

Spring  
2016

# Litchfield Legends

A publication of the Litchfield Park Historical Society and Museum

## The DOCTOR, the DENTIST, and the DRUGSTORE

**New Exhibit  
GRAND OPENING**

Sunday, April 24th  
1:00-4:00 p.m.

*"A wise man ought to realize that health is his most valuable possession."*

**Hippocrates**

From the beginning of time, mankind has sought relief from and cures for his bodily afflictions. That was also the case in Litchfield Park during the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century. Two beloved men – **Robert Hilton, MD** and **George McMillan, DDS** – and a neighborhood drugstore gave aid to area residents who were suffering from ailments which ranged from a mild toothache to a serious accident, and from fitting a set of dentures to bringing a new life into the world. Their stories are the subject of our museum's new exhibit opening on Sunday, April 24<sup>th</sup>.

**Robert Kornitzer Hilton** was born on December 9, 1902 in the small community of Socorro which was located along the Rio Grande River in the Territory of New Mexico. His middle name proudly paid homage to his maternal grandfather – Dr. Joseph Kornitzer – an 1869 emigrant from Austria-Hungary who was a physician, pharmacist, essayist, inventor and free thinker. Robert's father was a Norwegian immigrant, Jacob Hansen Hilton, whose business was "The J.H. Hilton Boot and Shoe House." Here he made and sold leather goods which included boots, shoes, harnesses and saddles. He died of stomach cancer when Robert was 5 ½ years old.

Growing up in New Mexico fostered in Robert a life-long appreciation for nature, and bestowed on him a fluency in Spanish which would benefit him during his adult years. He also learned to play the clarinet. The youngest of four children, Robert's last three years of high school were spent at the New Mexico Military Institute in Roswell, New Mexico. It was dubbed *The West Point of the West*.

The school's structured routine nurtured in him the discipline required to get him through his medical education. He graduated in 1921 and headed east.

The first three years of his pre-med studies were spent at the University of Wisconsin in Madison. He received his Bachelor of Science at the University of



Mrs. McMillan, Dr. Robert Hilton, Mrs. Hilton  
and Dr. George McMillan

### In This Issue:

- The Doctor, the Dentist, and the Drugstore
- President's Letter
- Museum Certification
- New Artifacts
- Melissa Thomas Gift
- Litchfield Park Centennial Coin
- Sponsors
- Membership Form

Cont. on page 6

## Board of Directors

### Executive Committee:

Lisa Brainard-Watson, President  
Judy Cook, Vice President  
Meredeth Stucky, Secretary Pro Tem  
Jeff Raible, Treasurer  
Sonja Hendrick, Past President

### Board Members:

Larry Baker  
Paul Crawley  
Judy Fulton  
Sara Homan  
Linda Lamm  
Robert McMillan, DDS  
William Robey, MD  
Libby Hilton Rouse  
Nancy Schafer  
Melissa Thomas

### General Counsel:

Paul J. Faith, Esq.,  
Faith, Ledyard & Faith P.L.C.

### Research Consultant:

Dr. Gloria Cuadraz, ASU Office  
of Oral History & Ethnography

### Special Thanks

The City of Litchfield Park  
Tim Blake, LandCare LLC  
Palm Gate RV & Self Storage

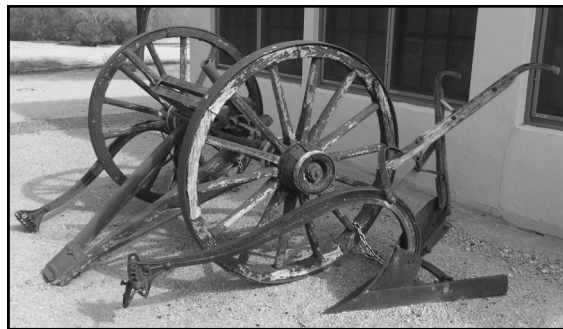
## Letter from the President

As our Society winds up another year of fantastic offerings about Arizona history, I would like to extend a personal invitation to each and every one of you to our next opening. The exhibit – **The DOCTOR, the DENTIST, and the DRUGSTORE** – will be on display to the public on **Sunday, April 24, from 1:00-4:00 p.m.** The personal history of Dr. Hilton and Dr. McMillan is fascinating – and you won't want to miss the story of our old drugstore. Did you know that Litchfield Park once had its own hospital? Come and find out about that, as well.

