



the Quarterly

Remembering the Southwest Valley

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Salt  Agua Fria  Gila
Three Rivers Historical Society

Ed Hazelton Remembers

Ed Hazelton recalls the first days of Chamber activity. "There were separate Chambers for the cities then, I think it was 1958, Avondale and Goodyear merged. Next, Litchfield Park joined and it was the Tri City Chamber in 1961. Lawyers determined proportional percentage to each city: Avondale 65%, Goodyear 25% and Litchfield Park 10%.

"When others joined – the Southwest Valley Chamber was born. I was there through 23 years of service to this community! This goes back to 1952. These were the good old days for me.

"I recall names of many early members: Lattie Coor, superintendent of Avondale Schools, Paul Foster, manager of APS, Clint Davis, the Davis Furniture Store, Louis Gray, Commercial Accounts Manager of APS, Jim King, owner of King's Department Store, Victor Allen of Tasty Freeze and real estate, Mel Welzin of Napa Auto Parts, Harold Motes, Farmers Real Estate agent for 30 years, Walter Lonergan worked at the Naval Air Facility (he also sold guns and ammo), Bill Tainter, builder, and Kenneth Davis, Manager of Valley National Bank, Don Bennett, Bruce Thein, Harold Porter, Hal Runyun, Base Commander, ..I knew all of them and many more because I was manager of the Chamber from 1954 until 1977. I recruited many of them for membership in the Chamber.

"I was paid \$15.00 for gas money in the beginning. Later I got \$25.00 a month.

In 1960 the County Board of Supervisors gave the Chamber \$200,000 of AZ State money to attract tourism. So we took out black and white ads in Chicago newspapers to advertise the great Arizona temperatures when it was freezing there.



An early photo of the Chamber of Commerce meeting was provided from the files of Jim King, Sr. Names were not included.

"In 1958, I had a budget of \$5,000.00 and I started Billy Moore Days. My brother Herbert, the artist, designed the art work on the souvenir book. I call him the famous Hazelton. Eventually I earned a big \$150.00 a month."

In 2008, the Southwest Valley Chamber of Commerce honored him with their Annual Award of Excellence. Pictured below with Ed Hazelton is Sharolyn Hohman, current President and CEO of the Chamber at the Awards Banquet held at the Wigwam Resort.



Photo courtesy the Southwest Valley Chamber of Commerce

Headline News of the Past

Litchfield residents question costs of forming a new city.

Despite the blessings of the community's largest landowner, a number of Litchfield Park residents are reacting with skepticism to the proposed incorporation of their community... "How can little Litchfield Park possibly find sufficient revenue to operate its own city government and services needed for residents, like fire and police protection?" asked one Litchfield resident at a special meeting last Thursday evening at the Wigwam Inn.

More than 400 residents gathered at the resort May 7 to discuss the incorporation of their community with officials of SunCor Development Company, new owner of the 12,000 acre former Goodyear Farms property. Keith Turley, chairman of the Board of Pinnacle West Corp, SunCor's parent company, used the meeting to formally announce to the Park's residents that SunCor favors the idea of having its property ultimately annexed into a new city of Litchfield Park.

West Valley View: May 13, 1987

1940's...When a Handshake Meant Something

Excerpt from a letter to Goodyear City Council

"Do you know that Russell Stair purchased the first piece of Goodyear Farms when Mr. Litchfield decided to sell? Russ asked me to build the Airline Restaurant for him. The lot was 25 feet by 50 feet. I decided to buy the land next door, to the East, but Mr. Litchfield was out of the country and they had no idea when he would return. Newell Kring, Goodyear Farms Manager, said they would give me a Letter of Intent and I could go ahead and build. That's what I did, and the Deed was recorded much later. I built a variety and hardware store, and then a real estate office. The buildings are there today on Western Avenue. Those were the first pieces of Goodyear Farms to be sold."

By Jim King, Sr. May 30, 2005



Site of Russell Stair's Airline Restaurant

Site of Jim King's Goodyear Hardware and Variety store

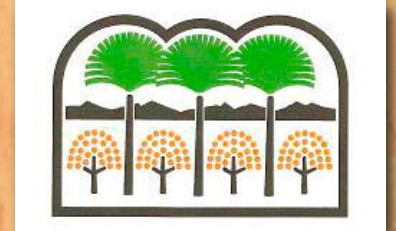


Below (looking east from left to right) were Bowman's Drug, Abraham's Market, Goodyear Post Office, Airline Restaurant, Goodale Hardware and First National Bank.

The City of Litchfield Park

Third in our series of City Logos.

