

## NOVEMBER 2011 NEWSLETTER COLUMN

Ahhhh November. What a glorious month! Fall sports (minus the NBA – sigh), cool to chilly nights and delightful days (and snow events in other parts of the country), and gentle pressures are beginning to gnaw on the compulsive shoppers in our families as the number of days before Christmas dwindle in an alarming fashion.

Before I move too far into this month's column, I'd like to remind everyone that the first part of November is very special – it has nothing to do with food or retail sales, but it has everything to do with our existence as the United States of America and our democratic society. In 1919, then President Wilson declared November 11 as Armistice Day and envisioned a pause in the day's business at all levels at 11:00 a.m. Following his lead, Congress passed HR7786 and when President Eisenhower signed the bill on June 1, 1954, Armistice Day officially became Veterans Day. The official moment for observing this day is the 11<sup>th</sup> hour of the 11 day of the 11<sup>th</sup> month.

This year Veterans Day events begin with the 5<sup>th</sup> Annual Veterans Day Parade on November 5<sup>th</sup> at 9 a.m. in downtown Casa Grande. The parade will enter Florence Boulevard at Brown Avenue and travel west to Florence Street, before turning south to Second and then back east before dissolving. The intrepid aviators of the Arizona Antique Aircraft Association will perform a fly-over of the route at 9 a.m. to start the parade. Later that day, members of the Pinal County Veterans Memorial Foundation will dedicate the site of a future Memorial Wall that will honor Pinal County Veterans who've died in the service of our country. Taking place at the entrance to the Paul Mason Sportsplex, the ceremony will begin at 2 p.m.

Later that same day (6 p.m.), there will be a fundraiser for the Memorial project in the Paramount Theater in downtown Casa Grande. Then on November 9<sup>th</sup>, Pinal County will honor the county's veterans with a ceremony in front of Building A of the County complex in Florence that will begin at 2 p.m. VFW Post 1677 will perform a special flag ceremony at 11:11 a.m. on Friday, November 11<sup>th</sup> and the Arizona Workforce Connection (part of our local DES office) will be dedicating a one-stop facility for the exclusive use of veterans and their spouses on November 15<sup>th</sup> at 10 a.m.

The City of Maricopa will honor veterans as well. On the 11<sup>th</sup>, there will be: a flag-raising ceremony at Rotary Park at 8:30 a.m. with members of the Maricopa VFW and American Legion presiding; at 10:30 a.m. Chances for Children is sponsoring a public 1K Walk or Run at Rotary Park in support of veterans; and at 12:30 p.m. the City and the Maricopa Rotary Club will hold a BBQ for veterans and their families -- and the general public.

The City also announced its own Operation Welcome Home and the Council honored a Maricopa service member recently returned from an overseas deployment. It's a program the City hopes to continue throughout the year.

Our veterans and their families deserve our thanks and our support every day of the year – but especially on these days and during these ceremonial events. I hope to see you there.

Speaking of very special people, I'd like to encourage everyone to consider a donation of non-perishable food (i.e. canned or dried or packaged) or money to the food bank of your choice. We are seeing more and more demand for the commodities that our food banks distribute on a weekly basis. And the scary thing is that in some instances, the faces in the lines waiting for a food box belong to people who just a year or so ago were volunteering their time and energy on the other side of the distribution table.

Why am I asking for your assistance now? Hunger is not a holiday thing – it respects no calendar and doesn't care if the hungry one is an innocent child or a totally-down-on-their-luck adult. Please consider making a donation of canned goods, money, and/or time to your local food bank on a regular basis. Think of it as paying it forward because you never know.

For those of you involved in either starting up or keeping the doors open on a small business, here's a great opportunity. CAC's Small Business Development Center, in conjunction with the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA), will be holding SBA Loan Clinics on the first Wednesday of every month for the foreseeable future. These loan clinics are designed to help entrepreneurs learn about SBA loans (how to estimate loan costs, prepare a loan application, find sources of capital, find banks that are interested in small business loans, etc.).

The SBA Loan Clinics are physically held in the SBA offices at 2828 N. Central Avenue (Suite 800) in Phoenix from 9 to 11 a.m. However, if driving into Phoenix is not convenient, you can call 602.745.7200 to register and then view the clinic at <http://www.readytalk.com> – access code is 3626204 and phone in number is 866.740.1260.

One last thought before I close: naturally most of us associate the Thanksgiving holiday with November. For the most part so do I. But the events of last year's Thanksgiving season gave me pause and helped redefine it. Early last November I travelled to Peoria, Illinois where my folks live and I grew up. My sister Kathie, who lives in Peoria, and my brother Myk, who lives in Chicago, came to the family home and we had a very special weekend of togetherness. I returned to Casa Grande that Monday – and received word at the end of the week that my father had passed in his sleep at the age of 94.

I can't tell you how much I now cherish my remaining family and all my friends – I'm thankful for the moments that we have together and the influences they've had on me and my life. And I thank you for letting me share this time with you and for allowing me to serve you in this capacity.

God Bless Pinal County, and the United States of America.

**David Snider**, Supervisor  
Pinal County District 3