We're also looking forward to 2017 – **Litchfield Park's Centennial Year**. To begin the celebration, make sure that you visit our museum gift shop this spring and purchase a centennial coin that we have had struck. Be the first in your neighborhood to buy one! Then look forward with us to next year when we begin not only the centennial celebration, but a celebration of the fifth year of our museum. Join us today.

**Lisa Brainard-Watson**

**President of the LPHS and MUSEUM**



### PLOWS and WAGON WHEELS ON DISPLAY

The museum now has on exhibit two horse-drawn plows used to clear the virgin desert for the Southwest Cotton Co. one hundred years ago. Along with them, are two wooden wagon wheels used for hauling farm materials over the years. See them today!

## MUSEUM CERTIFICATION

The LPHS & MUSEUM has just received certification for 2016 from the Arizona Historical Society. Each year we must re-apply; and this is the third year of being granted that certification. We are all proud of that accomplishment – and know that you in the community are proud of it too. Thank you for helping us make history.

**The Board of the  
LPHS and MUSEUM**

### Summer Museum Hours

**Memorial Day—Labor Day**

**Wednesdays: 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.**

## Melissa Thomas Gives \$5000 Grant to the LPHS

**Melissa Thomas** wanted to do something special in memory of her mother **Nancy Osborne Armstrong Traub**. Melissa had been a Board member back in 2001, when the fledgling Litchfield Park Historical Society began. She left for several years and fought a battle with cancer. Upon her recovery, she returned to the Board. However, she has been fighting a second battle with this insidious disease this past year; and recently her mother passed away. Painfully aware of life's transient nature, Melissa thought long and hard about some sort of lasting gift in her mother's name. Her mother Nancy was born in Newark, New Jersey, in 1927. She graduated from Southern Seminary in Virginia and had a love of museums, old furniture, and art. After marrying Victor Traub, she made sure that her children developed an appreciation of the things she cared about. Melissa said that those frequent visits to museums and barns filled with old furniture are what fostered in her a love of history.



Melissa Thomas and Nancy Osborn Armstrong Traub

Melissa was aware of the fact that the Society had a new building in its long-range plan. Only three years old, the museum has achieved Arizona State Historical Society Certification and has enjoyed an attendance of well over 3,000 visitors – many from other states, Canada, and Europe. She also knew that we have literally run out of space. A new building would not only afford our organization a larger storage area, but would give increased protection to our collections from light, heat, cold, and moisture damage – not to mention insect infestations. It would also provide increased security and additional space to mount exhibits that school children could visit easily.

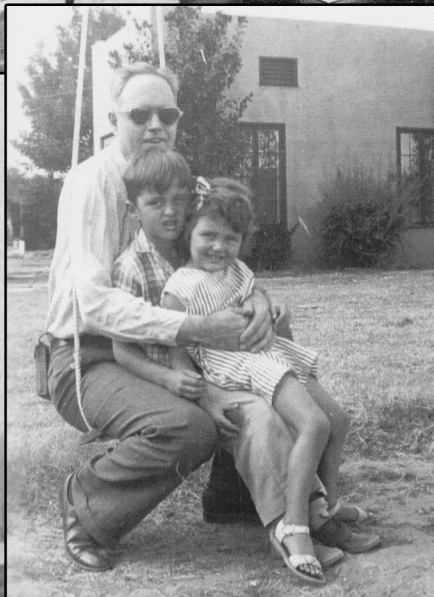
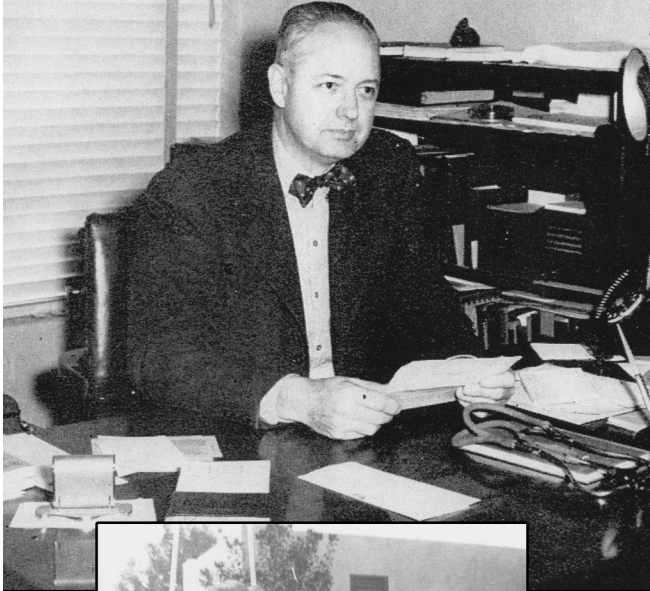
Melissa also realized that the Board believed the story of Goodyear Tire & Rubber Co. in the state of Arizona had to be one of the top ten stories for the state from 1917 through to Litchfield's death in 1959. The growing of cotton, *green feeding* of cattle, soil conservation, water conservation, seed development, the Southwest Cotton Co., Goodyear Farms, the establishment of the Southwest Valley Mexican-American community, the Apprentice Farmer Program, Goodyear Aircraft, Goodyear Aerospace, Luke Air Force Base, The Wigwam, and the perfection of tires for farm equipment was an astounding legacy to Arizona and the larger world beyond its borders. This story requires a fit building to house this impressive history.

