

Arizona Coach Talker

Newsletter of the Arizona Guides Association

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Celebrate AZ History

Established originally as Our Lady of Perpetual Help, Scottsdale's first Catholic church was built in 1933 by Mexican and Yaqui Indian families who settled in the area. Today, the Old Adobe Mission (1st St. and Brown Ave) is being restored to its former glory and is still used as a spiritual center. The brilliant white facade and domed bell tower of the Spanish Colonial Revival church were designed to resemble the Mission of San Xavier Mission del Bac, south of Tucson.

Inside you see the building's original adobe bricks through a small cutaway in the plaster on the north wall. The bricks - which were made by blending local soil, straw, and water, then molded and baked in the sun - allow the walls to "breathe," moderating the church's temperature in both the summer and winter.

~ AGA JANUARY MEETING ~

When: MONDAY, JANUARY 7, 2013

Where: The Old Adobe Mission ~ 1st and Brown, Scottsdale

Time: 5:15 p.m. ~ Happy Hour at Los Olivos (around the corner on 2nd Street)
6:30 p.m. ~ Meeting at Old Adobe Mission

Please RSVP to Jana Powell: okiejgp@cox.net

AGA President's Notes.....

AGA is all about learning Arizona facts and wherever we go, there's something to be learned. The one thing that impresses me about AGA members is their quest for knowledge about our beautiful state - anything from historical facts to where the newest place to "see and be seen" is. I'm always hearing comments about someone studying for an upcoming job that they have done hundreds of times before. Maybe that's what keeps us all so "young". Our meetings and trips are a great way to add to our repertoire of Arizona knowledge. We experience things first-hand and learn from shared information from our fellow guides. Our Education section has news on our Spring trip.

For our January meeting, Jana has arranged another fantastic AGA experience. Happy Hour at Los Olivos will give us the opportunity to get caught up on each others personal lives or become acquainted with new friends. Then, at the Old Mission, we will be filled with the historical tidbits we all crave. It's the best of both worlds, so don't miss this meeting. After that, a **SHORT** business meeting will give you all the pertinent AGA news you need to know. If you have something you want brought up at the meeting, please let me know in advance so I can put it on the agenda. To keep my promise that our meeting will be short; we must stick to the Agenda.

Also, brand new members are able to join the AGA for half-price in January, so if you know anyone who might be interested, bring them to the meeting. When you R.S.V.P., tell Jana who your guest is and then introduce them to me at the meeting so I can personally welcome them.

One of my goals this year as your president is to help every member understand and truly experience the value of being a member of the AGA. Let me know how I can help - I want to hear from you. I'm wishing everyone a Happy and Prosperous 2013!

Judy Frasier, *AGA President 2012-2013*

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

Historic downtown Phoenix hotels may be razed. A block away from US Airways Center arena in downtown Phoenix, the vintage brick facade of the Hotel St. James contrasts with the gleaming lights of soaring high-rises and billboards. Plywood covers the hotel's windows, but its early 20th century architecture and neon signage hint at a more significant past, before it became known as a flophouse and, now, another vacant urban relic slated for demolition. Although the St. James and its older sister, the Madison Hotel next door, aren't ornate, they're a rarity in Phoenix -- a city critics say has few historic buildings to show for its storied past. The hotels are among a handful in the Valley that date to around the time of statehood.

But that history could soon turn to rubble if plans to replace the buildings with a parking lot move forward. Suns Legacy Partners, owner of the NBA team and the property, has pulled a permit to raze the structures. The Suns want to construct a valet parking lot and hope to begin generating income from the land it bought before the recession for about \$7 million, city officials said. Historic-preservation advocates are fighting the demolition, though no legal barriers to the developer remain. They say losing the hotels would once again show Phoenix's preference for pavement over posterity.