Population	1990	3,303
	2009	5,093
Area	1990	3.1 sq. miles
	2008	3.3 sq. miles
Sales Tax	1991-92	2% = \$ 720,685
	2006-07	2% = \$3,410,304
	October 1, 2008 tax	increased to 2.8%



The Litchfield Park logo was originally created for Litchfield Park Properties, Inc. (LPP), which was a development arm of Goodyear Tire and Rubber Company of Akron, Ohio. LPP used the logo in its marketing endeavors for residential property in Litchfield Park. Mr. Paul Grella, a graphic designer, created the logo and used arches at the top to correspond with the architecture on buildings in the downtown area. The orange trees and palm trees in the logo reflect the trees planted in the community. LPP originally registered the logo with the United States Patent Office in 1970.

SunCor Development Company subsequently purchased the Goodyear Farms properties from Goodyear Tire and Rubber Company, including The Wigwam Resort and remaining property belonging to LPP. The Wigwam is now The Wigwam Golf Resort and Spa.

Continued on next page

SunCor provided the logo registration documentation to the City of Litchfield Park in 1992, however, the registration period had expired. The City eventually re-registered the logo with the U.S. Patent Office in 1994, and the City has continued to keep that registration current.

The palm tree/orange tree logo has not changed from its original design. For identification purposes, the City adds its name, the state, and year of incorporation when using the logo.

Many thanks to Mary Rose Evans, City Clerk, who gave us a copy of each logo. Mrs. Celeste Crouch and Mr. Mike Cartsonis helped furnish historical background of the City logo.

Parks Rich in History

White Tank Regional Park is in Waddell, and is the largest regional park in the U.S.A.! Darci Kinsman, park director, told 3RHS that the Master Plan for the park was approved by the County Board of Supervisors on October 15, 1964 and the park opened to the public. Maricopa County is currently constructing a library near the entrance. A nature center and gift shop are also planned. Be sure to look for these coming attractions. Call 623-935-2505. J.R. Cardin is County District Director of Parks.

Estrella Mountain Regional Park has opened the new Nature Center (below) with historic artifacts and documents, creatures, gift shop and guided tours and lectures by Carolyn Mayberry, Park Director and Patricia Armstrong, Ranger. For group tours phone 623-932-3811. This is a good way to learn about the history of our desert, mountains, animals and plants. Trails are available for hikes. Estrella Mountain Park opened in 1954. The golf course opened in 1962 and was enlarged in 1967. The Rodeo arena opened in 1983. Enjoy your parks!



Did You Know?

Governor Jack Williams signed the bill in 1971 that made the bola tie the official Arizona State neckwear. This made Arizona the only state in the union with an official neckwear. At first the lawmakers didn't take this idea seriously and suggested that blue jeans should be the official pants and why not make a margarita the official state drink?

Bola ties, (also known as bolo ties) are made with braided slivers of leather with tiny silver balls on the ends (aglets) and a slide usually silver, decorated with turquoise. However, decorations can be made from all sorts of things. Desert Caballeros Museum in Wickenburg has many bola ties on display.

Silversmith Victor Cedarstaff of Wickenburg, Arizona, claims to have invented the bolo tie in the late 1940s, and later patented his slide design. According to an article in *Sunset*: Victor Cedarstaff was riding his horse one day when his hat blew off. Wary of losing the silver-trimmed hatband, he slipped it around his neck. His companion joked, "That's a nice-looking tie you're wearing, Vic." An idea incubated, and Cedarstaff soon fashioned the first bolo tie (the name is derived from boleadora, an Argentine lariat). However, it is also said that the bola tie is a North American pioneer creation that dates back to between 1866 and 1886.

Mr. Sam Garcia...

Gone but not forgotten...

I want to share a bit of history from my brief relationship with Mr. Garcia. Back in the 1970's when I was new to the Westside; I had the opportunity to meet Mr. Sam Garcia. I was a new teacher at Agua Fria Union High School. In 1970, I was appointed to be the new track coach at Agua Fria. I began looking for ways to promote a running program on the Westside. At that time, Ron Ross was the Chairman of the Billy Moore Days Committee. I contacted Ron about sponsoring a running race during the community celebrations. Ron was kind enough to invite me to attend the next meeting of the Billy Moore Days Committee.



I outlined my proposal for a 5K running race, open to all age groups. I had hoped that my proposal would be accepted by the group. It was then that I met Mr. Sam Garcia who was serving on the committee. After looking at the logistics of setting up the race, I had forgotten how important hydrating the runners would be during the race. Mr. Garcia spoke up and said he would be glad to provide the water and soda for the participants. This was typical of Mr. Garcia. The run became known as the Run For Your Life and later, the Billy Moore Days 5K Run.