The Board of the LPHS, Sun Health, and the city of Litchfield Park are all dedicated to the preservation of our museum. For the past two years, we have all been discussing ideas for the museum's future and researching possibilities. Once a site for a new museum has been selected, Melissa's grant will allow us to hire an architect, come up with the preliminary design, and begin a capital campaign. This first step was made possible by a lady from New Jersey, born in 1927, and her daughter, who after finding her way to Arizona, wanted to *make a difference* in her mother's name. We thank her ...

**The Board of the Litchfield Park Historical Society & MUSEUM**



Dr. Hilton in his office in Litchfield Park

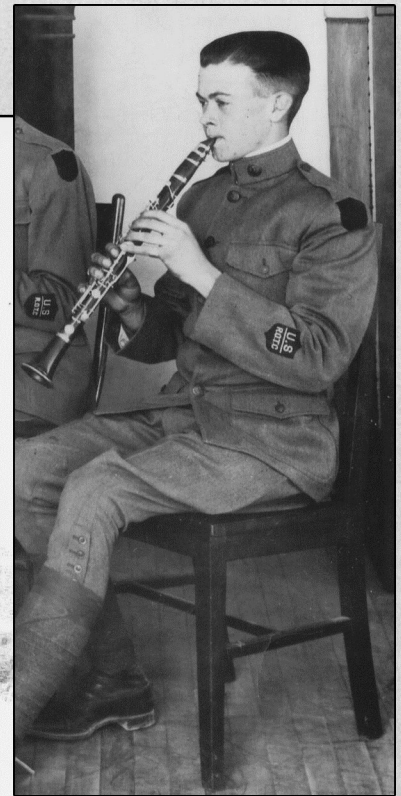


Robert Hilton with his son, Thomas and daughter, Nancy