"It would be a historic loss, but economically understandable if it was done in the context of redevelopment" said Brendan Mahoney, a senior policy adviser to Phoenix Mayor Greg Stanton. "But simply scraping it is a hard pill to swallow." The Mayor's Office is attempting to broker a solution that's attractive to the Suns' investors and preserves at least a portion of the hotels. His office has proposed a temporary fix: Lend the team nearby city parking space for games, so the buildings can stand until they find a permanent use.

The dispute speaks to the difficulties of historic preservation and redevelopment in downtown Phoenix, which is experiencing a cultural and economic renaissance. Companies that invested millions of dollars to snatch up land and vacant structures often aren't inclined to pursue the type of smaller-scale projects that utilize old buildings. In the case of the hotels St. James and Madison, located at Madison and First streets, the Mayor's Office and preservation activists envision some form of development that incorporates the structures. They say the downtown area already has more than enough parking lots.

Mahoney said it's unlikely the Suns could make a profit by operating the hotels, which are mostly single-occupancy rooms that lack private bathrooms and other amenities modern guests expect. Renovating the buildings would cost an additional \$8 million or more, he said. But Mahoney said by that preventing demolition, the Suns could save some elements of the buildings and incorporate them into future projects. For example, he said the striking lobby and facade of the St. James could potentially become part of some future building, though some advocates decry the idea.

The National Register of Historic Places has listed the St. James since 1985, though the Madison is not listed. Attempts by the city to give the properties a historic-zoning overlay have failed; the previous property owner opposed such a designation in 2000. Mahoney said the hotels were never luxurious and didn't host notable guests, but are "treasures" nonetheless because of their age and the rarity of historic buildings in Phoenix. Both hotels initially catered to tourists and working-class travelers coming into the Valley on the railroads. The Madison opened in 1909 and is one of four territorial-period hotels still standing in Phoenix's central business district, according to the Phoenix Historic Preservation Office. Its brick facade has since been stuccoed over and painted white.

In 1929, the St. James followed. Designed by prominent Phoenix architect Lloyd LeRaine Pike, the hotel is by far the more visually appealing of the pair, with its original Spanish Colonial Revival influence facade, classic awnings and neon lighting. The hotels eventually fell into disrepair, and in more recent decades gained a reputations as cheap boarding houses for transients and drug addicts. A Phoenix New Times piece from 1996 described the St. James' vibe, noting marijuana plants and a plastic syringe could be seen in the alley next to the hotel.

But preservation advocates are optimistic somebody could restore the St. James and Madison to meaningful use. Jim McPherson, president of the Arizona Preservation Foundation, said the hotels would join the ranks of businesses thriving under historic roofs in the surrounding warehouse district. "Let's be creative about these buildings," McPherson said. "Why does history have to be the victim in this? Preservation is an incredible economic-development tool."

Smithsonian, Heard exhibits shed light on Code Talkers. The story of the Navajo Code Talkers was a slow-leaking secret. They kept their role in World War II under Pentagon embargo for 23 years, and some declined to talk even after that. Only one original Code Talker has written a book. Others refused to relive the

stories, even with their sons. Their first museum was in a Burger King in Kayenta on the Navajo Reservation, so it means something extra that this time, it's the Smithsonian Institution paying attention: capturing the voices and memories of Code Talkers from many tribes in two exhibits opening at the Heard Museum this month.

Code Talkers didn't march in veterans parades because it would invite attention. They didn't want questions. They couldn't give answers. A couple of decades, two small museums and a Hollywood film later, the Code Talkers' story is well-known: 29 Navajo men joined the Marine Corps in 1942, tasked with using their native language to write a secret code. By the end of World War II, more than 420 Navajo soldiers served the U.S. using the code, which was never broken. Until 1968, they were commanded to keep their role secret, and some kept that secret for many years after.

