

# Arizona Coach Talker

Newsletter of the Arizona Guides Association

Volume 23, Issue 5

May, 2010

## It's a Fiesta ~ Ole!

*Nestled in the shadow of the Squaw Peak Mountain, Aunt Chilada's is truly an historic landmark with a personality all its own. Constructed in the 1890's from desert stone and railroad ties, the original building served as a supply depot and general store for the mercury miners passing through the Dreamy Draw. Today, Aunt Chilada's not only carries on that century old tradition of heartfelt Southwestern hospitality, but also dishes out the finest Mexican food this side of the border.*

*Best of Phoenix Magazines Peoples' choice, Best Restaurant, Best Chips and Salsa, Best Margarita are only a few of the awards Aunt Chilada's holds dear. This does not even count the biggest Cinco de Mayo celebration in the State!*

*Join us for a Fiesta! to celebrate a more successful season this past year and optimism for an even better one in 2010-2011!! And, most importantly be there to vote for the AGA slate of officers for the next year. It's your organization...be there to vote your support!*

### AGA Annual Meeting ~ May 17, 2010

**When:** Monday, May 17, 2010

**Where:** Aunt Chilada's ~ 7330 N. Dreamy Draw Drive, Phoenix  
602.944.1286

**Time:** 6:00 P.M. ~ Dinner is \$14.00 with a Cash Bar ~

**Please RSVP to Joan Moran: 480.538.7999**

### AGA President's Notes.....

Our last meeting of the AGA year is approaching, and Jeannie Parrish will become the next AGA president. I know you all will give her the assistance, ideas, and advice that you shared with me. The president's job is not the difficult job because it is shared with active, energetic board members. The most difficult job is that of the nominations committee. With as many members as we have, we should have several willing to serve on the board or agreeing to run for office. This next year, remember the friends you've made in AGA, the times you've been recommended for a job by a friend, and the time other members have helped you through a difficult time. Then contact one of our nominations committee members and offer to run. **PRACTICE SAYING, YES, I WILL!!**

My thanks for this past year could go on and on and on, but for the very recent past and future, thank you to Larry Dyb and his fabulous duo, Lisa Gannon and Patti Grandpre, for the fun trip to Jerome. They kept us on track, overfed us, and kept us entertained and educated. Thank you also to CS McFadden, Roberta Reichel, and Joan Day for their commentary while on the road. And for future thanks, Joan Moran and Joan Day have done a great job in planning our final meeting. Come vote, eat, enjoy a Margarita, and let me tell you how much I've enjoyed working with all of you.

Dottie Helgeson

### ***Election Reminder !!***

***Annual Elections will be held at the AGA annual meeting in May. Remember that if you can't be at the annual meeting, you can ask for an absentee ballot from the nominating committee (Gabriele Laudenschlager at 602.418.1324). Proxy ballots are not accepted at the annual meeting, and absentee ballots must be received by the annual meeting date to be counted.***

### ***In case you missed it...from the Arizona Republic***

***Cruises on Tempe Town Lake end .....*** Town Lake boat tours have ended with the recent resolution of a legal battle between Tempe and the company that has steered cruises on the lake since it opened 10 years ago. Over the years, Rio Lago Cruises has drawn thousands of customers aboard the company's dinner or tour cruises of the lake, including weddings, birthday parties, and bar mitzvahs.

Rio Lago owners filed a claim against Tempe in 2006, alleging their business was stymied by concerts, marathons and other large events, which Tempe officials allowed on the lake and at Tempe Beach Park. Rio Lago was suing Tempe for an estimated \$1 million. For some events, Tempe allows organizers to close the parking lot at Tempe Beach Park, place portable toilets at the lake or fence the park. Rio Lago contended those allowances blocked customers' access to their business. The city maintained that when they put a chain link fence across their kiosk, and lined portable johns across the kiosk, that enhanced its business. Rio Lago maintained that it destroyed their business.

Tempe's city attorney has argued Tempe never closed the lake in excess of the stipulated hours the contract allowed. The legal battle was scheduled for a Maricopa County Superior Court hearing, but attorneys for the parties negotiated a last-minute settlement. The council had the final say on whether to approve the settlement, and it was approved. The agreement would provide Rio Lago a \$315,000 payout, immediately terminating the company's contract to provide boat tours on the lake.