Dr. McMillan's Dental School Graduation Photo

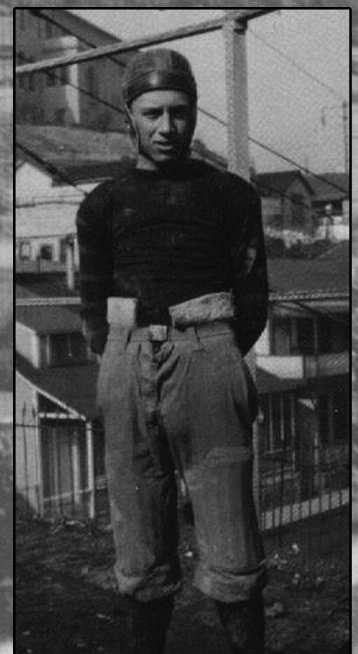


George McMillan in his first suit



Robert Hilton at New Mexico Military Institute

Litchfield Park Hospital- built in 1918

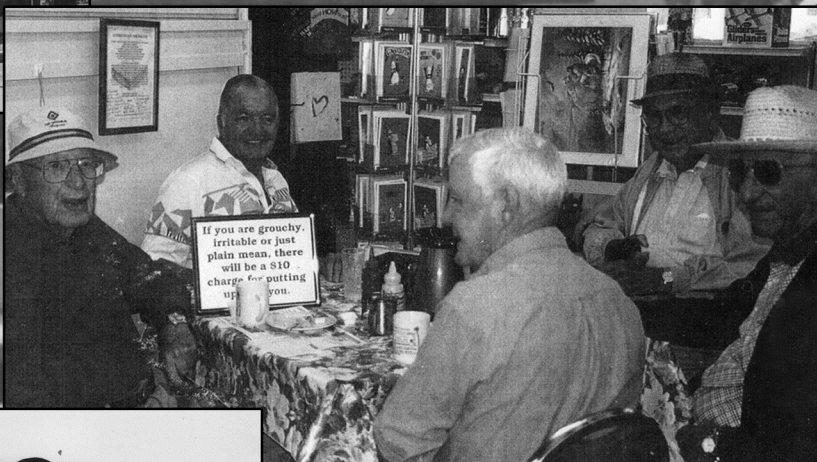
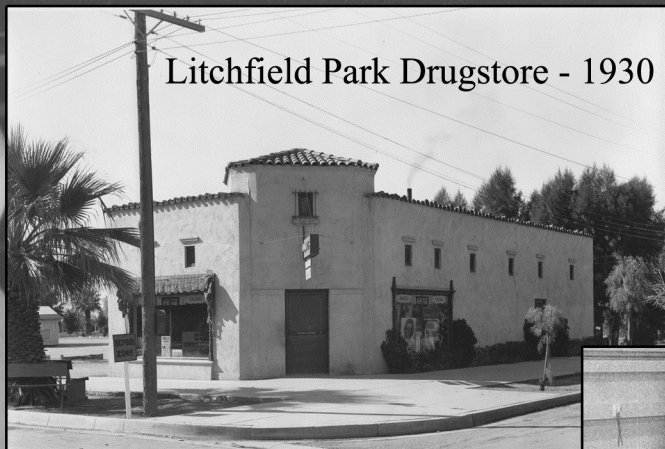


George McMillan in his football uniform in Jerome, AZ

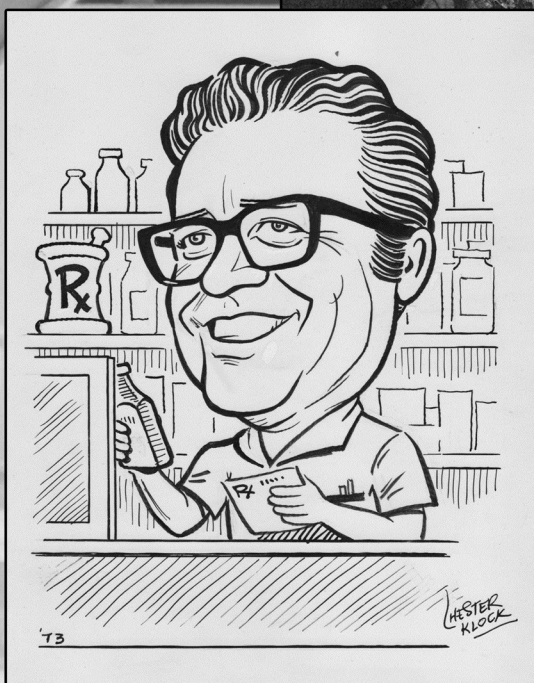


# Litchfield Drug

Litchfield Park Drugstore - 1930



Members of the Litchfield Drug Morning Social Club - 1999



Caricature of Al Holman -  
Pharmacist from 1967 - 1999

Litchfield Park Drugstore - 1938



Chicago and his medical degree from Rush Medical College at the University of Chicago; and he completed his internship at St. Francis Hospital in Evanston, Illinois, graduating in 1929.

