

TUCSON GIVING

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Editor: James Martinez | 520-573-4103 | jmartinez@tucson.com

Groups focus on vets, homeless, kids this holiday

By Loni Nannini

SPECIAL TO THE ARIZONA DAILY STAR

If your holiday focus is heart and home, there is still opportunity prior to Christmas to boost a sense of both for those lacking the comforts of either.

For the 14th consecutive year, Tucsonans have the chance to support homeless neighbors through the Primavera Foundation's Annual Homeless Memorial in conjunction with National Homeless Person's Memorial Day at 4 p.m. Thursday at the Evergreen Cemetery county plot at 3105 N. Oracle Road in the northwest corner of the cemetery.

"Our first goal is to honor the homeless who have passed away. Since they were homeless, perhaps they don't have the ability to have burials or funerals or they have no family members who can pay homage and acknowledge their lives and the fact that in their passing, many of them were contributing members of our population who were not necessarily in the best situations at the end of their lives," said Patricia Barcelo, coordinator of the event for the Primavera Foundation.

Barcelo said that last year, 48 people died while homeless in Pima County; an additional 103 people perished in the desert along the Arizona-Mexico border and 86 of those remain unidentified.

The Primavera Foundation, which offers pathways out of poverty through housing and workforce development, hopes to promote awareness about the incidence of homeless deaths due to exposure, hunger, poor health and violence on the streets.

"We want to draw attention to their plights and we also want to draw attention to our cause at the Primavera Foundation, which is to end homelessness and ensure that everyone has access to safe, affordable housing," said Barcelo.

At the upcoming memorial and throughout the holidays, Primavera will be accepting donations of items for "winter survival kits," which are one-gallon Ziploc bags containing socks, a winter hat, gloves, lotion/sunscreen, lip balm, snacks, a water bottle and a \$5 gift card to a grocery store or restaurant.

HOW TO HELP

Holiday help for the homeless, veterans and children in need.

Donations to the Arizona State Veterans Home in Tucson

- **When:** Ongoing
- **Where:** 555 E. Ajo Way.

To support local veteran's programs through volunteerism or with an online donation, visit the website at dvs.az.gov/donation-fund; to volunteer with one of 16 regional chapters of the American Legion, find a post online at www.legion.org or if you would like to support the American Legion Riders Oro Valley Chapter 132 and its efforts with local members of the military and veterans, contact ovpost132@gmail.com

Primavera Annual Homeless Memorial

- **When:** 4 p.m. Thursday, Dec. 19.
- **Where:** Evergreen Cemetery county plot, 3015 N. Oracle Road, at the intersection Fort Lowell Road in the northwest corner of the cemetery.

The event, which is sponsored by the Primavera Foundation in conjunction with National Homeless Person's Memorial Day, includes a memorial service honoring neighbors, friends and family who have passed away homeless in the past year. The ceremony will offer the opportunity for attendees to share memories of those who passed, share blessings

and promote discussion about social injustice and ending homelessness. The Primavera Foundation will accept donations of backpacks and items for winter survival kits, which are one-gallon Ziploc bags containing socks, a winter hat, gloves, lotion/sunscreen, lip balm, snacks, a water bottle and a \$5 gift card to a grocery store or restaurant. For information, or to make an online donation, visit the website at primavera.org or call 882-5383.

49th Annual Ramon Gonzales' Miracle on 31st Street Christmas Party

- **When:** 9 a.m. Saturday, Dec. 21.
- **Where:** AVA Amphitheater at Casino Del Sol Resort, 5655 W. Valencia Road.
- **Cost:** Free

Festivities include a visit from Santa and Mrs. Claus along with a parade of classic cars, food by Silver Saddle Steakhouse, entertainment and free toys for children with no screening required. Donations of 10,000 new and unwrapped children's toys, bicycles and cash contributions are needed to stage the event; donations are accepted at the Gonzales' home, 2019 W. Ajo Way. For more information or to provide cash donations, contact Ramon Gonzales at 971-8271.



COURTESY OF ED DAVIS

Veteran Gil Esquerdo, above, was among a dozen residents of the Arizona State Veterans Home in Tucson who waited their turns to try out a golf cart modified by Golf Cars of Arizona to allow residents to travel to doctor appointments around the VA campus in comfort.

get veterans to their doctor appointments across the VA Campus more quickly and easily. We were able to buy a used golf cart that was modified ... some people thought it would take a year to raise the money, but thanks to some generous donations, we did it in seven weeks," said John Madaloni, coordinator of the fundraising effort.

