



Friends of Carefree, It is with great sadness, and a sense of true loss, that I inform you of Jim Van Allen's passing Saturday afternoon, October 7th.

*In Memory of
Councilman James Van Allen
11/7/1937 - 10/7/2017*

Personal Note: In the stream of life I guess you could say that I didn't know Jim very long, just about 6 years. Sure, I knew of him prior to that from his service with the MCSO Posse, and as a dedicated volunteer with the Chamber of Commerce and at various Carefree events. I had even been stopped and lectured by him for 'rolling' through a stop sign near my home. Jim was tough. He followed the rules and expected others to do likewise. Besides tough he was honest, decent, and dedicated to Carefree, giving generously of his personal time. Some might disagree, especially those unrelenting in their personal attacks and criticism of him, even during his last days. Some may breathe easier knowing that Jim won't be watching or questioning any longer. Carefree residents have lost a truly dedicated friend and representative.

*I may not have known Jim very long, but I knew him fairly well...
He'll still be watching.*

[Editor's comment: Since publication of my prior newsletter, which covered the September Council meeting (held August 29th) there has been a great deal of what can only be described as 'trash talk' by the Town's vindictive termagant and her now prolific, mean-spirited letter writing husband. During that meeting a 6 to 1 majority of the Council approved the first- ever very tall apartment complex within our Town Core. They did so without any concrete information on which to base their approval - none, other than hope & trust.

You know that I have written regarding issues and/or situations in contrast with official town positions. The Hitchons, with the apparent silent blessing from Town Hall, have once again become the Carefree attack dogs for perceived enemies or obstacles. There is no nicer way to describe their actions. Anyone who hears or reads only one side of a story lacks a complete perspective upon which to base their conclusions. If you haven't already, I encourage you to read '[Zoning for Dollar\\$](#)' and '[Where's The Beef This Time](#)'. More will be forthcoming.

One of the nicer things said about me by certain Carefree bigots is that I'm a 'glass half empty' kind of guy, or that I'm against everything in Carefree. ***The truth is*** that I want to understand why the glass is half full, ***or*** half empty. I don't blindly swallow the party line and smile. Regarding that party line, you may be seeing a lot of feel good, 'happy' news floating around lately with more surely on the way. Happy news is excellent, if it is fact-based and true.

During the coming week I will prepare a more detailed account of events since August 29th, including the unprecedented character assault on a Carefree Council member in the most personal and demeaning manner imaginable, especially considering that Councilman Van Allen is hospitalized and not in a position to confront his attackers.]

October Town Council Meeting, October 3, 2017 at 5:00PM - Mayor Peterson mentioned that Councilman Van Allen was absent. [He did not mention that the Councilman had undergone hip replacement surgery. There was no expression of concern or good wishes from the Mayor or any other member of the Council during the meeting.]

Items 1 - 14 Consent Agenda: These items were all related to routine town business (meeting minutes, bills, financial reports, event permits, etc.). The Mayor reviewed each item, before asking if any item should be held for discussion. Hearing no request, he called for a motion and subsequent vote. All 14 consent items were approved, 6 - 0.

The Mayor spoke of a tumultuous month in America, with Hurricanes and the senseless carnage in Las Vegas. He asked that everyone to reflect on those events during a moment of silence. He then announced that Town Clerk, Kandace French, had recently been engaged.

Item 15, Call to the Public: No one spoke.

Item 16, Current Events: Mayor Peterson announced that Sales tax revenue was up 25% over the prior year, for the months of July and August to begin the new fiscal year. He asked Jim Keen to discuss the change. Jim said the increase was due primarily to Construction permits/fees associated with new home construction. He stated that there were also gains in the Retail sector. The Mayor added that this was an encouraging sign for the new fiscal year, coming during what have traditionally been slow summer months.