Navajo culture is unwritten, passed from generation to generation through verbal storytelling. The Code Talkers certainly weren't writing things down. It wasn't until about 2000 that the Navajo Nation asked for help and sent an e-mail to Washington, D.C. "They asked if the Smithsonian could do an exhibition," said Keevin Lewis, an outreach coordinator with the Smithsonian's National Museum of the American Indian. Museum curators researched and interviewed and compiled photographs for seven years, producing "Native Words, Native Warriors," an exhibit that is traveling the country and opened at the Heard Museum in October. "Navajo Code Talkers," featuring photographs by Kenji Kawano, opened the same day.

There are photos and radios and helmets, sure. There are surprising, fascinating stories about the other tribes that were tapped to use their native languages as wartime code: Choctaws, Cherokees and others during World War I; Hopis, Comanches and Navajos during World War II. In Comanche code, the word for sewing machine meant machine gun. But what makes the exhibit special are the videotapes of Code Talkers themselves finally telling their stories. Smithsonian crews traveled to the reservations to record Code Talkers at home, in their environments.

When these men were recruited, many were straight from boarding schools run by the Bureau of Indian Affairs, which was trying to "extinguish" native languages, Lewis said. Students were forbidden to use their languages at school. In Navajo culture particularly, "language is so sacred," said Judith Avila, who co-wrote "Code Talker" last year with Chester Nez, the only original Code Talker to pen a memoir. Nez, 92, is the last living member of that group, living in New Mexico, and featured in the Smithsonian's exhibit.

The language "is believed (to be) very much like the Christian Bible. The Navajo God said, 'Let there be light, let there be earth,' and all of these things came to be," Avila said. "The Navajo language could not be separated from the creation of the earth. It was considered part of the creation." In an interview from his New Mexico home, Nez said that his relatives "told us stories in the evening. You had to know a lot of things about our tribe." "Our language is one of the hardest languages to learn, and I am very proud to be a member of the Navajo tribe." In boarding school, Nez writes in his memoir, it was tough on the kids to be punished for using these sacred words -- but what a surprising power they came to be. Nez volunteered for the Marines along with 28 others, and the code they penned used two systems: an alphabet along with words that stood in for others. For example, "ne-he-mah" ("our mother") meant America, and "besh-lo" ("iron fish") meant submarine.

After the war, Nez "talked about really wishing he could talk to his dad about the code," Avila said, "because he knew his father would be really, really proud if he knew how the Navajo language had helped the country. "He said it was very difficult because people always asked him, 'What did you do in the war?' and he was told by Marines when he was released from duty to keep it secret." They told him to say, " 'We gave you a gun and told you to go shoot some Japanese,' " Avila said. "When he finally did tell his father, his father was so overcome with emotion that he couldn't speak for a while," Avila said. It was a little difficult to talk Nez into writing the book, Avila said. "He said, 'What if I don't have enough to tell you? What if my life isn't interesting enough?' " Avila said, but she knew his stories would come. "Oftentimes I come to the house and he's sitting there, reading it, like a corroboration of the fact that his history really exists now," Avila said. "There are pictures and maps. It's a solid thing that he can hold, and it will never be forgotten."

Salt River Project is embarking on a seven-year plan to dry up its entire 131-mile canal system, section by section. The electric- and water-utility company then plans to conduct comprehensive maintenance on the system, which delivers drinking and irrigation water throughout the metro Phoenix area. It's all because of the fish. SRP introduced the white amur, a vegetation-eating carp native to China, in 1989 for weed control, and it worked so well that the utility decided it no longer needed to empty the system for weed control and other maintenance.

"Since white-amur fish were introduced into the canal system, there has not been a systematic approach to be sure the entire system is inspected and repaired," spokesman Jeff Lane said. "The new plan allows for each section of the canal system to be inspected and repaired every seven years."

It's a significant logistical effort, figuring out which sections of canal to empty first and how to guarantee water delivery to customers down the line. SRP delivers approximately 1 million acre-feet of water to Valley customers, or more than 325 billion gallons annually. SRP weed-control supervisor Justin Schonhoff said the utility will choose 16 to 20 miles of canal each year for emptying, south of the Salt River in November and north of the river in January. There is nothing special about the dry-ups. SRP routinely empties sections of its canals for maintenance every year. What's different in the seven-year plan, is that every section of canal will be emptied. Lane said the canals have some spots that have not been dried up in 10 years.