While the \$8 boat tours of Town Lake may no longer be available, the city is preparing to release a contract for bids next month that eventually could bring back paddle-boat and kayak rentals to the lake. Rio Lago used to provide those watercraft rentals until Tempe officials chose not to renew that contract last year. Tempe officials have not decided whether they will seek a company to reinstate boat tours, said Nancy Ryan, Rio Salado Project manager who oversees lake operations. "But, we're looking forward to bringing back some of the services for the community," said Ryan, referring to the potential return of rental paddle boats and kayaks. Rio Lago doubts a watercraft rental business can succeed as long as large events continue at the lake, believing that families don't want to fight beer festivals and big concerts to take their kids on a paddle-boat ride. Tempe has maintained that residents can enjoy both events and water recreation at the lake.

***New court building an industry model .....*** Already, Flagstaff and Tucson studying Mesa facility to get ideas for their courts. After years of planning, Mesa's new Municipal Court building recently opened, designed to provide more efficient justice for most minor crimes and fewer delays for those paying parking tickets or handling other routine cases.

Already, the three-story cream-colored building is attracting attention from Flagstaff and Tucson officials, serving as a potential model for other municipal court buildings. With 97,050 square feet, the new courthouse is nearly double the size of the 49,500-square-foot building it replaces. The new courthouse is the third-largest in the state, behind Phoenix and Tucson. That makes sense because Mesa is Arizona's third-largest city. Municipal courts handle misdemeanors, including traffic fines, city-code violations and some driving under the influence of alcohol cases. Superior Court handles more serious felony cases and more complex civil cases

There is no doubt the new building at 250 E. First Ave. is noteworthy, since retired U.S. Supreme Court Justice Sandra Day O'Connor was scheduled to speak at an open house and dedication ceremony.

***Arizona's last new coal plant?.....*** Salt River Project customers will begin paying about \$6 more on their monthly bills this spring, most of which will pay for a new \$1 billion coal-fired power plant near Springerville in

northern Arizona. Unit 4 at the Springerville Generating Station began commercial operations in December and has been running at full throttle since then, burning about 60 rail cars' worth of coal a day from the Powder River Basin in Wyoming. The plant supplies low-cost electricity to the non-profit utility, but because of the stiff fight required to get it built, cost overruns and threat of global warming, some experts wonder if it will be the last new coal plant built in Arizona.

Not only did the plant overshoot its original cost estimate by \$350 million, but legislation proposed by Congress to limit greenhouse-gas pollution could also make running the plant even more expensive, because coal has more of those emissions than natural gas or other power sources. David Areghini, SRP's associate general manager of power, said it would be nearly impossible to permit another coal-fired plant. Arizona Public Service Co. has ruled out more power from coal unless there is a way to handle the carbon-dioxide emissions that contribute to climate change. Tucson Electric Power Co. also is proposing ways to meet energy demand without new coal plants. "Most people will tell you, unless something changes, there probably won't be another coal plant," said Bill Rihs, the manager of major projects for SRP who oversaw Unit 4's construction. "That depends a lot on future regulations like cap-and-tax (greenhouse-gas legislation), which doesn't make it attractive for us or anyone else to develop a coal plant."

***Mondrian Scottsdale now Hotel Theodore under new owners .....*** The Mondrian Scottsdale has a new name and new management company after no bidders surfaced to buy the struggling boutique hotel. The 194-room hotel in downtown Scottsdale, which has had many names and owners in the past several years, recently became the independent Hotel Theodore after president Theodore Roosevelt. It is being run by a division of GF Management, a Philadelphia-based hotel management and development company whose lineup includes the historic US Grant in downtown San Diego. Rick Henrikson, senior vice president of operations for GF Management, said the company has a long-term management agreement with the hotel's lender, which took the property back when there were no bidders at a trustee's sale Tuesday. The minimum bid was \$21.7 million.

Henrikson said GF became involved with the hotel as an asset manager for Bank of America after the lender started foreclosure proceedings against owner Morgans Hotel Group late last year. Morgans, a publicly-traded company best known for hip hotels in New York, Miami, Los Angeles and London under the Mondrian banner and other brand names, ran the hotel through Tuesday. Henrikson said the new management company retained the majority of the former Mondrian's employees. It currently has 130 employees. General manager David Morgan was replaced by John Reynolds, who formerly ran a GF hotel in California.