Madaloni, 73, who served in the Air Force during the Vietnam War, said that supporting the veterans' home residents is just one way that the American Legion Riders assist veterans. The group also supports various programs for enlisted and active-duty military members.

"As veterans, it is our way of giving back. Lots of us didn't get some things we should have been entitled to or receive acknowledgment that we should have, and that is what the American Legion is all about: It is veterans helping veterans. Unfortunately, our government doesn't support enough of the needs for veterans, so as civilians we have to pick up the slack," Madaloni said.

TOYS FOR CHILDREN

If picking up a toy for a child in need is on your heart this holiday season, consider donating a new,

unwrapped toy for the 49th Annual Miracle on 31st Street.

Almost 50 years since it originated on 31st Street in South Tucson, the event has grown to serve more than 10,000 children from disadvantaged neighborhoods in its current venue at AVA Amphitheater at Casino Del Sol, 5655 W. Valencia Road.

Founder Ramon Gonzales credits the generosity of the community — along with Casino Del Sol and Silver Saddle Steakhouse, a 36-year sponsor — for the longevity of the event.

"Sometimes I feel like I have been doing it for so long that I know how it started, but I don't know what made me do it besides the kids. Every year I say that was it, but I am still doing it and hopefully we can get to 50 one year from now," he said.

For the time being, Gonzales encourages people to continue to donate.

"I have never, not once, seen any kids go home without a toy and I don't want that to happen. I would hate to tell the last kid in line, 'Sorry, we don't have any more toys. You have to leave,'" Gonzales said.

Contact freelance writer Loni Nannini at ninch2@comcast.net

"These help out tremendously when people are on the streets. We have a number of different programs within our organization, including our Homeless Intervention & Prevention Drop-In Center at 702 S. 6th Avenue, where folks can come if they need these supplies. We also have case managers who go out and meet with the homeless population directly and hand them out. Anytime they see someone in need, they are out there trying to help make things better," Barcelo said.

HELPING VETERANS

Another organization working to improve the lives of those in need this holiday season is the American Legion Riders Oro Valley Chapter 132.

The group of veterans and motorcycle enthusiasts raised more than \$10,000 during the last few months to purchase a specially modified, eight-passenger golf cart for residents of the Arizona State Veterans Home in Tucson.

The cart, led by 13 shining motorcycles, was delivered to the veterans at their Christmas party over the weekend, with Santa riding shotgun carrying a bag of holiday gifts. Before now, many of the 100-plus geriatric and/or chronically ill residents required someone to push them by wheelchair — even on the hottest days of summer and coldest days of winter — across the street and around the expansive VA campus.

"They really needed a cart that was wheelchair accessible to

BEN'S BELLS

ARIZONA DAILY STAR

- **What:** Ben's Bells promotes kindness and community involvement. Each week a person who makes Tucson better is "belled."

- **Last week's recipient:** Jonathan Martinez

- **Nominated by:** Renee Lamphear

- **Why:** For his commitment to spreading kindness in the Tucson community through the game of chess. Jonathan brings kindness to people through the game of chess and the initiative he founded called The Pawn Initiative, wrote Lamphear. Jonathan began playing chess at 8 and has turned his passion for chess into a community outreach effort. He believes chess is a tool that can be used to build community and bring about change. Jonathan started a chess program at the Boys & Girls Club, Jim and Vicki Clubhouse, and volunteers there every week, Lamphear wrote. Through chess, he teaches life skills



CHELSEA FORER / BEN'S BELLS

Bellee Jonathan Martinez and Renee Lamphear, who nominated him for what he's learned playing chess.

such as decision making, planning ahead and understanding the consequences of one's actions, Lamphear wrote.

- **More info and to nominate someone:** Go to bensbells.org/BellingForm to submit a name. Go to bensbells.org or call 622-1379 for more info.

Winterhaven accepting food donations

ARIZONA DAILY STAR

Visitors to the 70th annual Winterhaven Festival of Lights are encouraged to bring food or monetary donations for the Community Food Bank of Southern Arizona.

The festival began Saturday and will continue through Sunday, Dec. 29, from 6 to 10 p.m. each night. Drive-through night this year is Sunday, Dec. 29.

There is no entrance fee for the festival, but attendees are asked to bring nonperishable food or make a monetary donation as they enter the area. Donations may be dropped off at the Fort Lowell, Country Club and Prince roads entrances.