Those who lived here in the 1980s and earlier may remember complete dry-ups of the canals during the November and January periods, but the utility stopped that practice when it started using the fish. Those fish add a level of effort to the dry-out periods. Employees of the utility have to herd the fish together. Then, armed with nets, they scoop the fish out of the water into larger nets, which are lifted by a crane into tanks mounted on dump trucks. The fish then are released elsewhere in the system.

Schonhoff said trash will be removed from the canals and silt will be scooped out. Then, employees will go to work shoring up the canal walls, repairing concrete and making sure all the gates and grates are working properly, sealed correctly and free of corrosion, rust or other damage. "We will do every kind of maintenance we can think of," Schonhoff said. The first stretches to get the full-maintenance treatment are the Consolidated Canal in Mesa, between roughly the intersections of Horne and Brown Road on the north to Lindsay and Broadway roads on the south, and the Eastern Canal in Gilbert, running from Elliot and Greenfield roads to Pecos and Lindsay roads.

When Salt River Project begins emptying the canals, officials say, everything comes into view. Among their finds: Dozens of grocery carts; old tires; construction debris bicycles; TV sets; bed frames; tools; and safes. And once, a black Corvette was found in the Arizona Canal, just east of Pima Road. It had been stolen.

To read more fascinating history about the challenges of bringing water into Arizona through a canal systems, paste this link into your browser. It documents much of the background of the CAP water project that now supplies vital water to Arizona from the Colorado River.

<http://www.azcentral.com/arizonarepublic/news/articles/2012/11/25/20121125arizona-canal-project-an-uphill-journey.html>

Airport News.....

Mesa Gateway Airport is a growing option for air travelers. In Phoenix, going to the airport used to mean one place: Sky Harbor International Airport. Today, there's another option for an increasing number of travelers: Phoenix-Mesa Gateway Airport. The east Mesa airport, the former Williams Air Force base, has grown rapidly since commercial flights debuted there five years ago. Discounter Allegiant Air, the airport's busiest carrier, started with eight destinations and now offers non-stop flights to 35 cities from Oakland to South Bend, Ind. Honolulu flights begin in February.

This year, the airport added two carriers, Spirit Airlines and Frontier Airlines. Spirit offers non-stop flights to Denver and Dallas and one-stop flights to Fort Lauderdale, Fla. Frontier goes to Denver. The airport has been expanding to keep up with the growth in service. Gateway, which will surpass the 1 million-passenger mark for the first time this year, added two gates, a security checkpoint and a gleaming baggage-claim area in the fall.

It all adds up to a lot of newbies headed to the airport 35 miles from downtown Phoenix, especially as the holiday travel rush begins. Gateway is small and navigable - the airport's slogan is "Just Plane Easy" - but travelers will find other differences from Sky Harbor. Here are tips for travelers new to Gateway and its airlines.

On Allegiant and Spirit, a checked bag is overweight if it weighs more than 40 pounds. The cutoff for most major airlines is 50 pounds. Airlines charge overweight-bag fees in addition to the standard checked-bag fees. According to frequent flyers, if you are one pound over, they will make you take it out or pay.

If you plan to use the overhead bin, plan to pay. Allegiant and Spirit charge for carry-on bags that don't fit underneath the seat in front of you. Pay the fee in advance rather than at the airport, where it will cost more. Spirit recently raised its fee for a carry-on bag at the gate to \$100. It has been \$45.

Don't trust your smartphone. The map app on some smartphones can send you on a longer-than-necessary route from northeast Phoenix. Instead of telling you to get off U.S. 60 at Power Road, it can have you continue onto Loop 202 and get off at Elliot Road, which adds a few miles to the already long trip.