Henrikson said the company aims to boost the hotel's business by making it more attractive through a subtle redesign. The theme under Mondrian was Garden of Eden with a stark white exterior and white fixtures inside. The hotel's lounges will be renamed Teddy's Lounge and T's. This is GF Management's only property in Arizona and the only Hotel Theodore. Henrikson said the young, hip crowd will still be wooed but that the hotel also wants to increase business from business travelers and local meetings and events. "Scottsdale's a destination," he said. "It will do very well as an independent high-end boutique."

Morgans bought the former James Hotel in 2006 for \$46.5 million and significantly remodeled it. It was a social hotspot in Scottsdale. But it has struggled the past two years during a hotel depression that hit metro Phoenix especially hard. It also saw new competition from the W Scottsdale. Morgans said last year that it was unwilling to put more money into the hotel or toward a loan restructuring, as it did with some of its other properties in default.

***Union Pacific chugs along with track improvements .....*** As it waits for the economy to improve, Union Pacific Railroad's construction plans are heading in two directions. Although it has postponed plans to finish doubling its tracks in Arizona, the company has begun a \$42 million upgrade to its existing rails. The company began doubling its heavily used southern Arizona line from Los Angeles to El Paso in the middle of the past decade to allow it to transport more containers from California ports to the interior United States.

Because the recession cut freight movement and Union Pacific's revenue, the company slowed the remaining work in 2009 and then stopped it this year, said Zoe Richmond, a spokeswoman. The project was about 60 percent done and was supposed to be finished in 2012. Richmond added that it is unknown when the project will resume. "The work slowed down because there isn't the business need," she said.

A few years ago, the rail company was transporting about 650 shipping containers a month through Arizona from the Ports of Los Angeles and Long Beach to areas east of Arizona. Richmond did not have an updated number. But in its past earnings statement, parent company Union Pacific Corp. reported that 2009

freight revenue fell 22 percent, to \$13.4 billion, compared with 2008. Business has picked up, though, an indication that the economy is improving as well. Union Pacific said that through mid-March, the number of containers, cars and truck tractors carried on trains this year had increased 12 percent compared with the same period a year earlier.

In January, the company began replacing miles of rail lines, particularly in rail yards in Phoenix and Tucson and on a main line between Casa Grande and Yuma. The \$42 million being invested includes \$18 million to buy concrete ties that are made of cement produced near Tucson. Union Pacific has been steadily replacing wooden ties with concrete ones on its heavier-used lines across the country because they don't weather as fast and aren't susceptible to termites. Also the hard woods used to make them are getting scarcer. Even though wooden ties are soaked in creosote, an oily preservative, they don't hold up well in the Arizona desert, Richmond said. Union Pacific began using concrete ties when the second track was added to the Sunset line between Los Angeles and El Paso in 2005, and the railroad added more this year on a line between Maricopa and Gila Bend. Concrete ties are just one of the innovations that have come to the rail industry. Rails can now be installed mechanically en masse, and computers have taken the place of cabooses. Most of Union Pacific's concrete ties are being installed with its "track-renewal train," a mile long machine called the TRT 909 that can install up to 5,000 ties in a 12-hour day. It includes 30 rail cars each carrying 210 concrete ties and three cranes used to move the concrete ties forward.

At the front of the machine, old wooden ties and rails are picked up, and at the back, the new ties are automatically dropped into place and new rails threaded onto the ties. It also can be used for wooden or composite ties. When the work in Arizona is done, crews will have installed an estimated 156,000 wooden and 58,000 concrete ties and 24 miles of welded rails. The work is expected to be done by the end of May.

As for cabooses, they aren't needed anymore, Richmond said. They used to house a conductor and two brakemen whose primary role was to inspect a train and make sure there weren't overheating or causing sparks or fires. Now, trains have detectors on the cars and along the tracks that check for heat to make sure a wheel isn't too hot and a fire hazard.

**Fountain Hills 'Fountain' .....** At 560 feet, it is taller than the Washington Monument and Old Faithful. Annually it attracts thousands of visitors to Fountain Hills, who sport cameras in the dry Arizona heat to catch a view of the towering oasis. Fountain Hills' famed fountain - built in the 1970s as the town's main attraction and namesake - is the focus of a growing controversy. Town officials, in an effort to curb costs, proposed trimming the geyser's hourly running time to five minutes, from 15. The proposal, raised during a brainstorming session on the town's budget, had local real-estate agents up in arms. "This fountain is the namesake of this community and it is insane to essentially cut the time frame," said Art Tolis, director of a Fountain Hills Realtor marketing group. Tolis, in a letter that appeared in the Fountain Hills Times, submitted the names of more than 130 real-estate agents and affiliates who oppose the cut. He didn't stop there. He also asked the town to pass a law that ensures the running time never will be changed. "There are so many other cost savings that they should be looking into," Tolis said.