This is the second largest food drive of the year for the food bank. Most needed items are



KELLY PRESNELL / ARIZONA DAILY STAR FILE/

This Winterhaven Festival of Lights is one of the Community Food Bank's largest food drives of the year.

cereal, oatmeal, peanut butter, canned tuna or chicken, canned vegetables, canned fruit, canned soups, canned tomato products, beans, pasta, rice, and nuts.

The food bank hopes to collect

60,000 pounds of food this year and surpass last year's collection of 56,238 pounds.

Donations can also be made online at www.communityfoodbank.org/winterhaven

Gospel Rescue Mission hosting annual community Christmas dinner

ARIZONA DAILY STAR

The Gospel Rescue Mission will host its annual Christmas dinner from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. Wednesday, Dec. 18.

The dinner will be at a new lo-

cation, the H.S. Lopez Family Foundation Center of Opportunity, 4550 S. Palo Verde Road.

The mission served its Thanksgiving dinner at the center for the first time and served more than

1,800 meals.

Guests will enjoy turkey, stuffing, mashed potatoes, gravy, mixed vegetables, fruit salad, cranberry sauce, rolls, pies and drinks.

The mission is still collecting donations of frozen turkeys; and cans of vegetables, fruit, and cranberry sauce.

Donations are being accepted at the Center of Opportunity, 4550 S.

Palo Verde Road, or at the Women's Recovery Center, 707 W. Miracle Mile.

The dinner is free and open to the community.

POWERING HOLIDAY SPIRIT



From hanging Christmas lights in Winterhaven to delivering meals and donating bicycles for foster children, TEP employees embrace many opportunities to give back during the holidays. While we volunteer all year, December is a special time for our employees to hold food drives, collect toys, and support other efforts to spread goodwill across Southern Arizona. It's a great way to cap off another year spent improving the quality of life in the communities we serve.

ARIZONA TAX CREDITS

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Editor: Debbie Kornmiller | 520-573-4127 | dkornmiller@tucson.com

Donations can help students solve the world's problems

By Julie Euber
CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER OF
SARSEF

- **What:** SARSEF
- **Where:** 4574 E. Broadway, Tucson, 85711
- **Phone:** 520-273-8259
- **Website:** sarsef.org

Are you stressed about everything you've been reading in this paper? Don't worry - SARSEF students have it covered.

Take Emily Ignatoff, a high schooler who is working on a new method to remove plastic from the ocean.

Meanwhile, a fifth-grade class at Nash Elementary School found the best solution for keeping their neighborhood clean.

And Wyatt Macias, who, as a second grader, braved the Tucson landfill to learn if worms were better at breaking down trash.

When you invest in SARSEF, you are investing in 95,000 kids making the Tucson community, even the world, a better place.

In the classroom, SARSEF teaches students to let their curiosity guide them to the solutions most needed in their lives and communities, empowering them to be problem solvers with science and engineering in their tool kits.

Peek in a cafeteria after school and you might see SARSEF students and parents working together to follow the research process and bond over their growing excitement.

And because SARSEF believes every child has the right to make a difference, we prioritize schools in areas of poverty and train teachers how to infuse critical thinking into their everyday lessons.

By going into 87 schools for free annually, SARSEF is providing students the skills they need for a lifetime of critical thinking and problem solving, no matter what field they pursue.