Community-relations coordinator Patrick Oakley said it has something to do with the address of 6033 Sossaman Road. The airport hasn't heard similar complaints about auto-based GPS systems. The airport's website, phxmesagateway.org, offers its preferred routes.

Arrive on time, especially especially if you are flying Allegiant. The airline, which generally serves each city just two or three times a week, often closes its ticket counters about 45 minutes before each flight as employees move to the gate to board passengers for the flight.

Park in the Ray Road economy lot. That's where you'll get the cheapest rates. Parking is \$6 a day, and there are frequent shuttles. The airport added more shuttles recently after it increased the price of the lot next to the terminal to \$10 a day. Park in the terminal lot if you're in a hurry. You'll park practically on the tarmac, and it's just a short walk to check in. Spaces are usually available, even during holidays, since the price increased from \$6. The priciest overnight parking option (\$18) is in the express lot across from baggage claim. It is designed for those picking up or dropping off passengers, but overnight parking is allowed. For short-term parkers, the first half hour is free; each subsequent half hour is \$1.

Don't expect a Sky Harbor-like lineup of restaurants, shops and bars. Beyond security, a new Paradise Bakery serves sandwiches, salads and treats, and the Copper Plate restaurant has the only bar at the airport. One sundry shop sells snacks, magazines, books and gifts. Grab a drink or snack at the Paradise Bakery in baggage claim if you're meeting passengers. Your purchase gets you an extra half-hour of free parking in the short-term lot.

Phoenix Sky Harbor International Airport the 10th busiest in the U.S., has had the most reported wildlife strikes in Arizona since 1990 with 1,150. Aviation officials say they're doing all they can to reduce the risks. Officials, for example, worked with Tempe to make sure Tempe Town Lake, in the airport's flight path, is surrounded by desert landscaping rather than vegetation that would attract birds, said Deborah Ostreicher, a deputy aviation director for the city of Phoenix.

There were about 2,250 instances of aircraft striking wildlife at and around Arizona airports documented in the Federal Aviation Administration's Wildlife Strike Database from 1990 through Oct. 31 of this year. The data cover incidents voluntarily reported by airports, airlines and others. A Cronkite News Service review found eight Arizona strikes that resulted in injuries, none of them fatal and none involving commercial flights. Of the reports, 47 cited damage of \$1,000 or more. Some examples:

- On April 17, 2000, a United Airlines jet struck a turkey vulture on approach to Sky Harbor and landed with \$50,000 worth of damage to a wing.
- On Aug. 27, 2002, a Southwest Airlines jet that apparently sucked a dove into an engine after taking off from Tucson International Airport made an emergency landing in Phoenix with six dented fan blades.
- On Oct. 9, 2004, a plane taking off at Falcon Field in Mesa sustained two large dents and \$60,000 in damage when a bird struck it.

Wildlife strikes are most commonly associated with areas that have more bodies of water than Arizona. The January 2009 emergency landing of US Airways Flight 1549 in New York's Hudson River is the best-known recent example. The majority cause no damage

Tucson International and Phoenix-Mesa Gateway, Arizona's next-busiest airports, have had the second - and third-most with 389 and 277 reported strikes, respectively. So far this year, Sky Harbor has had 28 strikes, according to the data. The majority involved an "unknown bird" — but some were more specific, including an American kestrel, Townsend's warbler, and several mourning doves and duck pigeons. None of the strikes this year caused damage. Many of the strikes weren't reported in flight, but workers found the telltale signs: blood smears on the plane or a carcass on the runway. Since Jan. 1, 2012, Phoenix Deer Valley had only one reported strike, which caused minor damage.

Arizona's 2,253 reported incidents since 1990 are the 18th-most among the 50 states and the District of Columbia. California reported the most with 11,383, while Wyoming reported the fewest with 190. In the opinion of Archie Dickey, dean of the College of Arts and Sciences at Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University, a higher number of reported strikes at a given airport or in a given state doesn't necessarily indicate a greater threat. Instead, it likely means that airports or states are doing a more thorough job of reporting. Arizona's lack of water actually makes it very safe compared with other states, according to Dickey. "If you think about airports in the eastern part of the United States or even on the West Coast, many of them have been built next to a river, next to the ocean, things like that, which end up being habitats and places for birds to hang out and come to," he said.