The fountain, built to attract tourists and property buyers to the town east of Scottsdale, sprays a white plume of water at the top of every hour, from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. Its height is capped at 330 feet to save money on energy costs, with the exception of events such as the town's St. Patrick's Day celebration, when it is dyed green and unleashed at its full height of 560 feet. Fountain Hills Parks and Recreation Director Mark Mayer said the cut is one of many options being considered to balance the budget in the next fiscal year. The town would save almost \$60,000 in a year by reducing the time, he said.

Fountain Hills was founded in the early 1970s by developers whose vision was to build a landmark to draw property buyers to the remote town. That vision became the fountain. C.V. Wood Jr., a planner for McCulloch Properties Inc., designed the "World's Highest Fountain," whose title has since been eclipsed by taller fountains across the world. It was turned on for the first time Dec. 15, 1970, according to the Fountain Hills Chamber of Commerce. The geyser stands in a large lake at the 32-acre Fountain Park.

**Loop 101 in Scottsdale is losing its lizard art .....** Pay your respects to its prickly-pear cactus pads, because "The Path Most Traveled" is heading in a new direction. The much-acclaimed artwork added a decade ago to nearly 1,800 feet of freeway wall south of Via Linda in Scottsdale will be dismantled as early as this fall as part of a Maricopa Association of Governments project to mitigate noise at 10 locations along Valley freeways. Scottsdale paid \$2 million in 1996 to have the art included in the freeway wall. Decorated with three-dimensional murals of lavender-colored lizards, sage-green cactus and creamy Native American

patterns, the Via Linda noise wall was designed to give drivers more of a sense of desert and less of the feeling they are driving through yet another concrete canyon.

Projected increases in noise levels in neighborhoods along the freeway, however, mean taller walls are needed to better block the sound. The old walls have to be removed so new foundations can be poured to support the taller walls, said Doug Nintzel, spokesman for the Arizona Department of Transportation. So a new, taller wall will be built in place of the art-studded Via Linda wall. But because of tight state and city budgets, artwork for the new wall will be limited to sage-green bands of saguaro ribs alternating with gray stretches of concrete, said Wendy Raisanen, collections and exhibits manager for Scottsdale Public Art. The new design is a compromise between the city's public-art program and ADOT, she said. It complements the original work and protects the artist's intent, she said, even though it won't re-create the current design. "We don't have money, and they don't have money, so we came to a compromise," Raisanen said. "That's the thing about public art in the infrastructure of a city. Things do change, and you have to be respectful of change and respectful of the intention."

ADOT has worked with Scottsdale's public-art program and with original artist Carolyn Braaksma of Denver to replicate the existing artwork, Nintzel said. Large molds have been made of the cactus-rib patterns on the wall, and concrete will be poured into the molds to copy the artwork as the new wall is built. Braaksma was philosophical about the prospect of her work being changed. "It doesn't belong to me," she said. "You walk in knowing it is not your personal thing, that you're doing it for an entire city. It just happens."

Construction on the 10 noise walls is expected to start by late fall, Nintzel said. The contractor, which has yet to be selected, will decide the order in which the walls will be built and where the Scottsdale walls will fit in the timeline, he said. A second wall in Scottsdale, north of the Cactus Road interchange, is part of the Valley-wide project. That new wall would replace a privacy wall built by developers of the Astoria and Greenstone subdivisions west of the freeway between Cactus Road and Sweetwater Avenue.

Scottsdale's lizard-and-cactus-filled wall runs along the west side of the freeway between the Via Linda overpass and the Camelback Walk multiuse path. Even if parts of the original wall could be salvaged, Raisanen said, there is the question of where one would put such large pieces. Public-art supporters initially were alarmed about plans to tear down "The Path Most Traveled," Raisanen said. "It's an award-winning design. We're internationally known for this project, so for us to take it out and not replace it would be really unconscionable," she said.

Braaksma, who specializes in large-scale public art, said the work's name was just a spin on the Robert Frost poem "The Road Not Taken." Published in 1916 and a staple of high school English classes, the poem is most famous for its ending lines:

"Two roads diverged in a wood, and I –

"I took the one less traveled by,

"And that has made all the difference."

