

# TUCSON GIVING

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## Freecycle Post-Holiday Swap is days away

By Loni Nannini

SPECIAL TO THE ARIZONA DAILY STAR

If Marie Kondo-style mindfulness is your mantra as we usher in a new decade, consider gifting items that don't "spark joy" during the Annual Freecycle Post-Holiday Swap on Saturday, Jan. 25.

The swap will take place from 2 to 4 p.m. at the Woods Memorial Library, 3455 N. First Ave.

"This event is very helpful for people. One one hand, it is a great way to clean out the house and bring unwanted, reusable goods that are stuck in houses and transfer them to others who can use them. At the same time, it's part of the cycle of giving and helping the environment," said Graciela Robinson, coordinator of the event for the Woods Memorial Library.

The swap is one of two held annually at the library in conjunction with Freecycle, a Tucson-based nonprofit on a mission to "change the world one gift at a time."

Founded by Deron Beal in 2003, the organization is now the largest recycle and re-use web community worldwide, with more than 5,000 groups comprised of more than 9 million members in 100-plus countries.

Beal said [freecycle.org](http://freecycle.org) offers a free venue where members can give items they have and don't need and receive items they need and don't have.

"It is like Craigslist for free, with a healthy dose of community thrown in," he said.

Globally more than 32,000 items — about 1,000 tons — are gifted daily on [freecycle.org](http://freecycle.org).

"Those tons of items would otherwise go into landfills, so this website enables us to have one less landfill on the planet. If each single person decides to give away one little thing, it all adds up,"



COURTESY OF FREECYCLE 2019

Tucsonans have the opportunity to swap new and gently used items of all kinds at the Freecycle Post-Holiday Swap. "It is like Craigslist for free, with a healthy dose of community thrown in," says event founder Deron Beal.

### IF YOU GO

- **What:** Freecycle Post-Holiday Swap
  - **When:** 2 to 4 p.m. Saturday, Jan. 25
  - **Where:** Woods Memorial Library, 3455 N. First Ave.
  - **Cost:** Free
- Festivities include the opportunity to swap unwanted items in good condition for other items that attendees may want or need. A wide range of items are welcome, including books;

clothing for adults and children; household items and small appliances; electronics; holiday decor; toys; and games. Large items, such as refrigerators, sofas and motorcycles, are prohibited at the swap.

For more information, call 791-4010; visit [freecycle.org](http://freecycle.org) to learn more about other free gifting and recycling opportunities.

Beal.

Goods swapped include new and gently-used clothing for children and adults; books; toys; holiday decor; household items; small kitchen appliances; electronics; and a diverse array of smaller items that can be "easily carried into the event." Large items, such as sofas and major appliances, can't be accommodated and can be listed on [freecycle.org](http://freecycle.org).

Any items left over at the swap will be donated to Big Brothers Big Sisters of Southern Arizona and Suburban Miners.

"I feel like it is our Tucson ver-

sion of 'Boxing Day.' People have all this new stuff from the holidays and need to figure out what to do with their other stuff, so they can box it up and bring it down instead of taking it to a thrift store," Beal said.

"People often don't know that secondhand stores only sell about one-third of the items donated, so if you don't think it can be sold then it's better to find it a new home directly through [freecycle.org](http://freecycle.org) or the swap."

Contact freelance writer Loni Nannini at [ninch2@comcast.net](mailto:ninch2@comcast.net)



COURTESY OF GIRL SCOUTS OF SOUTHERN ARIZONA 2019

Cookies & Cocktails, at The Playground Bar and Lounge, features light appetizers and Girl Scout Cookie-inspired cocktails, along with cookie-and-wine pairings as well as pairings featuring cookies and craft beers.

## Girl Scouts fundraiser to pair cookies with wine, craft beer

By Loni Nannini

SPECIAL TO THE ARIZONA DAILY STAR

Smart cookies won't want to miss this downtown happy hour where they can raise a glass to support young entrepreneurs and leaders with Girl Scouts of Southern Arizona.

Cookies & Cocktails will be from 6 to 8 p.m. Wednesday, Jan. 29, at The Playground Bar and Lounge, 278 E. Congress St. The event features light appetizers and Girl Scout Cookie-inspired cocktails, along with cookie-and-wine pairings as well as pairings featuring cookies and craft beers. The evening is capped with cookie-themed desserts created by chefs from eight local restaurants including Villa Peru, Chef Chic, Penca, The Hub, Nook, Brother John's BBQ, Gourmet Girls Gluten Free Bakery/Bistro and Bottega Michelangelo.

"This is a wonderful fundraiser that brings focus to celebrating the largest girl-run business in the world. Many people know of our wonderful cookies, but they might not understand the entrepreneurship behind the program," said Kristen Garcia-Hernandez, deputy CEO of Girl Scouts of Southern Arizona.

The iconic Girl Scout Cookies Program, which delivered 300,000 boxes of cookies locally during the initial "cookie drop" last week, is designed to teach five important business skills: goal-setting, money management, decision-making, people skills and business ethics.

Garcia-Hernandez emphasized that the girls receive in-depth training in everything from personal interaction to crafting business pitches and marketing to time management and developing road maps in order to achieve goals.