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

JW Marriott Camelback Inn Resort & Spa the favorite hotel of lodging icon Bill Marriott, has lost its AAA five-diamond rating after 36 years. The Paradise Valley resort was bumped down to four diamonds for 2013. The 76-year-old resort was one of just three resorts in the country to hold the five-diamond rating since the program began in 1976 and has long touted the coveted rating on its website and in promotional materials. Camelback Inn officials were notified of the ratings change a couple months ago but it was not made public until AAA Arizona released its annual list of the state's five - and four-diamond winners at a reception in November. AAA does not publicly reveal ratings details for individual hotels or disclose results from its annual, unannounced inspections. "Based on our published standards, and the expert opinion of our inspectors, the Camelback Inn is accurately rated at four diamonds," AAA Arizona spokeswoman Linda Gorman said in an e-mail.

Shane Allor, director of sales and marketing for Camelback Inn, attributed the drop in ranking largely to outdated bathrooms in the resort's 453 guest rooms. He said the resort's service remains top notch. "They (the bathrooms) just weren't as modern as you and I would expect," Allor said. Camelback Inn did not update its bathrooms during a \$50 million makeover four years ago but is now embarking on a \$10 million project to redo them with must-have luxury resort features including walk-in showers, large showerheads, lighted mirrors, new tile and granite countertops. Many guests have those amenities at home and expect them when they travel.

Allor said the goal is to restore Camelback Inn's five-diamond rating as soon as possible but whether that's the 2014 or 2015 list will likely depend on the timing of the next AAA inspection and the status of the room makeover. The annual inspections are unannounced. "We value that five-diamond rating and we strive to be there again," he said.

It is not unprecedented in Arizona or nationally to lose an AAA diamond or a star from Forbes Travel Guide, formerly Mobil Travel Guide. Five years ago, The Boulders in Carefree fell from five diamonds to four diamonds, a rating it retains. The Phoenician lost its five-star rating from Mobil in 2003. No Arizona resorts have had a five-star rating since. With Camelback Inn's departure from the five-diamond list, Arizona has four five-diamond properties for 2013, all in metropolitan Phoenix: Fairmont Scottsdale Princess, Four Seasons Resort Scottsdale at Troon North, The Phoenician and The Canyon Suites at the Phoenician. In contrast, there are 43 four-diamond hotels and resorts across the state. The list includes upscale resorts, casino hotels and convention hotels.

The winners of AAA's Five Diamond award for 2013, and the number of consecutive years they have been rated a five-diamond property: Fairmont Scottsdale Princess (22); Four Seasons Scottsdale Resort at Troon North (12); The Phoenician (9); The Canyon Suites at The Phoenician (6).

Scottsdale Tourism Updates....

The Scottsdale City Council recently embraced the final phases of the Scottsdale Waterfront, which call for 249 apartment units and 10,000 square feet of retail and restaurant space. City Council members unanimously supported a site plan for Broadstone at Waterfront. The \$54 million project, encompassing land between Marshall Way and Goldwater Boulevard, will expand on the existing Waterfront, adding restaurants and retail on Marshall and residential units around a central courtyard.

Alliance Residential Holdings, the developer, has said it is ready to begin construction as soon as possible. "Hopefully it means more potential customers, more vibrancy and folks downtown to shop and, frankly, to work and live," said Mayor Jim Lane. Broadstone Scottsdale Waterfront LLC, a partnership between Alliance Residential and JP Morgan Asset Management, bought the 3.4-acre property this year from Scottsdale Waterfront LLC for \$13.5 million. In addition to retail and residential, the project calls for 430 spaces of underground parking.