"The Path Most Traveled" proved an apt title. ADOT added carpool lanes to the 101 in Scottsdale in 2009, and additional general-purpose lanes are scheduled to be added in 2014.

Readings taken in spring 2008 show ambient noise levels ranged from 59 to 61 decibels in the Via Linda neighborhood and 56 to 59 decibels in the Cactus Road neighborhood. ADOT typically considers noise-mitigation projects when future noise levels are expected to hit 64 decibels or higher, which falls roughly between the sound of normal speech three feet away and the sound of a vacuum cleaner 10 feet away. The existing Via Linda wall is only seven to 13 feet high on the residential side, and even shorter on the freeway side because it was built on a slope. The new wall will be built to rise between 10 and 22 feet on the residential side. The Cactus Road wall runs 2,200 feet long, but is only 6 feet high on both the freeway and residential sides. The new wall will be at least twice as tall, at 12 to 14 feet. Residents of Astoria, a 76-home community south of Sweetwater, lobbied for the new wall and have been meeting with engineers and planners for months, said Bob Ward, president of the Astoria Community Association. "We're looking forward to having it here," he said. "Some of the people are more sensitive and they are very anxious to get it." MAG has budgeted \$26 million for the 10-wall project, Nintzel said. It is financed by Proposition 400 sales tax revenue approved by Maricopa County voters in 2004 for the Regional Transportation Plan.

***Picacho Peak makes top 10 endangered battlefield list .....*** The Civil War Preservation Trust's 2010 edition of the nation's most-endangered battlefields includes Picacho Peak. Picacho Peak is destined to close June 3 because of state budget cuts. It is among the top 10 most-threatened Civil War battlefields contained in the trust's annual report, released Thursday in Washington, D.C. The list of battlefields threatened by development or neglect includes some memorable battles waged in states where the Civil War still resonates

on the eve of its 150th anniversary. They are located primarily in the South and the Mid-Atlantic. The trust headquarters is in Richmond, Va.

**Arizona archives to get original OK Corral papers .....** The original court transcripts from the 1881 Coroner's Inquest into the Gunfight at the OK Corral will be handed over to the Arizona State Archives on Wednesday. The 36-page handwritten account of witness testimony given after the shootout that left three men dead in Tombstone had been missing for years. Two Cochise County court clerks cleaning out a storage space at the Bisbee courthouse found the old documents in a box in March. Cochise County Clerk of Superior Court Denise Lundin realized they were the original OK Corral documents that had disappeared prior to her becoming clerk in 1994. Although the documents belong to Cochise County, Lundin says her office can't maintain them and they are an important part of state history that belongs in the archives.

## **News from the Arizona Office of Tourism** **(AZOT) .....**

**The Navajo Nation: A Tapestry in Progress .....** There is a remarkable tapestry being woven through the Navajo Nation. The frame is held together by four sacred mountains. Each woven thread travels through time, across the land – back and forth, weaving a story unlike any other on Earth. Some of the threads weave designs that are prehistoric – spectacular geological formations from Earth's creation. Others are designs woven from ancient ruins at Navajo National Monument, Monument Valley Navajo Tribal Park, Canyon de Chelly National Monument and Chaco Culture National Historic Park. Designs have been provided by the history, culture, tradition, arts & crafts and lifestyles of the Navajo people. Six Navajo Nation Scenic Roads create the newest threads of the tapestry and provide access to timeless vistas and attractions that draw visitors from around the world.

A new website for travelers has been developed where visitors can find exciting new travel-planning resources for the Navajo Nation Scenic Roads at [www.NavajoScenicRoads.com](http://www.NavajoScenicRoads.com). Each generation continues to add to the tapestry, weaving in new threads of harmony and beauty for you to discover. The Navajo people have woven together their traditional ways with modern society. When visiting the Navajo Nation, it soon becomes apparent how the influences of today will be reflected in this generation's tapestry designs through colors, ideas and talent.

Covering 27,000 square miles of northeastern Arizona, northwestern New Mexico and southeast Utah, the Navajo Nation is the largest Native American reservation in the United States. With its own government, it is truly a nation within a nation. Unlike Arizona, the Navajo Nation observes Daylight Savings Time. Between March and November, when it's 10 a.m. in Flagstaff, it's 11 a.m. in Monument Valley.

