

Mayor's Monthly Message: August 2019

Last month, the Town of Florence issued 35 single family home building permits. This is the highest total since July 2009. They may exceed the totals of 2008. In addition, D.R. Horton has begun construction of their model homes on Hunt Highway, with a total of 305 lots.

Statewide numbers are looking good in terms of revenues. According to our Town Manager, Brent Billingsley and Assistant to the Town Manager, Benjamin Bitter, who attended a talk by a well-known economist who believes Arizona's economy will continue to grow into next year, followed by a stagnation period, and then a correction similar to that in 2000 where property values normalized.

The Town will continue to work with Central Arizona College to provide a Workforce Education Business Series. They will make some adjustments to offer business training and options for local business and government employers.

The Town set a number of records with regards to attendance, revenue, and new programs for the Aquatics Center. The Kids Club was successful and they are transitions to the Hanging After School Program. The After-School Program, which was previously provided by the Town, is now being offered by the Florence Unified School District. The Town was asked to provide a low-cost solution which evolved to the Hanging After School Program. To date, they have 36 students enrolled. There may be additional activities added per the request of parents. They now have an arts and music program, coding, and sports program.

Give-a Lift Program has received two more years of funding. There is a growing need and encourage others to volunteer. The Town of Florence Give-A-Lift program is dedicated to promoting independence and enhancing the quality of life to senior and disabled Florence residents by providing a no cost means of transportation to medical appointments. We serve Florence residents at least 55 years old and those with disabilities.

The Town of Florence Police Department has partnered with Pinal County for the use of their graffiti abatement truck. Police personnel would work with the Pinal County Sheriff's Office to identify and abate graffiti within the Town of Florence and on occasion assist PCSO. The Police Department will ensure that the equipment is kept in good working order and that only products and materials donated or purchased by the Police Department will be used.

The statistics show that every one in four homes have children that are hungry and do not have access to the food that they need. Brayden Biggs, United Way of Pinal County, discussed this need at the July 1, 2019 council meeting, as well as a peanut butter and jelly drive. At this meeting, Councilmember Cordes challenged the community to exceed the amount collected by Apache Junction (849 jars) and Casa Grande (2100 jars). The Town of Florence partnered with

the United Way, Florence Unified School District, and the Greater Florence Chamber of Commerce, in conjunction with all businesses and residents. I'm happy to report that the grand total collected by the community is 6,304 jars of peanut butter and jelly.

Those who helped collect peanut butter and jelly include:

- Core Civic
- Arizona Public Service
- Total Concept
- Sun City Anthem
- Parkside Anthem
- Florence Gardens
- Caliente Casa Del Sol
- Safeway
- Bucks for Style
- Florence Fudge Shop
- Arizona Department of Corrections – Eyeman Complex
- Pinal County Sheriff's Office
- American Leadership Academy
- Pinal County Uniforms
- Mosaic Church of the Nazarene
- Mount Athos
- American Legion Post #9
- Gila Valley #9
- American Masonic Lodge
- Heart J Ranch
- Town of Florence Officers
- Florence Copper
- Clark's Bees
- R & S Service and Supplies
- Sun Valley Solar

As always, there are great things happening in Florence, AZ. We have the best community and people! Stay safe and enjoy. 😊

Sincerely,
Tara Walter
Mayor of Florence, AZ
tara.walter@florenceaz.gov