Also, the council discussed plans at a work-study session for a downtown art and history museum. The non-profit Scottsdale Museum of the West submitted proposals this summer. The preferred project calls for a sculptural garden and small amphitheater in addition to the museum, at a cost of up to \$13.1 million. As proposed, the project will not encroach on the Greasepaint Theater, formerly the Stagebrush Theater, which is northeast of Second Street and Goldwater Boulevard. Scottsdale has earmarked a portion of its bed-tax funds that could pay for as much as \$7.5 million.

The council also adopted a resolution to extend the trolley contract with Dunn Transit through June 30, 2013. The city's trolley system, comprised of the downtown, neighborhood and Miller Road routes, is funded by federal grants and a transportation privilege tax. The annual cost is \$2.5 million.

The shops at the Borgata of Scottsdale are likely to remain open through the spring as the new owner maps out a plan to redevelop the faux Italian shopping village with townhouses or condominiums. AV Homes Inc., which bought the Borgata in September for \$12.8 million, intends to study the market to determine what type of housing to build on the property, said Ken Plonski, AV Homes vice president of communications. "We're committed to working with the (Borgata tenants) through the first quarter of 2013. That gets them through the main selling season."

The Borgata, patterned after an ancient Tuscany village, opened to great fanfare in late 1981. However, the specialty shopping center of 90,000 square feet has struggled in recent years to attract shoppers and hold onto retail tenants despite its cobblestones, towers and shaded courtyards. Westcor, a division of Macerich of Santa Monica, Calif., sold the Borgata in April to RED Development for \$9.2 million. AV Homes, which recently relocated from Florida to Scottsdale, bought the property at 6166 N. Scottsdale Road from RED Development. AV Homes then resold two restaurants -- Blanco Taco and J. Alexander's -- that will remain in operation at the front of the site.

Robert Kammrath, a Valley retail consultant, said the Borgata suffered from not having any anchor stores, its mid-block location and poor accessibility. "The access was always awkward, and it wasn't even obvious it was there if you were driving by on Scottsdale Road," he said. "Hilton Village across the street has maintained a reasonable level of occupancy because it's a pretty conventional shopping center for parking and access." RED Development also bought Hilton Village from Westcor in May for \$24.8 million and has improvement plans for the 10.8-acre property.

"The Borgata's original concept would work if you were in a pedestrian environment like Rodeo Drive (in Beverly Hills) or Michigan Avenue in Chicago, but we don't have any place like that here," Kammrath said. He compared Borgata with other themed specialty shopping centers including the successful Tlaquepaque in Sedona and by contrast El Pedregal in Carefree "that has never really clicked." It seemed that once the novelty wore off, the Borgata was just another collection of shops in a city with a surplus of specialty retailers.

AV Homes likes the Borgata site for its residential potential. "It has accessibility to great restaurants and shopping," Plonski said. "We believe there is growing demand in the more mature market ... for some type of residential in a location like that with so many things in walking distance." The Borgata includes underground parking, but AV Homes is not sure whether it will have to build a new underground parking structure or reconfigure the existing one, he said. It's unclear whether any of the Borgata's turrets will remain.

The Borgata, designed by Jones and Mah Architects Inc., took its share of criticism for being out of place in the Sonoran Desert. It's worth noting that San Gimignano, the village that inspired the Borgata design, has a recorded history dating to the 10th century. In Scottsdale, its lifespan appears to be just over 30 years.



- Shea Boulevard and Bell Road are thoroughfares named in honor of a pair of farmers who brought water to Paradise Valley in 1915. James Shea and Harvey Bell assembled the Paradise Verde Irrigation District.
- Noah Broadway owned a farm on the southeastern corner of 19th Avenue and what is now Broadway Road.
- A homesteader named John Osborn got his own road after his death in the early 1900s.
- And Greenway Road is a tribute to Gen. John C. Greenway, a mining engineer in Bisbee who was also a Rough Rider and a World War II brigadier general.
- Scottsdale — the town and the road — was named for Army chaplain Winfield Scott, who retired in the area and promoted his settlement as a place to find good oranges and good health.