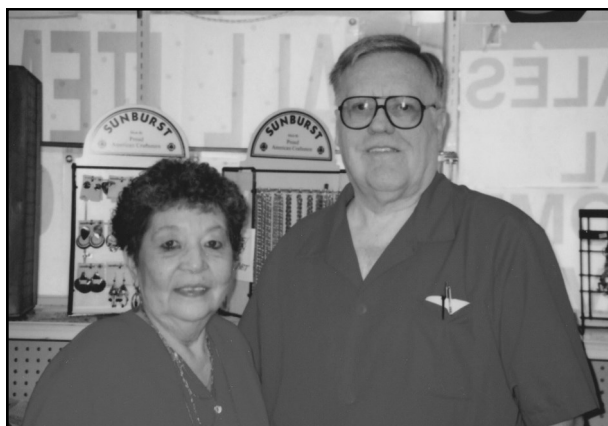
He then headed west hoping to relocate near his brother Joe in Los Angeles. But what began as a brief stint working in the Verde Valley copper mining country of Arizona turned into twelve years of practicing medicine in Clarkdale and Jerome. It was there that he met a young nurse named Roberta Jensen who became his wife, and where he developed what was to become a life-long friendship with dentist George McMillan.

**George Herbert McMillan** was born on September 19, 1906 in Jerome Junction located in the Territory of Arizona. His mother Rose wanted a girl. One can only hope that this 4'10" mother of three boys (George, Ralph, and John) eventually overcame her disappointment. His father, George Emmett McMillan, was a railroad engineer who fostered in his young sons a love of trains. Later on, George Sr. became the town's mortician and also went into a partnership with a man named John Scott, opening a successful furniture store called "Scott and McMillan."

As young boys, George and his brothers got into continual mischief along with the other boys from the town. Calling themselves 'the gang,' they one day purloined a fresh pie from an area restaurant. They whizzed it through the shot-gun styled building, out the back door, and away from the site where they indulged themselves in the fruits of their theft. However, upon reaching home later that day, George and his brothers had to face their parents and the owner of the restaurant. Found guilty, they all vowed they would never repeat such a deed again.

Young George also loved music. He played the piano and trombone both at parties and in a band. He carried that love of music with him throughout his life.

When he was a teenager, George decided he wanted to be a dentist. He worked at a Jerome department/grocery store and the local pharmacy, saving the money he earned for his later schooling; and after graduation, he left Jerome and went to college in Tucson. One year later, he was accepted into the dental school at Denver University, graduating in June of 1929. After returning home to Jerome, he bought the practice of a retiring dentist and began his career; and he eventually married his high-school sweetheart Beth Galbraith.



Shirley Holman and Pharmacist Al Holman

The **Litchfield Park Drugstore** was built and opened to the public during the winter of 1928-29. It has always sat on the southwest corner of the intersection of Old Litchfield Road and Honeysuckle Street. We believe that it housed the area's post office from 1934 to 1944. We also think that over the seven decades of its existence, there were six pharmacists – among them **G.R. Rhoades** and **George Henderson**. However, it was the last pharmacist – **Al Holman** – who oversaw the business the longest – from 1967 to 1999.

Al Holman and his friend Bruce Beekman bought the pharmacy in 1967. They worked there for the next nine years; after that, Al took over the pharmacy completely. Al and his wife

Shirley had come from Michigan; and they had six children. They remodeled the store in 1976.

Over the years, the pharmacy had become not only a place to buy medicine, but a place where area residents could visit while eating at a table or on a stool at the soda fountain. One group that met regularly was called the Litchfield Drug Morning Social Club. The club had a few rules. Among them were that a member had to drink coffee, be a fan of drugstore cuisine, be an expert on all matters of state, and had to meet in true friendship and absolute disregard as to another's political association (except that you had to be a Republican).

In 1999 the drugstore was closed. Al had filled prescriptions for 31 years and Shirley had waited

Cont. on page 7

**The Doctor, The Dentist and the  
Drugstore Cont. from page 6.**

on customers for 25 years. When Al Holman purchased the drugstore in 1967, Litchfield Park had 900 residents; when it was closed in 1999, the city had over 3800. It was the end of an era of small community drugstores owned and operated by one pharmacist. In these neighborhood pharmacies, community members knew their pharmacist personally and trusted his advice. Many drugstores also contained a soda fountain, which for many of us brings back memories of sweet treats and innocent dates. Now medicine has to be purchased in large, impersonal chain stores or through mail order purchases. Like so much of 21<sup>st</sup> century life, the sense of community has disappeared and life has become more impersonal.

