdue For Widening

-Information from Independent Newspapers

The intersection at Alma School and Warner roads will be widened once the city can find a contractor who will present a bid close to its estimated \$5.5 million budget.

Of the estimated \$5.5-million cost, \$4.1-million will come from federal grants. The City's share of the remaining cost will come from General Obligation Bonds.

The intersection happens to be one of Chandler's busiest with 76,000-vehicles traveling through it on an average workday. In 2005, 76-accidents occurred at the intersection, 19-with injuries. City of Chandler Public Information Officer, Jim Phipps, says the figure is the highest of Chandler's 100-plus other intersections.

Designs for widening the intersection went back to the drawing board after the City originally received just one bid on September 30, 2005 offering to do the job for \$9.98- million.

The City found that costs can be cut in some places, such as the original storm drainage plans that can be redesigned and this will save costs. Mr. Phipps also feels the construction boom lent to the single bidder in 2005. "Contractors had more work than they could handle, and didn't really need this job," he said.

Widening the intersection will allow about 5,000 more vehicles through per day and should improve the areas safety, city

officials state.

New bids for the project will be sought by year's end. "We're hoping the bids (this year) will come in close to the \$5.5-million estimate and that the climate is better for bids more in line with our budget," said Phipps. However, he added, if no bidder comes within the budget the project will again be shelved.

According to Mr. Phipps, widening of the intersection which is anchored by Wal-Mart, Fry's, Goodyear, PetsMart and Chilis, will take about 8-months to complete once the project gets started.

Garry Wilmore (continued from page 3)

"My passion is landscapes and sunsets," says Garry. "I enjoy hiking and taking photos of the Arizona desert," he adds, "the best times of the day are an hour after sunrise or an hour before sunset." A favorite spot of Garry's is the Valley's own Utery Mountain Regional Park. Recently, he has begun to explore the East Valley's San Tan Regional Park. Closer to home, Garry captures many beautiful sunsets and landscape photos at Hoopes Park.

I asked Garry if he has taken any photography classes. "I have not taken any classes, but, I do read books, photography magazines, and I may attend an upcoming digital-photo workshop," he said. "A lot of what I've learned about photography, has been by trial and error. I'm gaining more experience," he

states. Part of the reason Garry has taken-up photography is that it helps with the stresses of life, much like gardening does as a comparison. It is a good social activity that can be enjoyed with other people. Garry recommends photography to others, because, it's not the most expensive hobby there is if you go with digital. He says getting started will range from eight-hundred dollars (not including special lenses) to investing over one-thousand dollars for the initial equipment. Lenses can be added as one's experience grows. Garry now uses four-different lenses.

Although Garry's first love in photography is landscapes and sunsets, he says he has started taking pictures of planes. I asked him to elaborate. "I work for the

Superior Court in downtown Phoenix. On my lunch-break I sometimes take my camera with me to the top of the parking garage and take photos of the airplanes flying into Sky Harbor Airport," he said. Garry told me he has aspirations to get his pictures published. "I would love to get a photo into Arizona Highways or National Geographic," he said. Garry has a lot of natural talent so we may just see that happen for him sometime!

Garry Wilmore lives in Section-3 and moved to the neighborhood approximately 3 years ago.

To view Garry's photos of Hoopes Park: <http://flickr.com/photos/86013963@N00/tags/hoopespark/> or type in Google: Hoopes Park Photos

To view Garry's profile at Flickr: <http://flickr.com/people/86013963@N00/>

The Crime Report



'Tis the season to be jolly, but it is also the season to be wary of burglars, thieves, pickpockets, and other holiday grinchers. Nothing can ruin the holiday spirit faster than becoming the victim of a crime.