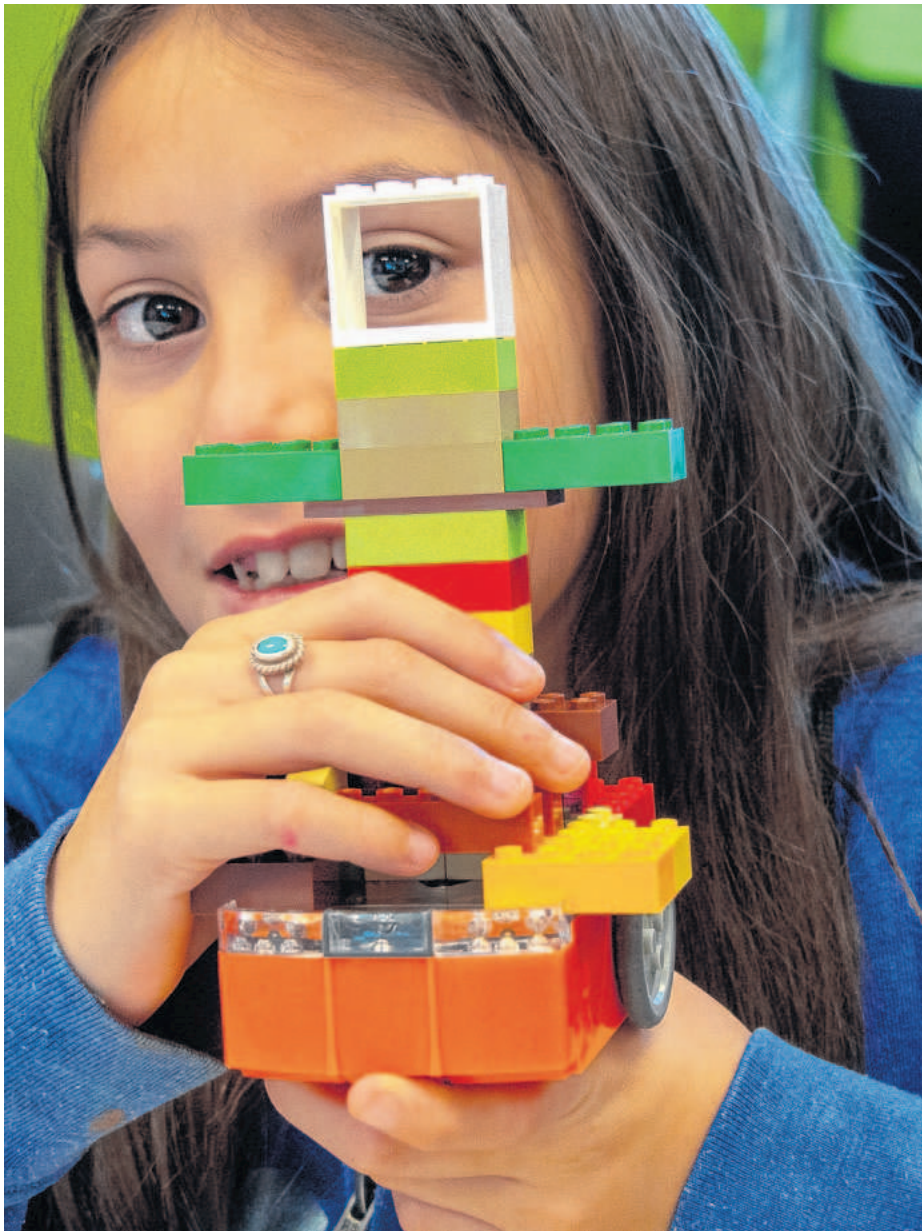
But these kids aren't just changing the world - they're changing themselves.

For Emily Ignatoff, the program has had an impact on her learning process and also more personal skill sets.

"I definitely used to be a lot more shy," Emily said.

Emily's mom, Elizabeth Ignatoff, has noticed the difference.

"Sometimes she still gets nervous, but as soon as she's speaking about her research, she lights up and is in her element. She's confident and comfortable,



ANN-EVE DINGELL

In the classroom, SARSEF teaches and guides students who are curious about the world to the solutions most needed in their lives and communities.

HOW IT WORKS

Arizona provides two separate nonrefundable tax credits for individuals who make contributions to charitable organizations: qualifying charitable organizations and qualifying foster care charitable organizations. Tax credits are also available for donations to schools.

These tax credits are a way for Arizona taxpayers to direct their taxes to organizations and causes that are important to them.

Individuals making cash donations may claim donations as tax credits up to the allowable amount on their Arizona Personal Income Tax returns.

Tax credits provide a dollar-for-dollar reduction of your Arizona income tax liability. This means that a \$400 tax credit saves you \$400 in taxes. On the other hand, tax deductions lower your taxable income and are equal to the percentage of your marginal tax bracket.

The allowable 2019 credit for contributions to qualifying charitable organizations is \$400 for single and head of household taxpayers and \$800 for married taxpayers filing a joint return.

and she even carries herself differently," she says.

The challenges presented to students through SARSEF, personal and academic, are better preparing them for college. SARSEF students at the University

of Arizona have a higher GPA than their peers.

With your tax credit, we can continue inspiring students like Emily. We focus our funding on providing free programming, training and supplies to Arizona

students and teachers.

With every \$400 donation, we can add one more school to our programming. With your donation, you will help grow the number of Arizona kids who can solve big problems.



