



We Say "Goodbye" to a Faithful Friend

***Donald (Don) Gene
Jones
1936 – 2015***

Charter Member and Three Rivers Historical Society Board Member for over ten years, Don Jones, passed away at his home on December 8, 2015 after a stay at Hospice of the Valley in Surprise. His wife Peggy was at his bedside. Don was the first Treasurer for 3RHS and he established the financial records for the society. He remained Treasurer for more than ten years. He was always ready and

willing to count the money after our fundraisers. He and Peggy arranged several successful yard sales in their back yard. He was always a willing volunteer to help with activities and special events.

Don was born in Wichita, Kansas. He served four years in the U.S. Air Force. He worked for Douglas Aircraft (Boeing), Three Mile Island Nuclear Plant, and the Alaska Pipeline. Don went to work for Salt River Project in 1972 and retired after 20 years. While working for Salt River Project he completed his Bachelor's Degree in Management from Park College. Proudly he graduated Summa Cum Laude. Don was an active bowler, an avid hiker, and a physical fitness advocate. It was these attributes that helped him to cope on a daily basis with the weakening effects of Parkinson Disease.

Don was a member of Skyway Church in Goodyear.

Black Widow Spiders

The black widow spider is a notorious creature, so named because of her habit of devouring her consort after mating. Her reputation is further tarnished by being among the few spiders dangerous to people.

They are common in temperate climates throughout the world. They can be found in wood piles and basements everywhere. In colder climates they have a habit of coming inside for the winter! Sometimes your first clue that one of these lovely ladies is nearby is finding their characteristic “sticky” web. Black widows are easily identified by their glossy black bodies with the scarlet red hourglass on their abdomen. They belong to the genus, *Latrodectus*

Nearly all spiders can be venomous, but the neurotoxic venom of the black widow is drop for drop more potent than the rattlesnake. Her bite, though rarely fatal, should not be ignored. The initial bite is a pinprick of pain. But it is followed by intense, searing pain that travels from the site of the bite to the abdomen and legs. Additional symptoms can include nausea and vomiting, dizziness, sweating, tremors, labored breathing, and even shock. Without treatment, the symptoms will last two to three days and gradually disappear. Death is rare, but the bite is more dangerous to children.



There is good news; the shy black widow would rather not bite us. She is timid and would rather retreat or play dead. The real reason for her venomous bite is to kill the insects that become trapped in her web and become her dinner.

Her web is not as architecturally intricate as other species, but is strong, elastic and perfectly capable of helping her catch her food. She further uses her webbing to truss up her victims. As you work in the garden or in dark corners of the garage, be on the lookout for the “sticky” web and this beautiful lady.

From the President

Your Society is looking for volunteers to help in two important areas.

Our Treasurer will need to step down soon, and we very much need someone to move into that role. Please consider whether you can work with him to learn, and then assume the Treasurer’s duties, early this year. .

Also, we need additional assistance in producing this Quarterly publication. Sally Kiko has done an extraordinary job making sure that the publication appears every three months, and always with excellent articles; but she deserves some relief. Sally and your Board would welcome anyone interested in taking the editorial lead, or providing significant editorial assistance. In addition, everyone - please think about what stories, articles, photos you may have available to share with our readers. Each of us is part of the history of our community, and each of us is interested in sharing what others have to offer. If you can write about it – great – or we can work with you to learn your story and prepare to it to share in the Quarterly.

Please contact me, or any Board member, to discuss how you may be able to help. **We need you!**
Mark Pelletier, President
Cell phone: 847-224-5653
Email: president@threerivershistoricalsocietyaz.org

Phoenix Goodyear Airport Marks 75th Anniversary

Phoenix Goodyear Airport celebrated its 75th anniversary with an Open House on Monday, November 16, 2015. The event featured Mayor Georgia Lord, City of Phoenix Aviation Director Jim Bennett, and Goodyear Airport Manager Joe Husband. The media and other attendees had the opportunity for an up-close viewing of “Spirit of Innovation,” a Goodyear Blimp. The day before the Open House, the airport was very busy taking care of NASCAR teams and spectators who use the airport on race weekends. Due to the rain delay at PIR, the NASCAR teams left quite late resulting in long hours for some of the airport personnel.

The Phoenix Goodyear Airport is a vital general aviation hub for the West Valley. The airport was originally the Litchfield Naval Air Facility. It was constructed on land donated by the Goodyear Tire and Rubber Company Aircraft Division in 1940. The airport was originally used to test thirty to forty different aircraft weekly. The nearby Goodyear Aircraft facility was building aircraft components and modifying aircraft for military use. These airplanes needed to be tested and ferried to the bases that needed them. The Naval Aircraft Facility met those needs. As the war continued, the navy base became an important part of the war effort.

Following the war, the navy base’s primary purpose changed. It took on the role of preserving and storing the aircraft no longer needed. The dry climate of Arizona was perfect for this mission. At its peak there were 5000 aircraft in storage. When the Korean Conflict started, many aircraft were taken out of “moth balls,” readied for combat, and again served our nation. In 1967, the base was decommissioned and planes in storage were moved primarily to Davis Monthan AFB in Tucson. In 1968, the airport was purchased by the city of Phoenix. It is now a thriving airport that offers services to private and corporate pilots, aircraft maintenance, and airplane storage services.