- Remember, whether you are leaving the house to go shopping or out for an evening of holiday parties, lock your doors and windows! Don't leave the drapes open with your presents in plain view. Presents displayed around your tree can be a pretty sight, but can also be quite tempting to burglars. It's better to scatter the gifts around the house, in closets or cupboards, where they can't be so easily seen.
- If you are leaving town for the holidays, make sure your home appears occupied. Leave inside and outside lights on timers and have your neighbors pick up newspapers, mail, and take flyers off your door. Ask neighbors to park in your driveway. Put a timer on a talk radio station for several hours a day.
- If you choose to have a live holiday tree, make sure it is always properly watered. Never leave tree lights on when no one is at home. Remember, ornaments can also burn.
- After Christmas, don't put out empty boxes advertising your new purchases (VCR's, microwaves, etc.). Break the boxes down and deposit them in your trash, recycle bin or dumpster away from your home.
- When you're shopping, use the trunk of your car to keep your packages out of sight. Keep your car locked at all times. Be sure and make several trips to your car to deposit packages in the trunk. Don't allow yourself to become so burdened down with packages that you become a tempting target. When walking through parking lots, be sure that you are aware of your surroundings. Walk with authority. Don't look like a victim!
- If you have a garage door opener, do not leave the control openly displayed in your car. Keep the door leading from your house to your garage locked. Try not to leave your garage door open at any time.
- Be aware that thieves and pickpockets also do some of their biggest business during the holiday season. Ladies, don't dangle your handbag from your shoulder. You are creating a perfect setup for a purse snatcher. Instead, keep your purse tucked tightly under your arm. Better yet, don't even carry a purse. Place your checkbook, cash, or credit cards in your front pockets. Avoid carrying your checkbook, cash, and credit cards all together in one wallet, because if a thief gets the whole package together, they can cash checks with your identification and run up a large credit card bill in a short amount of time.
- Never give your credit card number over the telephone to anyone when you did not initiate the call. And be sure that you are dealing with a reputable company when ordering merchandise over the telephone.
- Don't "flash" large rolls of money in public. You never know who's watching! Also, spread your money around in different pockets. That way a pickpocket can't clean you out in one fell swoop.
- If you go to an automatic teller machine, try to go during the daylight hours. If you must go at night, pick a machine that is well lighted and visible to passing traffic. If anyone is lurking near the machine, pass it up and find another.
- When dining out valet parking is nice, but don't be too lax. Don't leave valuables in your vehicle and **never** leave your house key with the attendant.

Just by using a little planning and some good common sense, most holiday crimes can be avoided.

Chandler Mercado Shopping Center Revitalization Details

\$6 million in improvements will be made within the next year

—Information Source Chandler Republic

A family entertainment center is potentially the start of a \$6-million redevelopment of the Chandler Mercado located at the northeast corner of Arizona Avenue and Warner Road. The 21.5-acre shopping center has a troubled retail history and remains largely vacant since Kmart closed in 2002.

The new million-dollar entertainment venue, called Portero, is slated to open within six months and seat 300, featuring dining, live music, dancing, a sports bar, billiards, an Internet café and video arcade games.

The owner is South Korean filmmaker, Sungho Park, who moved from Seoul to Tempe a year ago. He has owned similar businesses in Southern California.

The new club at the Chandler Mercado will occupy 14,548 square feet just east of the existing Dollar Tree store. Live entertainment, bands or DJs, will be featured three nights a week.

"This center this time next year will look completely different," said Harry Paxton, Economic

Development Specialist for Chandler. The site has three developers:

- The 83,873-square-foot former Kmart space is being refurbished by Ethan Christopher. The space may house a single anchor of 50,000-60,000 square feet, with the remainder divided into smaller retail spaces. Or, the entire space could be taken by one anchor. The developer will be reimbursed \$580,376 from the city for work on the façade, signage and landscaping as part of the city's Commercial Reinvestment Program.
- The developer, BP Real Estate Holding Co. of Scottsdale, is renovating the line of shops that starts on the northern wall of the old Kmart and extends around toward Arizona Avenue. "There will be a lot of improvement with stone work, painting and lighting fixtures and other things that will definitely improve the look and make it consistent with what Ethan Christopher is doing with the old Kmart space," Paxton said.
- Developer Perry Koon of Coronado, California is redoing about an acre on the immediate corner of Arizona Avenue and Warner. A gas station that was there has been torn down

and will be replaced with a 5,120-square-foot structure that will be anchored by a financial institution and house additional tenants.

Mia Linda's, a Mexican restaurant fronting Arizona Avenue has closed, and the restaurant replacing it is the Great American Food & Ice Cream Co., which will cater to families.

According to BP Real Estate, other new tenants will be a Department of Motor Vehicles office and a Fox's Pizza Den, the first franchise in metro Phoenix of a company that has locations in 28-states.

In addition to an entertainment center at the Chandler Mercado, filmmaker Sungho Park plans to open a gathering place called Hollywood Billiards in a former Peter Piper Pizza site in the Pollack Paseo del Oro center on the northeastern corner of Alma School and Elliot roads. That site will have up to 30 billiard tables, an Internet café and a video arcade, but, no sports bar.

Monument Sign At Hoopes Park Damaged

—By Judith Garner

The Hoopes Park monument sign, located at the corner of Evergreen and Palomino, was recently damaged. The sign laid face down on the ground for about a week until a resident notified the City's Parks Maintenance Division who removed the sign promptly.

