



## **Town of Carefree, Mayor Les Peterson Carefree Becoming a Social and Cultural NE Valley Destination**

Carefree is rapidly becoming the social and cultural hub of the vibrant NE Valley. With a walkable downtown area focused around the picturesque Carefree Desert Garden, vibrant new businesses are opening and existing businesses provide an outstanding complement to the wide assortment of native plants in the Garden and the continuing series of signature events and concerts held regularly in the downtown area. Many residents and visitors enjoy strolling through the Garden and shopping for the goods offered in the quaint shops and dining at the many fine restaurants located in close proximity to the Garden.

The new culture and “vibe” of downtown Carefree is very promising, attractive and exciting to the entire community. As the Mayor, I’m pleased to see entrepreneurs working together to make their businesses thrive. People attract people, and that’s in alignment with our core marketing strategy of executing signature events that support building a strong economic engine while maintaining the culture, cultivating social opportunities and taking advantage of the unparalleled landscapes of Carefree.

Carefree has long been known as a mecca for artists and craftspeople, a town of unsurpassed quality of life and the location of gracious homes positioned on spacious properties. Many don’t realize there is **no town property tax** which makes it even more appealing to purchase a home. In recent years, the market has asked us for a **selection of high quality, smaller single story homes** in the 2,200 to 2,500 square foot range so when the newest Eastwood development by Keystone Homes contacted us we were happy to have a solution. After a few short months, they have sold 40% of their inventory already. There is also a **new luxury apartment** project planned in the town core, attracting people to our downtown, pedestrian friendly environment.

The Town is anxiously waiting the arrival of a new sustainable **wellness resort** in 2018 along with a new health conscious restaurant on the property which is now the Carefree Resort & Conference Center. The transformation will be very evident when the project is finished. There are more projects in the works and we anticipate experiencing more interest from regional and national restaurants and businesses realizing there is a high income demographic looking for “new” experiences in the area year round. Seasonality will be a word of the past.

A recent real estate purchase in downtown Carefree with an interesting past, is the **Historic Spanish Village**. Since being acquired, it has been renovated and is now experiencing a resurgence of viable tenants interested in the culture and activity generated by the new landlord, Raskin & Associates. Raskin

has brought in a new restaurant owner with 30 years of experience, creating a new casual upscale, modern Latin table restaurant called **Bacán**, slated to open this coming November.

I would be remiss without mentioning our two signature events that turn the Carefree Desert Gardens into the **Enchanted Pumpkin Garden** from October 20 – 29. This Halloween event was ranked *Best of the Valley* by *Phoenix Magazine* for 2015 & 2016 featuring pumpkin carvings from world renowned artist Ray Villafane. The 10<sup>th</sup> Annual **Christmas in Carefree**, December 1<sup>st</sup> – 23<sup>rd</sup>, will again feature 30 tons of real snow, a Christmas Market, Christmas performances every weekend, along with the legendary Carefree Christmas Parade on December 9<sup>th</sup>.

Carefree is advantageously located in the lush Foothills of the Continental Mountains, a short drive north of Scottsdale and Phoenix. At an elevation of 2700 feet, Carefree is noticeably cooler than many surrounding communities and is situated in a prime location of the Sonoran Desert which displays its peak vegetation throughout the spring and summer. Carefree is also the gateway to the Bartlett Lake recreation area, and many adjacent communities, parks and natural attractions, making it a perfect destination.

We invite you to come and see for yourself everything that Carefree has to offer. **VisitCarefree.com**