New Exhibits at Litchfield Park Museum

Two new exhibits opened on October 25th at Litchfield Park Museum. “Lighter Than Air... Balloons, Blimps, and Dirigibles” takes us back to the days of the early hot-air balloons that astounded the French in the late 1700’s. From these early efforts at flight, the exhibit takes us through the balloons used for observation, the blimps that were used to find submarines in the World Wars, and the enormous dirigibles of the early 20th century.

“Goodyear Aircraft...Arming for War” tells how Goodyear Aircraft Corporation was formed in 1939 in Akron, the Goodyear Aircraft facility was built in 1941 in Goodyear, AZ. Following the attack on Pearl Harbor, Paul W. Litchfield converted all of the Goodyear Tire and Rubber Company plants to production for war as did many other manufacturing plants. The exhibit celebrates the work done locally to supply aircraft and munitions to our fighting men in WWII. At its peak, 7668 workers were employed at the Goodyear Aircraft Corporation in Goodyear.

Located on the northwest corner of Litchfield Road and Camelback Road, the Litchfield Park Museum is open on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday from 10:00 AM to 4:00 PM.

Goodyear Aircraft Builds More than Blimps

The talented “balloon girls” at Goodyear Aircraft not only made the blimp envelopes, the outer skin that contained the helium that caused it to lift into the air, but several of the Macy balloons, Popeye, Bullwinkle, and Donald Duck to name a few. The company’s extensive research and development of rubberized fabric led them to make other items, too. On one occasion one of their balloons caused some concern.

It was 1960. The Valley of the Sun was growing and housing was being built for the new families moving here. Competition between home builders was intense. One Phoenix advertising agency asked Goodyear Aircraft Corporation to build two small-scale replicas of old time hot air balloons to promote a new subdivision. The balloons were built and decorated; the woven baskets were attached and the balloons were delivered to the subdivision. It was so colorful and created quite a stir. Everyone was pleased until one of the balloons broke away from its mooring. Like a true explorer it went off into the wild blue yonder!



The colorful balloon was spotted some 40,000 feet above Los Alamos, New Mexico, home of the atom bomb and other sorts of advanced scientific secret activities. You have to wonder what the scientists thought when they first saw the balloon, looking much like the craft the Montgolfiers flew from the Palace of Versailles in 1783. It was seen on radar and jets were sent aloft to investigate. The balloon’s seams should have burst at that altitude but didn’t, and a nice breeze aloft had carried it along. In fact, it sailed happily on and was seen again over Oklahoma. In Oklahoma it settled to about 10,000 feet and a space age jet again gave chase. This time military action was taken and the jets shot it down so it would not be a hazard to air traffic. This was a testimonial to the sturdy construction of the balloons at GAC.

Grateful for Simpler Times

Forgive me for a few moments of nostalgia, but many of us who have been in retirement for a while will understand.

All of the childhood that I remember was spent here in the West Valley. It was a time of small towns, close neighborhoods, and unlocked doors. The merchants, be they grocer, butcher druggist or barber, all knew you. If you should have to wait in line to be checked out, it was not a delay, but an opportunity to visit with the neighbors in line with you.

Our local market was far different than today’s supermarket; our houses and appliances were different too. Homes were small, refrigerators were small; the freezer was but a box big enough to freeze two trays of ice cubes. Some homes still had ice boxes and the ice truck made his rounds to service those families. Our markets had seasonal produce; if the fruit or vegetable wasn’t in season, it wasn’t available. Frozen foods were on the horizon but did not yet warrant even one large case. Ice cream was something you bought, usually by the pint, right before serving it. Meat was served by the butcher since no pre-packaged meats were available. Even hotdogs were strung together so the butcher cut off as many as you would like. Cheese came in a big wheel; cheddar was the only flavor I remember. Grocery stores carried groceries; that’s all. Many of the merchants would allow you to carry a small amount on a “tab” to be paid on the next payday. They knew their customers and trusted them.

The drug store, often next to the market, carried personal care items like toothpaste or powder, soap for bathing, cosmetics, first aid supplies, home remedies and, of course, prescriptions. They also carried greeting cards and seed packets in the spring. Antibiotics were fairly new so there was only penicillin and sulfa. Our local drugstores had a soda fountain, a counter with stools to sit on where you could have a cup of coffee, a Coke, or an ice cream cone for five cents. They also had lunch items like sandwiches or burgers. Friday and Saturday evenings the teens would “hang-out” and have a Coke, and beg Oz, the owner and druggist, to install a jukebox!

The Post Office was another important place. Our P.O. Box number was 212. Home delivery of mail came along later, so everyone had a mailbox and picked up their mail there. The postal clerks knew everyone. If mail came addressed to your home address they would still get it into the correct mailbox. Zip codes had not yet been established, but friendly service was always available.

In 1953, First National Bank opened a branch in Goodyear. Prior to that, a trip to the Valley National Bank in Litchfield was required to conduct any banking business. The new First National Bank in Goodyear had the distinction of having the first drive-up teller in Arizona!