It is a mystery as to how the sign fell off of its base. Perhaps, it was

pushed over by vandals, or, may have tipped over quite naturally.

The wire -barbs that hold the sign up from its concrete base can become rusted and deteriorate to the point that the sign may have toppled over from its own weight.

The City does plan to repair and re-install the sign after the first of the year.

Neighbors who live near the park and people using and walking around the park are always encouraged to report any suspicious activity they see at Hoopes Park or anywhere else in the neighborhood.

Chandler Police Department:

Emergencies: 911

Non-Emergencies: 480-782-4130

Did You Know?

-By Don Langlois

BREAK TIME NOW BY SUBSCRIPTION

Each issue of *Break Time* offers three months of a variety of programs by the City of Chandler's Recreation Division. Recognizing the cost involved in mailing copies to every home, it has been decided to offer these on a subscription basis. They will still be free, but to receive them one needs to subscribe. This can be done either by sending in the postcard in the current December/January/February 2007 issue, or when registering for a class, or by calling 480-782-2738, or by going online to: www.chandleraz.gov/breaktime

RECREATION INSTRUCTORS NEEDED

"Our community needs recreational instructors," notes the ad on the back cover of the December/January/February 2007 issue of *Break Time*. Here is a great opportunity to teach some special skill or hobby. Instructor pay starts at \$11.50 an hour and is dependent on experience. If interested call 480-782-2705 or go online to: www.chandleraz.gov/recreation

✧ Neighborhood Meeting ✧

Due to the holidays
December's Meeting will be held on
Tuesday December 12, 2006

Get out and meet your neighbors! Attend a monthly neighborhood meeting held on the third Tuesday of each month. For time, location, or more information:

Time- 7:00 p.m.

Location- Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints Church (southwest entrance). The church is located across the street from Sirrine Elementary School at the northwest corner of Hartford and Mesquite Streets.

Please check before each meeting to ensure that there have been no changes to dates, times or locations by calling an Ambassador or check the Community Calendar online at our neighborhood's website:

www.neighborhoodlink.com/chandler/amberwoodnorth

City of Chandler Frequently Called Phone Numbers

| | | | |
|----------------------------|----------------|-----------------------------|----------------|
| Animal Control | (480) 782-4130 | Hazard Waste Disposal | (480) 782-3510 |
| Block Watch | (480) 782-4528 | Hospital, Chandler Regional | (480) 963-4561 |
| Building Permits | (480) 782-3000 | Information Line | (480) 782-4636 |
| Bulk Trash Pick-up | (480) 782-3510 | Tool Bank Program | (480) 782-4320 |
| Chandler Fire Department | (480) 782-2120 | Traffic Engineering | (480) 782-3454 |
| Chandler/Gilbert YMCA | (480) 899-9622 | Solid Waste/Garbage Pick-up | (480) 782-3510 |
| Chandler Parks | (480) 782-2727 | Senior Center | (480) 782-2720 |
| Chandler Police Department | | Solve It! Mediation Program | (480) 732-7174 |
| Emergencies | 9-1-1 | Special Events Hotline | (480) 782-2735 |
| Non-emergency | (480) 782-4130 | Street Light Repair Hotline | (480) 782-3460 |
| Chandler Recycling | (480) 782-3510 | Sirrine Elementary School | (480) 472-3600 |
| Code Compliance | (480) 782-4320 | Hendrix Jr. High School | (480) 472-3300 |
| Dial-a-Ride | (480) 633-0101 | Dobson High School | (480) 472-3000 |
| Graffiti Hotline | (480) 782-4322 | | |

To contribute information to the newsletter or if you have questions, contact the Editor/Publisher

Judith Garner (480) 560-7842 or email: judithgarner@qwest.net

Thank you to the City of Chandler for Printing Amberwood North's Neighborhood News

Editor/Publisher Wanted

**Are you interested in volunteering to coordinate
the production of Amberwood North's
Neighborhood Newsletter?**

If So, Please Contact:

Judith Garner

Ph. 480-560-7842

Email: judithgarner@qwest.net

Judith will be retiring from editing/publishing the newsletter after distribution of the current November/December issue. I have served as Editor/Publisher and Distribution Coordinator of the neighborhood newsletter for one full-year. It has been a great pleasure, but, now it is time to turn the newsletter production over to another neighborhood volunteer. I look forward to hearing from anyone who is interested and will be committed to doing the job. Call TODAY...

Let's keep the Amberwood Newsletter in production for another year!