Discover how to weave your own tapestry of memories at [www.DiscoverNavajo.com](http://www.DiscoverNavajo.com). Find information regarding attractions, culture and beliefs, lodging, tour guides and more. The Discover Navajo Official Visitor Guide, with turning pages, is also online. Or call the Navajo Tourism Department at (928) 871-6436 for information. The Explore Navajo Interactive Museum in Tuba City is owned by the Navajo Nation. At 7,000 square feet, the museum features a traditional Navajo Hogan (home) and Navajo stories of creation as well as exhibits of family systems, language and more. Next door, The Code Talker's Museum offers free admission. The museum has actual gear and tools used in battle, exceptional photos and a video you can watch to learn about the Navajo Code Talkers of World War II. Also visit the Tuba City Trading Post that adjoins the museum.

Information about Navajo National Monument and guided hikes to three intact cliff dwellings of the Ancient Pueblo People is at [www.nps.gov/nava](http://www.nps.gov/nava). No need for a guide to take the less strenuous, shorter Sandal Trail to the overlook. A visitor center, arts & crafts store, museum, two small campgrounds and a picnic area provide services to travelers. Drive the 17-mile self-guided tour that winds among the cliffs and mesas of Monument Valley Navajo Tribal Park. Along the road are 11 scenic stops for photographic opportunities. For the best experience, take a guided tour to see areas off limits to the general public and to get a personal interpretation of the park. Information about Monument Valley and other tribal parks can be found online at [www.navajonationparks.org](http://www.navajonationparks.org). While at Monument Valley, stay at [The View](#), the only hotel inside the park. All rooms have balconies with views so spectacular visitors will feel they can almost reach out and touch the Mittens!

There's no charge to drive the scenic overlooks, which are open all year at Canyon de Chelly National Monument. To hike or drive into the canyon, a guide is required for all but the White House Ruins trail. Spider Rock, inside the monument, is a spectacular red sandstone monolith standing more than 800 feet high. Spider

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Woman, who is said to live on Spider Rock, is among the most important and honored deities of the Navajo people. It was she who taught the Navajo ancestors of long ago the art of weaving on a loom. Find more about Canyon de Chelly at [www.nps.gov/cach](http://www.nps.gov/cach). Stop at the visitor center for interpretation and tour information.

The Navajo Nation's Capital, Window Rock, Arizona, provides more opportunities to discover the wonders of this area. The Navajo Nation Museum is known for its quality exhibits. The Navajo Council Chambers is a National Historic Landmark that houses 88 Navajo Council members from 110 Navajo communities. The council still gathers inside the circular building designed as a traditional Navajo hogan to enact legislation. Window Rock is also home to the only tribally owned zoo in the country. Believe it or not, admission to all these Window Rock activities is free!

With a landmass that equals the entire state of West Virginia, a visible history that predates mankind and a culture unlike any other, it's obvious this barely scratches the surface of this a nation-within-a-nation.

## ***Airport News.....***

**Early backers of Sky Harbor .....** had to sucker in new crowds with fly-through weddings, and dozens of couples – including some Hollywood A-listers – said 'I do.' Like any city, Phoenix has never shied away from promotional gimmicks, and in the 1930s it hit upon a doozy: a marriage chapel at the airport that provided quickie fly-in weddings for the Hollywood set. At the time, a quirk in California law required couples to hold off marrying for three days after they applied for a license, so Phoenix figured it could lure celebrity lovebirds. Like a desperate bride-in-waiting, the city proposed, and dozens of couples said, "I do." They didn't exactly attract the A-list crowd boosters had hoped for, but the gimmick drew some well-known names along with the desired publicity.

Today, all that remains of the chapel is its bell. Hanging in a reconstructed tower, the bell has a prominent spot on the patio of the Left Seat restaurant overlooking Sky Harbor International Airport's north runway. There's been one modern-day wedding on the patio in recent years, and scores of diners have taken pictures of the bell. Owners Karen and Ron Zamenski inherited the bell when they took over the restaurant five years ago, but they've had to piece together the history themselves through old news clippings and in-the-know customers. "We've just learned along the way, with the storytelling," Karen says. "Everyone is very curious about the history but nobody knows the true history."