The allowable 2019 credit for contributions to qualifying foster care organizations is \$500 for single and head of household taxpayers and \$1,000 for married taxpayers filing a joint return.

For a list of qualifying organizations and more information on these or school tax credits, see tucne.ws/taxcredits at the Arizona Department of Revenue website.

You can donate and claim the credit for 2019 up until April 15, 2020. For more details, consult your tax professional.

Feeding hungry is just one part of Sahuarita Food Bank's mission

By Penny Pestle

BOARD PRESIDENT,
SAHUARITA FOOD BANK

- **What:** Sahuarita Food Bank & Community Resource Center
- **Where:** 17750 S. La Cañada Drive, Sahuarita, 85629
- **Phone:** 520-668-0547
- **Website:** sahuaritafoodbank.org

The Sahuarita Food Bank & Community Resource Center serves Sahuarita, Green Valley and the surrounding rural areas. One in four residents of our region lives below economic self-sufficiency and one in eight children lives in poverty.

We feed the hungry and have a second mission of helping community members become economically secure.

The food bank started in a small closet and now serves up to 200 families a week. To meet increasing demand, we are building a 13,000 square foot facility.

When we finish construction in 2021, we will be the only food and service hub in Sahuarita. In addition to food distribution, we will offer health/nutrition, family support and workforce development programs.

Many people we serve have minimum-wage jobs or are unemployed. Our mission will begin to be fulfilled when we can serve more and more people like the recently divorced woman with a teenage son who

SHARE YOUR STORY

The Star is asking organizations in Southern Arizona that are certified as a qualifying charitable organization or as a qualifying foster care charitable organization or qualifying school or program to share their story with Star readers. If your organization would like to participate, please email Debbie Kornmiller at dkornmiller@tucson.com for details.

came to us for food.

Both she and her son seemed very depressed. After some weeks, she began to volunteer at the food bank. Then her son began to volunteer. After several months, her depression lifted and she showed what a great worker she is.

Today, she is married and employed 25 hours a week. This school year, she was able to buy her son a second pair of shoes and more than one T-shirt and pair of pants.

If you donate \$100, we'll provide hearty, protein-rich soup to 50 families. If you donate \$400, we can supply weekend emergency food to more than 100 school children who would otherwise go hungry.

And if you donate \$800, we will be able to run our hard-working truck and van for nearly two months or buy shelving for our new commercial kitchen.

"Many people we serve have minimum-wage jobs or are unemployed. Our mission will begin to be fulfilled when we can serve more and more people."



Volunteers at the Sahuarita Food Bank and Community Resource Center ready to distribute food.

Ironwood Elementary 4th graders experience hands-on field trips

By Karin Haile

IRONWOOD ELEMENTARY

- **What:** Ironwood Elementary
- **Where:** 3300 W. Freer Drive, Tucson, 85742
- **Phone:** 520-579-5150 ext. 7221
- **Website:** maranausd.org/taxcredit

As a fourth-grade teacher at Ironwood Elementary in the Marana Unified School District, tax credit donations are very much

appreciated.

They are applied toward our fourth graders' hands-on experiences and field trips.

The general public is often unaware that schools do not provide funds for field trips, so donations are essential to pay for the entry fees, materials and transportation, as we are also required to pay for the buses/gasoline per mile.

Our fourth graders' experiences include a trip back in time to the one-room schoolhouse in Tubac. During this visit, our dress and conduct reflect that of the 1880s.

We also take a hands-on educational tour of the picturesque Saguardo National Park (West) to learn about the early people of our Southern Arizona, the Hohokam.

We experience art and culture

on a tour of the Tucson Museum of Art. We've also taken trips to DeGrazia Gallery in the Sun Museum and, when our funds could support it, we'd camp under the stars at the Cooper Center for Environmental Learning.

Choosing to use Marana Unified School District's Credit for Caring is truly a win-win opportunity. Not only for our students,

who benefit from the experiences and opportunities, but those who donate and receive 100% of their gift back when they file their state income taxes.

Indicating "4th grade field trips at Ironwood Elementary" on the Credit for Caring form at maranausd.org/taxcredit will ensure your donation goes directly to this area of need.



Yes, It's True - You can pay less taxes and help your favorite charity!

In Arizona, you can choose where your money goes!

For more information or to donate now, visit



**GiveLocal
KeepLocal.org**

Arizona Charitable Tax Credit Coalition