

La Solana Town Crier

All the positive news that's fit to print.

Notes from Jan Smith, HOA President

Hop Into Spring



Hey Neighbor, we are Hopping into Spring and boy are we happy. We have Arizona Sun and the flowers are in bloom. I hope you have noticed the refurbished lollipop lights. With the lighting project on hold, Ole and Harold got busy. They painted and repaired the lollipop lights and what a difference. We cannot thank our volunteers enough. We don't have a definite date yet for our new benches to arrive but hopefully it will be soon. A volunteer team will be assembling and installing them when they arrive.

I'm constantly asked about the painting of our buildings. The Board is in the beginning stages of planning. This is a huge project that will take a year or longer to get it planned. We will be asking for residents to help and we will keep you updated. (Con't page 2)



Who Knew there was so much HAIR at La Solana? Our March 15th "50's, 60's, 70's" party brought it all out, along with the beads, leather, and psychedelic attire.

(Jan. Con't from page 1)

Let's Get Gardening

We have been told one of the most difficult decisions will be picking the color. Arizona brings to mind a lot of spectacular color choices and I'm sure, with resident input, we can select colors that will keep La Solana beautiful.

Exciting announcement. Jim Kauth, a certified Landscape and Water Management Expert will be doing a power point presentation, along with answering our questions about water usage on April 25 at 7pm, in the Clubhouse. Jim works with The Grand, ASU, and the Botanical Gardens, so is well qualified to assist us in understanding and planning. Please plan to attend. It's time for our winter residents to return to their other homes. We wish them a fun summer and look forward to their return in the fall. Let's continue hopping into Spring and enjoy the time outdoors.

Jan Smith



(L-R) Becky Panko, Barbara Pellegrino, Olivia Romaldo, and Terry Ward



La Solana has a new, very important, volunteer group.

The *Let's Get Gardening Group* is comprised of four ladies who live in La Solana year-round. They will be keeping our plant areas in the Atriums and outdoor pots clean and beautiful. We have volunteers caring for each building. We recently gave them each an apron, gardening tools, and gloves. It takes amazing volunteers to keep our community the Grand place to live we all

Important Meeting—Plan to Attend

Jim Kauth, The Executive Director for Aqua Trac, will be doing a power point presentation at La Solana. Jim is a water management, landscape expert, consulting with The Grand, ASU, and the Botanical Gardens, among other clients. He will be discussing water management for our area. He will entertain questions about our water usage, current and future, in La Solana.

Tuesday, April 25th. 7:30 PM. La Solana Clubhouse

Celebrations Abound at La Solana

Easter Dinner a Grand Success—so say 81 Residents



Pictured above (left to right): Kathy Vaughn, Lois Mumford, Vicki Johnson, Kim Bentley, Cheryl Enslin

They did it again. Our talented, and very organized, Social Committee volunteers put on a fabulous Easter celebration dinner. All 81 attendees brought tasty, and plentiful, dishes assuring no one left hungry. There was a wide assortment of main and side dishes, plenty of desserts, and beverages to everyone's liking. Since lifting all of the Covid restrictions our clubhouse has been getting some serious use, and we all say, Hallelujah! Have an idea for a party? Bring it on. Just because our snow birds are leaving, it doesn't mean the club house shuts down. Volunteer to chair or assist and the event can go on the calendar. See you in the Clubhouse. PS. Don't tell anyone, but the Clubhouse is air-conditioned and a great place to hang



The Smiths Fall for The Falls

Always looking out for the residents at La Solana, Jan and LeRoy Smith were among the first to sample the food and beverage offerings at our new Falls restaurant. "It is such a beautiful place in a beautiful setting," Jan reported inviting all of us to "come on down" and enjoy.

Reminder: the restaurant is still new and working out a few kinks. Be kind to the wait staff. A smile and patience goes a long way toward improving the service and offerings. Reservations are

Your Opinion Counts

The volunteer Board-of-Directors at la Solana don't govern in a vacuum, hiding behind closed doors, making decisions in secret. We are fortunate to have a Board that is both interested in what the residents have to say and transparent at the same time. To learn more about current residents' thinking the Board conducted a survey with residents' responses recorded, analyzed, and reported back. Already changes in response to the survey are under way, with more to come.