Step back in time in this exhibit. View what early life in Arizona was like. See the early years of these cherished doctors' lives. Discover which man is responsible for the large stone 'J' still seen on the side of Mingus Mountain. Find out how they met their wives; and how they arrived in Litchfield Park. Laugh at the story of the gophers. See what made these men who they were – dedicating their lives to healing the residents of the copper mining communities of Clarkdale and Jerome, and later the small town of Litchfield Park. Understand why memories of these two men and the drugstore still bring smiles to the faces of area residents.

### **Litchfield Park Centennial Copper Commemorative Coins**

You can now purchase your own copper coin commemorating the Litchfield Park Centennial (2017). These coins were designed by Don Crowder of the Arizona Territorial Mint. One side has a carving of Paul Weeks Litchfield – 1875-1959 and the other side has three cotton bolls with Litchfield Park Centennial – 1917-2017 stamped on it. Each coin was made from one Troy ounce (31.1 grams) of .999 pure copper mined in Arizona; and was struck on an 1893 500-pound drop-hammer press.



The edge is stamped with a purity verification and each coin is enclosed in a plastic case to prevent tarnishing.

These beautiful coins are available now in our museum gift shop for \$20 each. They make a wonderful gift – for others and for you! Come and see them today.

## **Sponsors**

### **\$500 Level**



**La Loma Village**  
Sun Health

**14154 Denny Boulevard  
Litchfield Park, AZ 85340  
(623) 537-7500**



**S&S Tire & Auto Service Center**  
800 N. Dysart  
Goodyear, AZ 85338



**WIGWAM**  
ARIZONA  
300 E. Wigwam Blvd.  
Litchfield Park, AZ 85340  
[www.wigwamresort.com](http://www.wigwamresort.com)

### **\$250 Level**

**Curtis, Goodwin, Sullivan,  
Udall and Schwab, P.L.C.**  
Attorneys at Law

**W. C. Scoutten**

### **\$100 Level**

**Larry Baker**  
Sparklin' Clean Carwash

**Paul J. Faith, Esq.**  
Faith, Ledyard & Faith, P.L.C.

**Rick Hughes**  
Haircutters in the Park

**Wilbur E. Kaufman**  
Litchfield High School Class of 1948

**John Manobianco**  
State Farm Insurance

**Margie Martinez**  
La Loma Mexican Grill





PO Box 1936  
Litchfield Park, Arizona 85340



NONPROFIT  
ORGANIZATION  
U.S. POSTAGE  
PAID  
PERMIT NO. 15

## Museum Hours

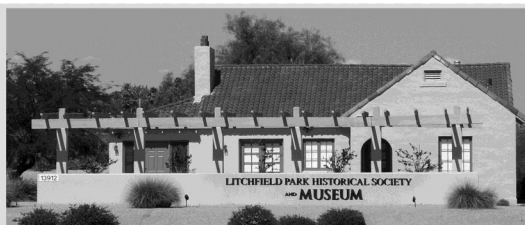
Wednesday, Thursday and Friday  
10:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.  
And by appointment - call 623-535-4414

Address: 13912 W. Camelback Rd.  
Litchfield Park, Arizona 85340

email: office@LPHSmuseum.org

### Do you have empty aluminum cans?

The LPHS will recycle them for you.  
Leave them at the garage door of  
610 N. Old Litchfield Road, Litchfield  
Park. The money will help the LPHS  
pay its utility bills.



**Join Us.** It is through your dues and donations that we are able to continue our efforts  
to preserve the history of Litchfield Park. *Become a member today.*

### LPHS 2016 Membership/Special Donation Form

January 1 – December 31, 2016 membership year

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Spouse's Name \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

**Annual Membership Dues** ☐ Single Adult \$20 ☐ Family \$30 ☐ Business/Professional \$60  
☐ Contributor \$125 ☐ Lifetime \$600

**I would like to make an additional Special Donation of:** ☐ \$25 ☐ \$50 ☐ \$100 ☐ Other \_\_\_\_\_

Thank you! Please make your check payable to: **Litchfield Park Historical Society,**  
PO Box 1936, Litchfield Park, AZ 85340

Would you be interested in volunteering to work on a committee or help in the museum? ☐ Yes

The Litchfield Park Historical Society is an official IRS 501 (c)(3) non-profit corporation, and membership dues and other donations are tax deductible for persons who itemize.