Mr. Garcia was known for many generous contributions to the community, but perhaps if you are new to the Westside you have not heard of him. He was typical of many fine citizens of the tri-city area who have stepped up to the plate. It is my understanding that Sam enjoyed golf and his children also took up the sport. I would have loved to play a round with him, but I never had that opportunity.

If people could not afford the price of groceries they would receive credit at his grocery store. I am sure that many who received credit never paid their bill. It is only fitting that the new library on Western Avenue in Avondale be named in his honor. He had a real soft spot for children who entered Garcia's Grocery Store. He frequently passed out candy to children who came to the store with their parents. Many times he dressed as Santa during the Christmas season and listened to children ask for presents under the Christmas tree. I am sure there are many fine people who aspire to fill the shoes of this gentleman. Yes, he is no longer among us, but he will not be soon forgotten. He was a credit to his race...the human race.

Article by John Beecroft, Photo courtesy of Bea Garcia

Let's Go to T.J.s

In 1956 this landmark eatery was a Drive Inn. It was built across from Agua Fria High School on Riley Drive. First it was called Rusty's Drive Inn. Then it became The Owl's Nest, referring to the Agua Fria mascot. Mr. Hartley was the owner.

Later Sharon, a showgirl from Las Vegas, tried her hand at running it (Does anyone remember Sharon's last name?). It was very popular with the local residents who usually sat in the same seat with the same neighbors on a regular basis. It became a favorite truck stop during construction of Interstate 10. However, progress caused Dysart Road to cease to be I-10's terminus and business drove on by. The new interstate highway continued on East toward Phoenix.

Sharon the showgirl couldn't keep the restaurant afloat. It was purchased on the last day of the lease agreement by two of the employees: Tony Pallea and Jim Sevage. We were told the initials of the restaurant did not start with Tony and Jim. They were the initials of Sharon's children. (Can anyone verify this?) It was known as T.J.'s in the 80's.

Don Holm and Dan Little are the current owners. They serve good home cookin'...pies from scratch, liver and onions, giant homemade cinnamon buns, burger buns, biscuits and gravy. The Rufus Brown Burger is rare with an over-easy egg on top! A big favorite is Friday Night Fish Fry – the only night they are open for dinner.



The T.J. initials now refer to "Thelma Jane", a fictitious character who seems to the regular customers to be everybody's Grandma. Because the restaurant food and décor remind them of their Grandmother, she has become the trade mark.

Many old-timers who frequent the restaurant have their photographs under glass on the table tops. This is the place where people meet, greet and eat. Two favorite waitresses are Barbara Logan who worked there for 24 years, and Brenda Martinez for 16 years. They make you feel at home in T.J.'s, Grandma's place.

By Lenore (Bensburg) Semmler

Photo by Three Rivers Historical Society

Goodyear Kindergarten



Goodyear Kindergarten was founded in 1947 by Eleanore Stanton. The Stanton family moved to Goodyear in 1945 from Youngstown, Ohio. Before starting the kindergarten Eleanore did substitute teaching at Liberty Elementary School. When her daughter, Sally, reached kindergarten age in 1947 she started the school.

She rented the Boy Scout Lodge from Goodyear Aircraft for the daytime hours during the school year. The lodge had only a fireplace for heat so she put in two gas heaters that she purchased herself to warm the room. She had Mr. Sower, who lived on Santa Cruz, make child size tables and benches as well as some storage cupboards. When she finished the school day she had to leave the building clean and ready for other uses at night and on weekends. A piano was added which she used to incorporate music into the kindergarten program. When she attended college the ability to play the piano was a requirement for kindergarten teachers.

Her first year at the school was just morning class. In the afternoons she taught a class in Buckeye. Prior to the building of the City Hall in 1948, the Town Clerk, Ben Veneklassen, conducted city business in the front office of the building. Soon the demand in the Goodyear/Avondale area grew and she had morning and afternoon classes.

At Christmas time the Christmas tree went up and the children worked hard to make decorations for it. When school dismissed for the holiday you could see us carrying the tree from the Scout Lodge to our home!

In the spring, the egg shell gardens were started. Placing dirt and a nasturtium seed in each child's half egg shell, the children watered and patiently waited for the seedling to poke through the dirt. A few days later the kids took them home to be transplanted to the garden at home.

Mrs. Stanton retired from Goodyear Kindergarten in 1962, leaving it in the capable hands of Margaret Pigg. A few years later Avondale Elementary School began a kindergarten program.

By Sally Stanton Kiko

Photo of Eleanore Stanton, founder and first teacher, provided by Sally Kiko.

Hangin' Out with Slim

Slim Laurer is 93 years old now and he enjoys great memories of the Shell Gas Station from 1944 to 1954 and the Mobile Station in Avondale for 27 years. Slim and his friendly cat live in Historic Goodyear and he shared this photo with us.



