



Friends of Carefree, now, more than ever, **Carefree's Future Matters**. While most of the world was hunkered down, locked down, or in quarantine for the past two years, the town administration went on a wild and reckless spending spree.



More on this topic later in this edition.

In the upcoming, critically important August 2nd Carefree Primary Election, you will have what may be the last opportunity to set Carefree back on a course of responsible government, with responsible development. You can vote for a new administration to represent all Carefree residents, not just those Les Peterson needed to get re-elected in 2018. There will be an opportunity to meet some of the new, 'non-Peterson-selected slate' candidates who will be on the Ballot. These

candidates will attend a meet & greet event hosted by Vickie Orrico in **Carefree Consignments** (inside the Carefree post office building, 100 Easy St, Carefree), next Wednesday May 11 at 5:30 P.M.

It is not too late to overcome the huge blunders caused by self-serving town officials. Three members of the Town Council and four members of the Planning & Zoning Commission have failed to recuse themselves from discussions and voting on projects from which they will personally benefit. A thorough house-cleaning in Carefree is long overdue. The way to overcome the 'block' of voters Les Peterson bought in 2018 with his pledge to deliver Carefree water to them, is by your vote. **Apathy in this election may be the end of Carefree as you once knew it.**

Before you vote in the August Primary, remember the \$32,000,000 debt (so far) Peterson's slate recently dumped on the shoulders of all Carefree residents for the next 3 decades. Also remember the Interstate Highway Hotel he brought to the iconic Sundial and Carefree Gardens – 16 miles from an Interstate. Think about cozy land deals, relationships with developers, and the development plans that could forever change our landscape and major roadways. Who the hell wants to change well established and well-traveled Tom Darlington and Cave Creek Roads into one lane bottlenecks? A fool, a madman, or perhaps the Peterson administration, that's who. And don't forget, his personally appointed Public Service committee has recommended implementing **a Carefree specific Property Tax** – an insult to injuries already inflicted, and his going away present to Carefree residents.

I can sense that some of you are thinking, 'but Les Peterson is not running in this election.' If you really believe this election has not been carefully crafted by him, or that it will not be guided by him, then you have not been paying attention over the past 8 years. As mayor, and behind the scenes, he set in motion John Crane's lawsuit which eventually led to the removal of the voter approved Term Limits statue in Carefree, so that John Crane could remain on the ballot even though he and Mike Farrar were scheduled to be termed-out. Farrar had the integrity not to join in that lawsuit and instead chose to run against Peterson for mayor, which he was legally permitted to do. Attaining 43% of the vote was quite an accomplishment for Farrar, given the close to the 1,000 votes the mayor bought with the water promise.

Recently there has been talk that Les, once again, has his sights set on a higher office. Failing to secure an appointment to fill a vacancy on the Arizona Corporation Commission several years ago, he learned a valuable lesson. It is said that he has been seeking advice from one of the major political parties on how to advance his 'public service' goals. You probably realize that \$25 or even \$100 campaign contributions would not cut it. He probably learned that many candidates aspiring to higher County or State positions are well financed by developers who have the much deeper pockets. Back scratching is very popular in certain circles.

Before I get back to the **'wild and reckless spending spree'** segment, there is a final point that needs to be addressed.

In the last print edition of The Sonoran News, the mayor chose to pen a lengthy rebuttal to a letter written by a Carefree resident which was critical of certain policies or decisions made by the Peterson administration. The rebuttal was well written, in a self-righteous, high and mighty tone one has come to expect. As I read that gem, I recalled something a very wise business executive told me early in my Information Technology career. Paraphrasing only slightly, she said, when trying to sell a project, or an idea for a project, keep in mind that the most convincing lies are those woven with elements of the truth. There were, in fact, several elements of the truth in the mayor's rebuttal. What was lacking was one detail he very consciously chose not to include. ***He never asked people like you,*** the voters that had nothing to gain other than \$32,000,000 in debt, if they approved of his plans for the 'water transition' project. He specifically told his supporters, those with something to gain, point blank that they would not want him to put the plan to a vote, in part he said, "No... because you are the 20% and they are the 80%." I have attached, once again, a short recording from a Q&A session in which the mayor took part. I think I'll include it in every CFM edition until after the election. Our voters should be reminded of what Les Peterson said, and the debt he is leaving them.

"The only thing necessary for the triumph of evil is that good men do nothing."

Attribution not verified; Not JFK and Not Edmund Burke. I attribute it to Common Sense!

Continued from earlier in this edition...

By obtaining \$18,000,000 in bonds, which over 30 years will total over \$32,000,000 in payments, the town incurred three decades of totally unnecessary debt.

All this, and other expenses, was done to give approximately 20% of Carefree residents, 'Carefree Water'. During the years that the *current* Carefree water customers suffered through the bumps, bruises, and the highest water rates in the State of Arizona to create the system we have today, the 20% who have recently demanded 'Carefree Water" **were silent**. There was no clamor for representation, no noise about dirty water, not a peep or whimper. Not until the Cave Creek water company, after more than 10 years of significantly lower rates, began to raise those rates to improve their system, did the noise begin. Tony Geiger, who is now a council member in Carefree, began his campaign to get the mayor's support long before the 2018 election. He eventually delivered the votes that saved Les Peterson re-election hopes. And Geiger did so by promising the 20% they could get into the Carefree water system for free. If asked to pay the freight on their transition into the system with an Improvement District tax, how many do you believe would agree?

This administration, and the members running for re-election may think the battle they have been waging for almost 4 years is over. They would be wise not to count their chickens just yet. During the current mayor's 8-year reign, and the 2.5 years as a council member before that, he may have already freely spent more town funds on lawyers and law firms than all his predecessors combined. Why not, it is only other people's money right? In just the years **2018 through December 2021**, the mayor has spent **\$2,061,792.03 in total legal expenses, with over \$1,753,067.48 specifically charged to the so-called "water transition project"**, his giveaway to get re-elected in 2018.

One final note. A 1.3 acre vacant lot located on the corner of E Cave Creek Road and Northview Lane, at the north-eastern end of Carefree, was briefly on the market for \$395,000. I just found out that it is currently in escrow. The contested 'eminent domain' situation in The Boulders is far different. Any municipality that wishes to use 'eminent domain' to seize private property, must pay "just compensation". How mayor Peterson and Mary Roberts (a former President of the Boulders North HOA) arrived at a price of \$20,100 as "just compensation" for about an acre of land in The Boulders is astonishing. That parcel, which I have dubbed The Peterson / Geiger Money Pit, is pictured in my opening. It sounds

more like theft than “just compensation”. If someone told me that a carport in The Boulders would cost more the 20 grand, I’d believe it. No wonder that situation has been in litigation until very recently, while the town’s legal bills continue to pile up in 2022. I’m not sure how the town/water company was allowed to begin construction at the site before the legal transaction is completed. But, hey, Welcome to Carefree!

Respectfully submitted by John Traynor

Notice: In addition to reporting *facts*, this Newsletter may contain the author’s perspective on topics or events affecting Carefree residents. That perspective may not be popular with the mayor, council members, staff, town attorney, a certain blogger, or her sycophantic followers . The fact is, I don’t care what they think.

If we lived in a perfect world, we would need but one newspaper.

God Bless America.

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Carefree, what life should be!

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