Historical records are hard to come by, and news accounts sometimes give conflicting information. But what's clear is that, at the time, this still-small city was eager to latch onto air travel and promote itself nationally. Boosters and business leaders were already pros at selling the city, the self-proclaimed "Valley of the Sun" and "New Winter Playground." A promotional booklet mailed nationwide in the early 1930s read, "Here one may know the joy of living with air, day and night, dry, pure and stimulating like champagne, just cool enough to be pleasant and sun kissed practically every day."

By 1935, the city was ready for a big-league promotion: buying an airport. Sky Harbor was in private hands, and the city purchased it for \$100,000, according to Desert Wings, a history of the airport. Sky Harbor was considered a modern facility with its terminal building, hangar and lighted field. It was also seen as a key location on a vital transcontinental air route. The city celebrated the airport purchase with flying demonstrations that drew the governor and 10,000 onlookers, and it also hosted a gala that night at Downtown's Westward Ho Hotel. Soon after, boosters began plotting how to put Sky Harbor on the national radar.

A chance fly-in by a California couple who couldn't wait to wed launched the chapel idea, the book says. It's not clear today exactly who the couple was, but Academy Award nominee Sylvia Sidney and Random House publisher Bennett Cerf flew into Phoenix for a day in October 1935 just to get married. A news clipping reported that the bride came from Hollywood and the groom from New York. They chose a ceremony at the Westward Ho Hotel over one in California where, the bride was quoted as saying, "We'd have to wait three days."

The Chamber of Commerce in Phoenix led the effort to build a chapel resembling a Spanish Mission (some reports give credit to the Jaycees). With a budget of just \$15, workers rounded up adobe bricks that were being used to construct a fairground wall and built a simple open-air chapel with an imposing bell tower. The story of the chapel's bell remains a bit of a mystery. One story goes that American Airlines bought it from

a second-hand store on Grand Avenue; another says a Catholic organization donated a church bell that at the time was 100 years old.

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Airport officials arranged to have the Maricopa County clerk issue marriage licenses at a moment's notice. Participating married couples would also get their names engraved on a copper plaque. By 1937, the chapel was ready for business and the boosters revved up the marketing machine. "Step Right Up and Say 'I Do,'" reads one undated news clipping. "Sky Harbor Phoenix spreads its welcome mat for aerial elopers...the chapel is expected to be the scene of many weddings, and its construction already has won publicity for Phoenix in many parts of the nation."

Among the fly-in couples was radio singer Donald Novis and former Broadway showgirl Dorothy Bradshaw, who married in January 1938. News reports show that the Hollywood couple was greeted by a crowd of 100, including chamber and government officials, reporters and curious spectators. A "Spanish orchestra played lively tunes" – the orchestra was likely a mariachi band – and the wedding ceremony was broadcast over the radio. A police escort whisked the happy couple to a hotel and they later returned home on an American Airlines flight.

About 40 couples married at the chapel between 1937 and the early 1940s. The copper plaque listing newlyweds disappeared long ago, so no one knows how many celebrities tied the knot there. But the general sense is that the city's plan flopped. "All they hoped for never really materialized," says Arv Schultz, an aviation historian and former publisher of Arizona Flyways magazine.

Historical records indicate the chapel was demolished in the early or mid-1940s. Schultz suspects that city officials tore down the chapel because of the war effort, which thrust Sky Harbor into its critical new role as a site for pilot training and more commercial air travel. The bell was moved to a new terminal, and eventually moved to the site of the Left Seat restaurant.

Today, owner Karen Zamenski gladly welcomes "aerial elopers" to her patio. But, she advises, "If you're going to get married at the bell, you're going to have planes and helicopters. You're going to have skids [sounds] and rubber smells, jet fuel smells. It won't be a quiet... but it will be different."

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About 40 couples married at the chapel between 1937 and the early 1940s. The copper plaque listing newlyweds disappeared long ago, so no one knows how many celebrities tied the knot there. But the general sense is that the city's plan flopped. "All they hoped for never really materialized," says Arv Schultz, an aviation historian and former publisher of Arizona Flyways magazine.

Historical records indicate the chapel was demolished in the early or mid-1940s. Schultz suspects that city officials tore down the chapel because of the war effort, which thrust Sky Harbor into its critical new role as a site for pilot training and more commercial air travel. The bell was moved to a new terminal, and eventually moved to the site of the Left Seat restaurant.

Today, owner Karen Zamenski gladly welcomes "aerial elopers" to her patio. But, she advises, "If you're going to get married at the bell, you're going to have planes and helicopters. You're going to have skids [sounds] and rubber smells, jet fuel smells. It won't be a quiet... but it will be different."