[A review of the Town financial detail revealed that Local Sales tax increased 16.4% in July compared to last year with State Sales tax adding an additional 8.4%. The combination of the Sales tax increase, Water Company loan repayment to the town, and an increase in Utility Franchise fees all contributed to a Total Revenue increase in July of 29.4% above the prior year, a surprisingly strong showing. For August, Local Sales tax was 13.9% higher than in the prior year with the State Sales tax adding 8.6%. Total revenue for August was 3.5% above last year's figures.]

Council member Kroyer outlined a list of positive achievements that have occurred in Carefree in recent times. I'll take a figurative breath and... Eastwood sold 3 homes in the last two weeks and expects to be sold out by year end; sale of the Carefree Resort has closed and a new health/wellness facility with major renovations is on the way; Spanish Village is now 85% occupied (or will be) when the new Bacan restaurant opens sometime this

year; Food Network magazine has spotlighted the Carefree Pumpkin Festival, a big (free) publicity boost for Carefree; volunteers are needed for the festival; Thunderbird Art shows kick off in November; the Carefree resort was host to the recent Arizona Chamber of Commerce meeting; Gina does an amazing job on town events; Gary Neiss is on top of it all, overseeing months of work. Council member Kroyer then introduced Gina Kaegi, Marketing Director.

Gina discussed the upcoming Pumpkin Festival (the 3rd) in more detail and thanked those who had or will contribute to the event in major ways. Another breath, here goes... New Trunk and Treat event; Arts & Crafts once again sponsored by Councilman Orrico and his talented wife Victoria; Venues to supply pies for the pie eating contest; the Carefree Coffee Roastery is a big asset; Ray will have 4 or 5 pumpkin carvers from all over the world and has secured yet another 500 pound pumpkin for carving; there will be a new inflatable corn maze; there will be an adult dress-up contest; Gina estimated the Food Network ad to be worth \$95,000; donations have kept event free; go to www.CarefreePumpkinGarden.com for all event info.

Councilman Farrar, our representative to MAG (Maricopa Association of Governments) has invited all the Mayors to the Pumpkin Garden. He experienced a ride-along with our MCSO Town car Deputy and never realized how difficult the job could be. He also mentioned that on 10/19 Corrado's restaurant will host the October meeting of the Italian American club, a social event open to everyone, Italian or not! Chef Corrado will prepare a special meal for the evening.

Mayor Peterson added that the entire staff keeps the town going. He said that marketing, land planning, and development have generated over \$90M in investments in Carefree. There's lots of excitement about Spanish Village. He said that Mesa, with a population greater than Minneapolis, would have trouble putting on an event like Carefree with just one staff person.

Item 17, Ollie the Trolley: Councilman Farrar presented a plan to provide **free** local trolley service between points in Cave Creek and Carefree. The materials show that the service would operate weekends from December through April. The Saturday & Sunday hours of operation were listed as 11AM to 9PM. The route would stretch from Rancho Mañana to the Carefree Resort on a 30 minute cycle. The monthly cost was estimated to be \$6,600, with sponsorship opportunities both inside and outside the trolley as well as a 'fee' for special trolley stops that may be requested by potential business sponsors.

Councilman Farrar explained the hope was for both towns and local merchants in each town to support 1/3 of the cost, or \$2,200 per month. There were a variety of questions and comments raised by Councilmembers Krahe and Kroyer. As the discussion continued, it appeared that the plan was still in a state of flux. The Council eventually voted to approve (6 - 0) a total of \$11,000 (*1/3 of the season cost*) contingent on Cave Creek doing likewise and the merchants in both locales contributing the remaining \$11,000 for this season's trial operation.

Item 18, Executive Session: The public meeting ended at approximately 6:01PM when the Council voted to go into Executive Session for private discussion.

Item 19, Adjournment: Time N/A.

In general, you can reach all Council members by email; Council@Carefree.org
and Mayor Les Peterson at Mayor@Carefree.org

Respectfully submitted by John Traynor

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