

Closing for holiday

The offices of the Town of Fountain Hills will be closed Tuesday, Jan. 1, for the New Year holiday.

The Community Center and Senior Center will also close on New Year's Day.

The Fountain Hills Library will close Monday, New Year's Eve, at 5 p.m. and will be closed for the day on Tuesday.

The Fountain Hills School District will be on winter break and offices

will be closed throughout the holidays.

Schools return to session Monday, Jan. 7.

Bank branches in Fountain Hills will be closed for the holiday.

Republic Services will take the holiday from trash collection, but will collect the remainder of the week on a one-day delay. Tuesday customers will be collected on Wednesday, etc. through the week.

Safety

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Fire officials said there were two patients treated for minor injuries and take to the hospital for further evaluation.

* A cellular transmission tower in Fountain Hills disguised to look like a saguaro cactus was destroyed by fire on Monday morning, Aug. 6.

The tall plume of black smoke rising from the site attracted a lot of attention.

Firefighters were called to the scene shortly after 11 a.m. to the area off Technology Drive south of Shea Boulevard.

The molded fiberglass tower, operated by AT&T, has been standing in the desert site for several years.

The fire did not extend to the desert area around the tower.

It was determined the fire started when leaking oil from a transformer was ignited.

* A Scottsdale physician was killed when a hit and run driver struck his bicycle on Shea Boulevard in Fountain Hills Sunday, Oct. 14, shortly after noon.

The cyclist was travel-

ing westbound just east of Palisades Boulevard when he was struck from behind by the motorist.

Shortly after arriving at the scene, deputies received another report from a motorist who provided the license plate number to a vehicle seen on Shea Boulevard near 134th Street with the driver checking front end damage.

Using the license plate information, deputies located the suspect, who was identified as an employee at the Target store in Fountain Hills.

He was booked into the 4th Avenue Jail on a Class 2 felony of leaving the scene of a fatal traffic collision.

*Fountain Hills firefighters were called to a residence on Montrose Drive early Thursday afternoon, Nov. 1, when smoke was reported coming from under the eaves of the house.

Fire Capt. Don Deasy said roofers were working at the house and hot tar apparently got under the eaves and into insulation.

Deasy said firefighters removed a portion of the roof to make sure no fire had spread in the attic area.

Ten

(cont. from page 1A)

by the town for the agreement lapsed and mixed messages were being sent by potential developers about the project's status.

Construction was to have started this past summer. Various movie theater proposals have come and gone through the years on Avenue of the Fountains.

4. Elections

The year 2012 proved quite a year for elections, starting with Town Council races in the spring.

Political rhetoric was ramped up with a recall election involving incumbent Henry Leger, but he soundly defeated his lone opponent.

Mayor Linda Kavanagh took office unopposed, and Cecil Yates joined the council as well.

The fall brought legislative, county and federal races along with a crowded School Board race.

Dr. C.T. Wright and Dr. Bill Mullaney will remain on the board, while Jill Reed will be a new member on the panel.

Congressman David Schweikert, State Rep. John Kavanagh and Maricopa County Sheriff Joe Arpaio, all Fountain Hills residents, retained their seats for another term.

5. Signs

It took a long time, but the town finally adopted a new sign code. A citizens subcommittee worked on revisions, and then they had to go through the Planning & Zoning Commission and Town Council.

The revisions are generally seen as "business friendly" and clarified contentious issues such as A-frames and banners.

The town vowed to enforce the new code as well, since non-compliance by businesses has been a big issue the past few years.

6. Street work

What to do following the defeat of a giant \$30 million bond package late last year for street maintenance was debated quite a bit in 2012.

It appears the town is leaning toward calling for another bond election in 2013, but this would be for a much smaller amount and just for totally re-doing

Saguaro Blvd.

Staff has outlined a different long-range street maintenance plan that could involve additional budget cuts in years to come to help pay for the expensive repairs and maintenance costs.

The council has yet to finalize that plan.

7. AZ Centennial

The Town of Fountain Hills helped celebrate Arizona's 100th anniversary of statehood in February by dedicating an improved Centennial Circle outside the Library/Museum and Community Center complex.

A series of monuments were installed honoring key elements of Arizona along with hardscape and landscape improvements to the circle itself.

That was followed up with a recent ceremony to honor John Cutillo, the town's first mayor who led the final incorporation movement.

"John Cutillo Plaza" was dedicated in his honor, designating the entire town acreage in his name.

*8. Marijuana

Medical marijuana remained in the local news throughout 2012 because

of a series of unrelated lawsuits.

A zoning dispute arose in the only Fountain Hills dispensary could be opened, and county and state officials were fighting implementation of the new law as well.

The Fountain Hills Coalition asked town officials to not work with a potential dispensary owner because of conflicts with federal drug laws.

Maricopa County Attorney Bill Montgomery was pursuing that legal angle as well, but so far he's been unsuccessful in the courts.

The owner of a potential local dispensary did introduce himself to the council this past year, but so far no plans have come forward for opening one here.

9. Town leaders

The community saw some upheaval this past year in terms of major leadership with two government entities – the town and School District.

Bill Myhr's contract was not renewed as superintendent of FHUSD, and high school Principal Tom Lawrence was named interim superintendent starting July 1.

Lawrence was just re-

cently named as the permanent superintendent for FHUSD.

Meanwhile, Ken Buchanan was named the new town manager after a search was conducted. The long-time Arizona management veteran replaced Rick Davis, who resigned to take a job in Utah.

10. Economy

At least one aspect of the local economy improved during 2012 – the real estate market.

Many foreclosed homes were sold to buyers, filling many houses that previously were vacant.

The recession the past few years did have an impact on Fountain Hills, causing the population to drop and impacting town and school budgets.

Resale prices have been creeping up in Fountain Hills since last year, improving the overall market value in town.

New construction remains slow in town, however, and the usual turnover in the restaurant and retail industry continued on and off throughout the year.

Contractors remain fairly busy with remodeling and other improvement projects throughout the town.