"In 2020, they are also learning to use mobile apps to collect credit card payments and learning e-commerce. The girls can create online stores so their friends and family members can make purchases; they are learning the technology to take their

### IF YOU GO

- **What:** Cookies & Cocktails to benefit Girl Scouts of Southern Arizona
  - **When:** 6 to 8 p.m. Wednesday, Jan. 29
  - **Where:** Playground Bar and Lounge, 278 E. Congress St.
  - **Cost:** \$75 per person; the event has sold out in the past so advance tickets are recommended.
- Festivities include light appetizers, craft beer, Girl Scout Cookie-inspired cocktails; cookie-and-wine pairings; a wine wheel; a raffle and desserts hand-crafted by chefs from eight local restaurants. Each restaurant will prepare a dessert with a different Girl Scout Cookie theme. All proceeds benefit various programs of Girl Scouts of Southern Arizona. For more information or to buy tickets online, visit [www.girlscoutsofsoaz.org/cc](http://www.girlscoutsofsoaz.org/cc) or call 319-3178.

businesses to the next level," Garcia-Hernandez said.

The program also centers around business ethics and real-world concerns about customer service.

"You might wonder what a 6-year-old can learn about business ethics, but this covers everything from providing correct change to appropriately handling a situation if a customer gives you too much or too little money and striving for excellent customer service ... really being a true Girl Scout by being honest and fair," Garcia-Hernandez said. Overall, Garcia-Hernandez credits individuals and businesses within the community for the support that allows the organization to provide a multitude of opportunities in science, technology, engineering and mathematics; outdoors activities and life skills to 6,000 girls ages 5 through 17 in Southern Arizona.

Contact freelance writer Loni Nannini at [ninch2@comcast.net](mailto:ninch2@comcast.net)

## Free tax preparation services through VITA begin Jan. 30

ARIZONA DAILY STAR

The United Way's Volunteer Income Tax Assistance program begins Jan. 30.

The program provides free tax preparation services to individuals and families earning up to \$66,000 annually.

There will be seven sites open with volunteers who can assist in the preparation of tax returns.

The preparers are IRS-certified volunteers.

The VITA program is offered by the United Way of Tucson and Southern Arizona in collaboration with Catholic Community Services and the United Way of Northern Arizona.

Together it is the largest tax preparer in Arizona, serving nine of the state's 15 counties.

In 2019, nearly 16,800 tax returns were prepared by 450 volunteers. The efforts resulted in nearly \$27 million

in federal refunds to taxpayers, and about \$4 million in tax preparation costs saved.

The location of the VITA sites in the Tucson area are:

- Interfaith Community Services, 2820 W. Ina Road.
  - Goodwill Job Connection Center, 1703 W. Valencia Road.
  - City of Tucson Ward 3 office, 1510 E. Grant Road.
  - El Pueblo Neighborhood Center, 101 W. Irvington Road.
  - Quincie Douglas Community Center, 1575 E. 36th St.
  - Abounding Grace Lutheran Church, 2450 S. Kolb Road.
  - Ellie Towne Flowing Wells Community Center, 1660 W. Ruthrauff Road.
- For more information about the VITA program, the hours of the preparation sites and what documents are needed, visit [www.unitedwaytucson.org/vita](http://www.unitedwaytucson.org/vita).

### BEN'S BELLS



PHOTO COURTESY OF BEN'S BELLS

From left, Laurel Pollard, Linda Lou Williams, bellee Dr. Burris "Duke" Duncan, nominator Mitch Marcus, Kathy Olsen and Bob Effertz.

- **What:** Ben's Bells promotes kindness and community involvement. Each week a person who makes Tucson better is "belled."
- **Last week's recipient:** Dr. Burris "Duke" Duncan.
- **Nominated by:** Mitch Marcus.
- **Why:** For his commitment to public health education and initiatives in our communities. Duncan is a faculty member at the University of Arizona College of Public Health. Before retiring from private practice and joining the UA, his practice was primarily geared toward children with special health-care needs, cerebral palsy and micronutrient deficiencies. Duncan mentors master level students and teaches undergraduate and graduate

students of public health. Following a border conference on disabilities in Nogales, Mexico, he helped create ARSOBO, a cross-border collaboration to help individuals with disabilities return to society. People with disabilities construct medical devices for others that they themselves use. For example, those who use wheelchairs construct wheelchairs and those with a prosthetic limb fabricate prosthetics. "Dr. Duncan is an inspiration. Kindness, along with helping others, is his life's work," Marcus wrote.

• **For more information and to nominate someone:** Go to [bensbells.org](http://bensbells.org)/BellingForm to submit a name. Go to [bensbells.org](http://bensbells.org) or call 622-1379 for more information.



# ARIZONA TAX CREDITS

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Editor: Debbie Kornmiller | 520-573-4127 | [dkornmiller@tucson.com](mailto:dkornmiller@tucson.com)

## At Pusch Ridge, you can help make a difference

By Rachael Hallett

DIRECTOR OF MARKETING & COMMUNITY OUTREACH.  
PUSCH RIDGE CHRISTIAN ACADEMY

A new family moved to Arizona burdened with crushing health care costs due to crippling illnesses. Yet even with the financial instability at home, the children were able to attend Pusch Ridge Christian Academy because of scholarships available.