## ***Education .....***

***If you weren't one of the 34 AGA Members on the AGA Education Trip to the Verde Valley last Monday.....you missed a great day with lots of good information on Arizona! Thanks to Larry Dyb, Lisa Gannon and Patti Grandpre, the trip was well planned and they kept us well fed, too. The trip began in Page Springs at the Page Springs Winery, where some opted to taste wine, and others to visit the Page Springs Fish Hatchery. From there it was on to a driving tour of the historic areas of Cottonwood and Clarkdale at the west end of the Verde Valley. It was then on to historic Jerome where we were fortunate to meet and talk with a 93 year old former Jerome resident, who shared many of her memories. Then there was time for lunch and shopping, before we headed for our last stop, Alcantara Winery, on the banks of the Verde River. After more wine tasting and a wonderful talk with owner, Barbara Predmore, we headed back to the Valley of the Sun.***

*Sample Certification Test Question: The town of Hayden's Ferry (Tempe) had a small Mexican village, at the base of the butte, along side of Hayden's Ferry. What was the name of the Mexican village?*

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## Did You Know!

**What makes Arizona unique? It's hard to even know where to begin! Here are a few of our favorite "fun facts" about the Grand Canyon State:**

- It would take more than 4.8 million pennies to equal the amount of copper used on the roof of the Arizona Capitol building.
- Arizona has the largest percentage of land designated as Native American Tribal land in the United States.
- The Hopi village of Oraibi is the oldest Native American settlement in the United States. The village was built 1100 and was discovered in 1540 by Pedro de Tovar, a lieutenant of Coronado.
- Interstate 10 stretches 390 miles across Arizona.
- More hummingbird species can be found in Sierra Vista, located in the southern portion of the state, than in any other state – earning its title as "the Hummingbird Capital of the United States."
- South Mountain Preserve is the largest municipal park in the country.
- Prescott, Arizona is home to the World's Oldest Rodeo, which dates back to 1888.
- The only place in the United States where mail is still delivered by mule is in Havasupai, located at the bottom of the Grand Canyon.

## **GET OUTSIDE !!**

*Yes, it's going to heat up soon, but there are many hikes still to be enjoyed before summer arrives!*

***Camp Creek Falls ~ Tonto National Forest ..... The innocuous, wildfire-tinged roadside pullout that marks the beginning of this hike gives little insight to the wonders that lie in the canyons below. The unmarked route ventures into the craggy desert canyons of Blue Wash and Camp Creek. Although this is not an "official" trail, it's easy to stay on course by simply following the obvious footpaths and bends in the canyon. The first of several tricky spots happens at roughly the half-mile point where the trail seems to dead-end over a dry waterfall. From here, veer right and hike up above the rise following a narrow path. Once back in the gully, there are several more minor hand-over-foot rock scrambles to overcome before Blue Wash meets the wide, sandy course of Camp Creek. At this "T" intersection, head left and hike upstream, hopping the many rivulets that flow in lacy, meandering currents. Soon, the rangy walls of a box canyon open up to reveal a cascade of water tumbling over a 20-foot-tall granite escarpment. At the top and beyond, water-hungry reeds and velvet ash trees live side-by-side with drought-tolerant cactuses and acacia trees. Length: 3.5 miles round-trip; Rating: moderate; Elevation: 3,243-2,643 feet.***

***Getting there ..... From the Loop 101 in Scottsdale, take the Pima/Princess Road exit. Go north on Pima Road for 13 miles to Cave Creek Road. Turn right (east) onto Cave Creek Road and continue 6.5 miles past a sign on the right that reads "Blue Wash #1." Park in the gravel pullouts and pick up the trail near the cottonwood trees.***

**Information: 480-595-3300, [www.fs.fed.us/r3/tonto/recreation/rec-hiking-index.shtml](http://www.fs.fed.us/r3/tonto/recreation/rec-hiking-index.shtml)**

***The Arizona Coach Talker***

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***Websites to Visit ....***

<http://arizonaguide.com/arizona-travel-info/learn-about-arizona>

<http://www.alcantaravineyard.com/>

<http://www.azgfd.gov/h f/hatcheries page springs.shtml>

***Certification Test ~ Sample Question Answer : San Pablo***

***~ HAVE A GREAT SUMMER ~***

*GET OUT AND LEARN MORE ABOUT ARIZONA!!!*