L to R: Elmer Holland, Willie ..?, Charlie Graves, Slim Laurer, Bill ..? the bookkeeper. All the guys liked to meet and visit at the station. Do you remember this?

About Three Rivers Historical Society

Three Rivers Historical Society is a 501 (c) 3 non-profit organization. Our geographic region centers around the confluence of the Agua Fria, Gila, and Salt rivers. This region encompasses the cities of Avondale, Goodyear, Litchfield Park and Tolleson.

Our long-range goal is a museum and we secretly have an old building in mind that would be perfect! Our immediate goal is to attract new and active members, to improve publicity, create fundraisers and special events. Near-future goals are to publish an electronic Book of Memories and build a website. We are well on our way with more than 30 histories videotaped and our website is under construction.

We collect artifacts, memorabilia, photos, newspapers, tools, household items, books, etc. Your participation is necessary and welcome. Our members pay dues. No person receives a salary.

We work with other organizations that have historical interests such as Buckeye Historical Museum, Litchfield Park Historical Museum, Estrella Regional Park, White Tanks Regional Park, the Southwest Valley Chamber of Commerce and the West Valley Arts Council. History belongs to everyone and we share.

Everyone is invited to our monthly meetings, but no meeting in July and August. We meet on the third Tuesday at 3 pm. Guest speakers are announced a few weeks prior to the meeting. Location has been a room at Goodyear City Hall, donated by the City of Goodyear. Occasionally we have luncheons or dinner meetings. Announcements are made by email (or postal if you are computer-free).

For more information or article contributions call The Quarterly newsletter editor, Ed Buonvecchio at 623.556.7988, or e-mail: eddibon@yahoo.com, or call 3RHS president Gloria King at: 623.932.4200 or e-mail: Kingranchaz@aol.com.

Some Historic Facts About Litchfield Park

Paul Litchfield, employed by Goodyear Tire and Rubber Company in Ohio, came to the valley to find land to grow long staple cotton for making tires. He acquired 16,000 acres in the west valley and called it the Southwest Cotton Company.

- Litchfield Park was built as a company town in 1916.
- 1917 the Litchfield School opened.
- 1918 the Wigwam was built for Goodyear Tire and Rubber executives.
- 1926 Litchfield Park community was named for Paul Litchfield.
- 1929 the Wigwam was opened to the public, but only the hotel part; and was open only during the winter months. The golf course and swimming pool were open to the public.
- 1931-44 the area was a test site for auto, truck and tractor tires.
- Litchfield Train Station was located just east of Litchfield Road along the RR tracks and Hwy 80, (currently MC 85). Mr. Litchfield had palm trees, cottonwood and citrus trees planted along Litchfield Road from the RR station to Litchfield Park so visitors from Goodyear Tire and Rubber in Akron would know the way.
- In the 1940's the old business district had Abraham's Market, Valley National Bank, the post office, barber shop and drugstore.
- In 1940 the U.S. Army selected the site of Luke AFB for an Army Air Corp training base.
- In 1941 Del Webb began construction of the base. The first class of 45 students arrived June 6. In 1942 Capt. Barry Goldwater served as director of ground training. The base is named for Frank Luke, Jr. who was born in Phoenix and held the Medal of Honor.
- In Nov. 1946, the base was deactivated and in 1951 reactivated as an Air Force Base to train pilots for the Korean conflict.
- In 1949 Jacque Mercer, who grew up in Litchfield Park, was crowned Miss America. Her parents were teachers, and school administrators in the area.

A Play About the Greatest Land Scam Ever

Watch for an announcement of the date for this 3RHS special event.



Barbara Dienes, of Sun City West, has a PhD in history and has taught at university level. She is a researcher and writer who has written and performed in several plays. Three Rivers Historical Society will sponsor an outdoor performance in October. This play is about James Addison Reavis, the Baron of Arizona, and the largest land swindle in U.S. history...and you may be standing on some of that land.

July, August, September 2009

Yes, I want to join Three Rivers Historical Society!



- Student \$5*
- Family \$25*
- Contributor \$100*
- Lifetime \$500
- Single \$15*
- Business/Professional \$45*
- Benefactor \$250*
- * *Yearly Fee*

Join _____ Renew _____ Call me to volunteer _____

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____ (Evening) _____

Cell _____ e-mail _____

Check enclosed in the amount of \$ _____

A receipt will be issued to you.

Make out your check and mail to:

Three Rivers Historical Society,
P.O. Box 7251, Goodyear, AZ 85338

Three Rivers Historical Society is a 501 (c) 3
non-profit organization



Three Rivers Historical Society

Remembering the Southwest Valley

P.O. Box 7251, Goodyear, AZ 85338

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