Their mother shared this:

“Without the scholarships available at the school, our family would not be able to send our girls to PRCA. We are ever grateful for the generous hearts of those who believe the gift of Christian education holds eternal value in each child it trains up and sends out as a light for Christ in the world.

“The financial support is a currency of grace and encouragement with tangible and eternal rewards. For a family like ours, with serious and chronic health challenges, donors literally become God making the way for our children. Thank you.”

You make the difference.

Tax credits make it possible for young people of all family income levels to enjoy the rich learning environment of Pusch

### HOW TO GIVE

- **What:** Pusch Ridge Christian Academy
- **Where:** 6450 N. Camino Miraval, Tucson, 85718 (Grammar)
- **Where:** 9500 N. Oracle Road, Tucson, 85704 (Upper)
- **Phone:** 520-797-0107
- **Website:** [prca.academy](http://prca.academy)

### SCHEDULE A TOUR

To schedule a tour go online to [prca.academy](http://prca.academy) or call 520-797-0107.

Ridge Christian Academy. Pusch Ridge Christian Academy is a K-12 school system serving Christian families from all over Tucson. Our mission is to teach students to become like Christ through a classical, Christian education within a covenantal community.

Our families come from economically diverse backgrounds. 90% of our students receive some form of scholarship assistance and 55% of Pusch Ridge Christian Academy revenue comes from tax credit scholarships for tuition. We rely heavily on Arizona tax

### 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.

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](http://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.

### 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](mailto:dkornmiller@tucson.com) for details.

and beyond our doors, as students thrive in active, project-based learning.

They may investigate ladybugs, grow food in the garden, build catapults, become scuba certified and do ocean cleanup, or solve real-world problems for organizations within our community.

Your tax credits provide a bright future for children who couldn't otherwise afford private, Christian education.

Pusch Ridge has been rated the No. 1 Christian high school in Arizona for three years and is an accredited institution through the Association of Christian Schools International and AdvancED.

credit donations to give the gift of Christian education to children and families in need.

Scholarships give students a biblically-based and rigorous academic education as well as access to competitive athletics and

thriving fine arts.

Servant leadership is encouraged, with students volunteering over 17,000 hours of community service per year, both locally and abroad. Expeditionary learning is incorporated in the classrooms

## Foundation helps reduce stress of caring for family members

By Bekki Booth

FAMILY CAREGIVER FOUNDATION

The Family Caregiver Foundation is an all-volunteer group made up of an estate planning attorney and a diverse group of people who either are or have been family caregivers.

Ninety percent of our funds go toward helping reduce stress for those who are caring for a terminally ill or disabled family member.

We provide everything from massage/mani-pedi's to home repairs, and respite care so a caregiver can get a couple of hours

### HOW TO GIVE

- **What:** Family Caregiver Foundation
- **Where:** 7739 E. Broadway, No. 155, Tucson AZ, 85710
- **Phone:** 520-528-0844

away to maybe watch a movie or go shopping or make a doctor's appointment for themselves.

We can also provide shoppers or someone to pick up and deliver meds or house cleaning. When we began, our thought was in the massage and personal-care field

to provide relaxation, but we have found that is not what all caregivers want or need.

Let me tell you about one of our donors who needed our services last year.

Lynn lost her husband about five years ago. Her son was born with cerebral palsy. He uses a wheelchair and has grown to be a good-size man. Lynn needs a lift to get him from the bed to his wheelchair. You can only imagine the amount of care this lady provides. She does have some people that come in, but this is a huge task.

On New Year's Day, her son was napping, so Lynn decided that it would be a good time to do some trimming in the yard. She got on a ladder to trim some tree branches.

The ladder slipped and down went Lynn, breaking her arm in two places. The neighbors got her to the emergency room and one stayed with her son. She needed surgery to pin her arm together.

All of her other family members live out of state and would need to catch a plane to get to Tucson quickly. And she couldn't ask people who have no experience in dealing with her son's condition.

Her stress level was very high.

She called the Family Caregiver Foundation and we were able to get a licensed caregiver with experience in taking care of someone with his disability over to the home right away. They were able to cover for her until family could get there. This was a great relief to her and allowed her to focus on healing.

Just knowing her son was being cared for by someone who knew how to meet his needs and was able to let her Facetime with him relieved her stress.

She made a full recovery.





feels like **home**

**PARADE of HOMES**

**SAHBA**

Arizona Daily Star

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# SAVE the DATE

## FEB 8 & 9 / FEB 15 & 16

• **23 Subdivisions** • **More than 85 model homes** • **Win Prizes**

## PARADE of HOMES

is a showcase of new homes throughout Tucson and the surrounding communities. This self-guided tour features homes with innovative ideas, the newest trends in home decorating, and much more!

### Participating Builders

- **Robson Resort Communities**
- **Richmond American Homes**
- **Lennar Homes**
- **KB Homes**
- **Pepper Viner Homes**
- **Mattamy Homes**

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