Items of interest.....

The Salt River is a major source of water for the Valley. But unless we've had a lot of rain, the riverbed is dry through Phoenix, so it's hard to get a feel for this vital watercourse. And where did it get that name? The Salt begins in eastern Arizona where the Black and White rivers meet. The entire watershed, which comes out of the White Mountains, is 13,000 square miles, fed by snowmelt, rain and mountain streams. The river itself is about 200 miles long.

Just below the Black-White confluence are salt banks, which raise the salinity of the water, said Ileen Snoddy, coordinator of heritage for Salt River Project. King Woolsey, a rancher, prospector and guide who lived in Arizona during pioneer times, thought the banks might prove useful as a salt mine. “He had seen the salt banks, and he tried to mine them for table salts,” Snoddy said. At the turn of the 20th century, salt was important. In addition to being used at the table, it was used to cure meat. Woolsey was never able to turn a profit from the mine, though, because the salt was mixed in with a lot of other elements and was difficult to extract. Woolsey, who was “always looking for things to do, always looking to make a buck,” moved on to other ventures.

The salt banks are now part of the Fort Apache Reservation and are off-limits to non-tribal members. The only way to see them is by boat during the spring, when rafting companies make runs down the river. The high salinity is not a problem for Valley residents who drink the water, because the water emerging is diluted by the time it gets here. What little salt is left can be treated. Phoenix also gets water from the Verde River, which is not high in salt. SRP alerts the city water-treatment plant regarding where most of the water is coming from. They make adjustments for the chemical makeup of the water. As far as what we can expect from the river this spring, SRP doesn’t want to predict that. It does look like this winter is more likely to be dry than wet.

Education

Coming up sooner than you think is our Spring day trip. Brenda and Gary have an exciting day planned for you. We will be visiting the Wickenburg area including a tour of the famous Vulture Mine along with other attractions nearby. The proposed date is April 2nd (the Saturday after Easter).

An AGA sponsored class is being planned for people interested in learning the ins and outs of working at the airport as meet and greet staff. DMC's in particular may have new staff who need training before being hired to work at the airport for arrivals or departures. At present, new staff are often sent to the airport without the basic knowledge to allow them to work as a team with experienced staff. As a result, clients often don't receive the level of professionalism they should be able to expect. For more information, contact Judy Frasier at judykay02@q.com.

Certification Test If anyone's interested in taking the next test for AGA certification as a tour guide, contact Leslie Ullstrup, Certification Chair, at lullstrup@cox.net.

GET OUTSIDE !!

Time to walk off those holiday goodies!!

You don't have to go far this time of year the weather is perfect for a hike in any of our mountains surrounding the Valley.

White Tank Mountains http://www.maricopa.gov/parks/white_tank/hiking.aspx

McDowell Mountains <http://www.scottsdaleaz.gov/preserve>

South Mountain <http://phoenix.gov/parks/trails/locations/south/index.html>

Camelback Mountain update the Echo Canyon trailhead will be closed until construction of a \$3 million improvement project is completed in the fall. For details, visit:

<http://www.azcentral.com/community/phoenix/articles/20121221echo-canyon-trailhead-closed-project.html>

The Arizona Coach Talker

AGA Newsletter

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Celebrate AZ History !!
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www.arizonaguides.org

Page 9 – AGA Newsletter ~ January 2013

Websites to visit

Paste these websites into your browser and expand your knowledge!

Get the latest updates on ground transportation at Sky Harbor<http://gt.skyharbor.com/>

Do you know our reservoir lakes and their origins and importance to our 'irrigated society' here in the desert www.usbr.gov/lc/phoenix/projects/saltriverproj.html

*Do you know the historic districts in downtown Phoenix - could you do a tour?
<http://phoenix.gov/pdd/historic/index.html>*

~ SEE YOU AT THE MISSION ~

Learn and enhance your professionalism in 2013 !!!