Police and fire protection were pretty basic back then. Upon incorporation both Avondale and Goodyear hired a policeman and set up a volunteer fire department. For a large fire the two fire departments worked together. Community members volunteered their time to protect their communities in the event of fire. Either the Chief or the first to arrive at the station drove the fire truck; the rest of the volunteers drove their car to the fire. As far as police action, with a smaller community, young offenders could often be corrected when the officer talked to the family. I don't recall any serious crime.

Believe it or not, not everyone had a phone in their home. If they did, it was on a “party line.” There were either two or four families on your “party line.” Each would have a distinctive ring that was theirs. Our phone number was 494 and our ring was two shorts. If you needed to make a call, you would listen to make sure no one was on the line. If you were fortunate to have a phone, you allowed neighbors that lacked a phone to use your number. A long distance call was placed through the operator. Long distance calls were expensive, so calls to distant relatives were rare. Letters were the usual mode of communication with the aunts and uncles. This must seem so foreign to our young folks who all have not only home phones but also a cell phone.

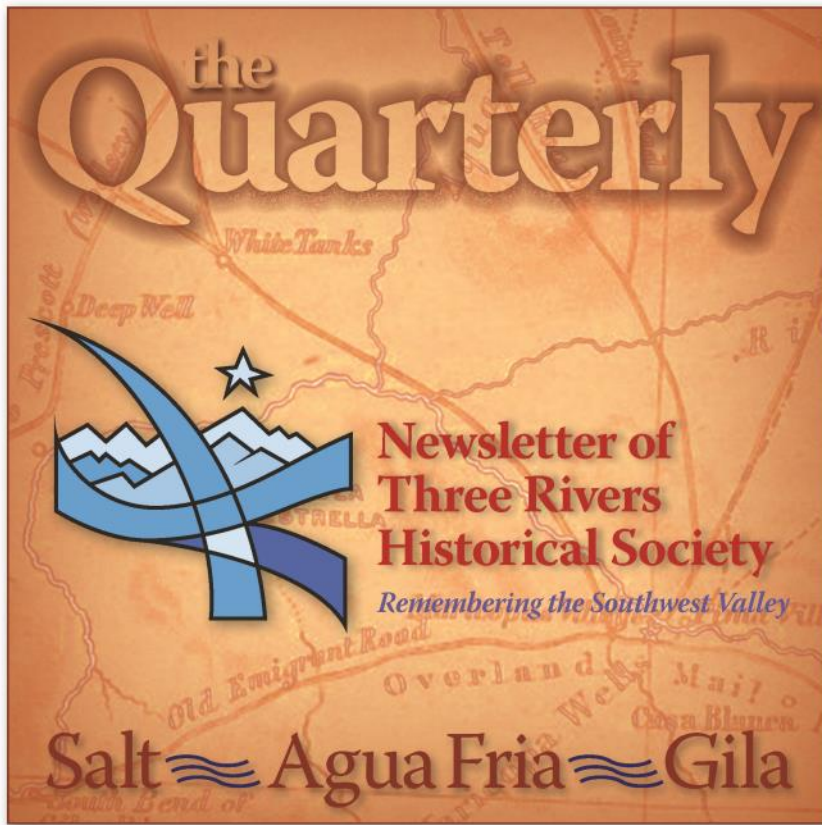
Eating out was a rare treat. There were only a few restaurants in the area and most of us didn't have extra money for this luxury. All the restaurants or cafes were owned and operated by local people. By the time I reached high school there was Mom's Drive-In that the teens loved. About that time our entertainment options increased as the Oasis Drive-In Theater and a bowling alley opened, both on Dysart Road.

One of the highlights of those early years was our military neighbors. Neither the Litchfield Naval Facility nor Luke Air Force Base had on-base housing for married men. We often had military families living next door. This made our neighborhoods more exotic. These interesting people had lived in multiple places and had often been overseas. Their homes had distinctive decorating touches from foreign lands. They were also socially active and provided abundant babysitting opportunities.

I'm as dependent as the next guy on my computer and cell phone. I truly appreciate the many innovations that have made our lives easier and given us a broader view of the world. But sometimes I long for simpler times when neighbors knew and helped each other, when the cashier at the market knew your name, when no one felt the need to lock their door, and the keys were left in the car.

By Sally Kiko





Yes, I want to join Three Rivers Historical Society!

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Student \$5* | <input type="checkbox"/> Single \$15* |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Family \$25* | <input type="checkbox"/> Business/Professional \$45* |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Contributor \$100* | <input type="checkbox"/> Benefactor \$250* |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Lifetime \$500 | * <i>Yearly Fee</i> |

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

Mark Pelletier, President

Betty Lynch, 1st V.P.

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Sally Kiko, Secretary

David Meese, Treasurer

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Joann Gongaware,

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Al Field

Board Members

The Quarterly

3RHS Meetings

We meet on the third Tuesday of each month at 3pm, at Goodyear Library, 14455 W. Van Buren, Goodyear, Arizona. Notices of date, location and guest speaker are e-mailed. Be sure we have your correct address. E-mail Sally at kskiko@cox.net