220 residents responded between January 14th and 23rd. Of the 220 respondents, 40% have owned at la Solana for five years or less and 51% for six or more years. What follows is a very brief summary, questions selected by the editor. The full report can be found on the LaSolanaLiving.org website.

- Why people move to LaSolana:
- Beautiful condos
- Location
- Amenities
- Pricing
- Social activities

- **Miscellaneous:**
- **Needed updates/improvements appearance & maintenance**
- **More benches & gathering places**
- **Vast majority find living here safe**
- **Overwhelming majority say community is welcoming**
- **Very few positive responses to volunteering for governance positions**



Just Getting it Done!

It looks like we'll be living with our lollipop lights for a while longer since we can't even get contractors to bid on the project.

Big thank you to Ole Borgen (Grand Forks, North Dakota) and Harold Enslin (Alberta, Canada) who jumped right in and did some interim scraping, painting, strengthening to keep those old lights from falling over.

La Solana is a community, not just 7 buildings and a club house. We help one another, we volunteer. Thank you both for giving those old lights some extra life

Meet the Unofficial Mayor of La Solana—

Nancy Johnson



In 1931, the Empire State Building opened in New York. The Star Spangled Banner became the national anthem and devastating droughts turned the Great Plains into the Dust Bowl.

Less noted, a tiny premature girl was born that year in Iron Mountain, MI. Placed in a shoebox on the open door of the Frangquist family’s wood burning stove, she wasn’t expected to live through the night.

Yet—if you’ve encountered a cheerful lady with a little dog near the fountain between buildings 6 and 7—you know that baby survived.

She’s Nancy Johnson, La Solana’s oldest resident and she’ll celebrate her 92nd birthday April 19.

Nancy left Michigan for Wisconsin after she married Russell Johnson. Despite early struggles, they eventually built a business that allowed them to retire early, travel, settle in Arizona, and make many new friends.

Music fueled Nancy’s existence. From her high school trio The Blondettes; to barbershop quartets, church choirs and musical theater productions with Russ; to several vocal groups in Grand, singing was one of her greatest joys.

Family is her other treasure. Her two children, a huge contingent of Swedish relatives, and three grandchildren bring her more happiness than one heart can hold.

After Russ died, Nancy downsized to this condo. Ushering for Coyotes hockey, she turned ticket-holders into more new friends. She worked until she was 89 when the pandemic hit, closing the arena and curtailing choruses and choirs.

These last three years have been quieter. But she still enjoys chatting with everyone passing by while she and her dog Violet enjoy the sunshine.

Question: at 15 years old, is Violet La Solana’s oldest

Please send your community news, ideas, tidbits, and stories to the editor:
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La Solana resident Lisa Minton had a dream—to gather knitters and crocheters who are willing to share their skills, hone their craft, teach others, and socialize around a project. Since its inception the group has been meeting on Tuesday afternoons from 1-3 in the Clubhouse. In the background, the members are holding a lap blanket crocheted by Lisa. Current members Lisa Minton, Madelyn Truett, Kathy Vaughn, Barbara Magnusson, Kathy Collier, Judy Climan are inviting all residents to drop by any Tuesday. All needleworkers are welcome.

PS: men also knit, crochet, do needlepoint. Just think retired football player Posey Grier.



Doings Around Grand Worth Noting

Our Grand Board of Directors election is over with nearly 44% of residents voting. The Board officers are: Rene Mitchell, President; Carol White, Vice-President; Bob Aiken, Treasurer; Jeff Gibbs, Secretary.

Of note: The community garden is currently on hold. The proposed basketball court will have a trial run soon, most likely using an existing tennis court. The Village Center phase 2 and the Desert Springs socialization area are moving along.

Big news: Space is always an issue. An external consulting firm has been assessing our use of space (indoor and outdoor) for two years and will be presenting a comprehensive summary of findings at a public town hall April 17th from 2-4 PM (location to be announced). The town hall meeting will be recorded and available for viewing on the Grand website within 48 hours of the live meeting.

We are making progress in being recognized by Grand as one of the 47 neighborhoods. Communications department head Chris Hinton assures us that the condos will be featured, along with houses and villas, in the new website. Info will be available in the area designed for those researching active adult communities as part of the options available for living in the Grand.