

DATE: December 6, 2024
TO: Mayor and City Council Members
FROM: Tom Whitmer, Acting City Manager
SUBJECT: Acting City Manager's Bi-Weekly Management Report



[Cottonwood Fire Department](#)

ZoneHaven Genasys Evac Software

The Cottonwood Fire Department is in the final stages of implementing its new software, ZoneHaven Genasys Evac. This software will enable emergency responders to effectively communicate with the public regarding necessary evacuations in the event of an accident or disaster affecting the community. Currently, this system is utilized by Yavapai County, the Town of Clarkdale, the Town of Camp Verde, and the City of Cottonwood. A campaign will be launched soon to educate the community about the system and provide information on where residents can access updates. We are grateful to the City of Cottonwood for their support of this system and the safety it offers our community.

Community Outreach

The Cottonwood Fire Department is actively enhancing its community outreach efforts through in-person presentations, social media engagement, and safety inspections of facilities across the community. Fire personnel dedicate thousands of hours each year to conducting inspections for fire safety and promoting overall community well-being.

Cottonwood Fire Department Services

The City of Cottonwood has been actively supporting the Cancer Initiative for approximately three years. This support enables our firefighters to receive enhanced screenings aimed at preventing life-changing illnesses. This initiative demonstrates forward thinking and positions the City of Cottonwood at the forefront of public safety and wellness. Fire personnel are grateful for this support and look forward to expanding the program further.

[Cottonwood Police Department](#)

Cottonwood Police Department Awarded Two Grants

The Cottonwood Police Department has been notified by the Arizona Department of Public Safety and the Arizona Department of Homeland Security about the award of two "non-match" grants. The first grant, totaling over \$213,000, will be used to combat human trafficking through the use of investigative internet platforms. These platforms will be utilized by all law enforcement agencies in Yavapai County, emphasizing the collaboration and teamwork necessary to address these complex crimes.

The second grant, amounting to \$42,000, will be used to purchase a mobile surveillance camera trailer. This trailer will serve as a deterrent to address various quality-of-life issues and protect critical infrastructure within the city during special events and other identified needs.

Communications Division

The Cottonwood Police Department's Communications Division recently celebrated the conclusion of a semester-long internship program with students from the Valley Academy for Career and Technical Education (VACTE). Over the semester, the four interns worked closely with the Communications Division staff and had the opportunity to meet and interact with several police officers.

This inaugural program, initiated by Alexis James, Kelsey Jacobs, and Jenn Noss, was made possible through their tireless efforts and dedication. It aims to bridge the gap between essential real-world skill sets and workforce education and development. Each intern presented a capstone project highlighting their key takeaways and knowledge gained during their time in Dispatch.



Shop With a Cop

Cottonwood Police Department will host its annual Shop With a Cop event on Friday, December 13, 2024. This event supports disadvantaged children and families in our community who have experienced trauma or otherwise may not have a Christmas to celebrate. Police officers will accompany the children as they shop at Walmart, each receiving a gift card to buy items of their choice. If you'd like to volunteer to wrap gifts or help set up, please contact Jennifer Mathe at jmathe@cottonwoodaz.gov or Sgt. Nathan Huibregtse at nhuibregtse@cottonwoodaz.gov.

Cottonwood Area Transit (CAT)

MASS Transit Magazine

Cottonwood Area Transit was featured in MASS Transit magazine. The article discussed the addition of three new buses to the Paratransit services and how these will enhance the program's capabilities. To read more about this article, please click on the link [City of Cottonwood Transit Department adds three new buses into its paratransit service | Mass Transit](#).

Utilities

The Utilities Department would like to recognize Matt Westcott for achieving the prestigious status of "4x4" in the industry. He has obtained certifications from the Arizona Department of Environmental Quality in all grade 4 categories, representing the highest levels in Water Treatment, Water Distribution, Wastewater Treatment, and

Wastewater Collections. Fewer than 250 individuals in the state have attained this distinction. Congratulations, Matt, on this great accomplishment!

[Tourism & Economic Development](#)

Money in the Mail

Cottonwood has many local businesses that rely on our support throughout the year. We encourage everyone to shop locally for the perfect gift during this holiday season. In partnership with the Cottonwood Old Town Association and the Greater Verde Valley Chamber of Commerce, we are promoting supporting local businesses and upcoming Parks & Rec events in the December 2024 Money in the Mail coupon book issue.



SHOP Cottonwood Newsletter

The last issue of the SHOP Cottonwood Newsletter for 2024 was distributed on December 6, 2024, by the Tourism & Economic Development Department. We look forward to continuing to provide informative material for our local businesses and the community at large, beginning again in January 2025. To read this week's issue or to subscribe to receive future issues, please visit [SHOP Cottonwood Newsletter](#).

Old Town Entertainment Guides

Are you looking for the latest happenings in Old Town Cottonwood this month? Then you must check out the Old Town Association's Entertainment Guides, which are released monthly in partnership with the Tourism & Economic Development Department. Learn about upcoming events, food specials, sales, and much more. Guides can be viewed online at oldtown.org or [Visit Cottonwood](#).

[Community Development](#)

Planning and Zoning Commission

The Cottonwood Planning and Zoning Commission meeting scheduled for Monday, December 16, 2024, has been canceled. The next meeting will be held on Monday, January 20, 2025.

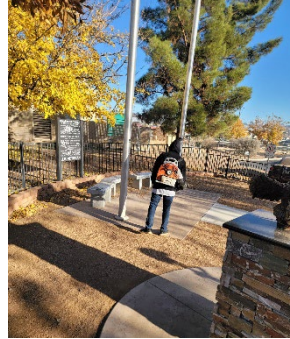
Historic Preservation Commission

The Cottonwood Historic Preservation Commission meeting scheduled for Wednesday, December 25, 2024, has been canceled. The next meeting will be held on Wednesday, January 22, 2025.

Parks, Recreation, Library

Parks & Recreation Collaboration with Spectrum

As part of Spectrum's ongoing collaboration with the Parks & Recreation Department, the work group spent this week helping the Public Works team remove leaves at our parks.



Cottonwood Youth Advisory Commission

On Monday, November 24, 2024, the Cottonwood Youth Advisory Commission (CYAC) assisted The Mission with its annual turkey drive. The Youth Commission helped collect food and monetary donations. Additionally, they purchased and donated sixty pies to contribute to the meal boxes distributed by The Mission.



Showtime Sportz

The City of Cottonwood Parks and Recreation is proud to support Showtime Sportz, a local organization that provides various sports programs for our youth. Registration is currently open for the January 2025 season of youth basketball, and so far, 252 kids have signed up. The registration period for the 12-14 age division will remain open until December 21, 2024. For more information or to sign up your child, please visit [Showtime Sportz](#).

Parents Night Off

Hey parents! Are you ready for a festive night out? Look no further. Let us take care of your little ones while you enjoy a night on the town or do some shopping for the holidays. Your child will have a jolly good time playing games and making new friends. Our experienced staff will lead them in fun arts and crafts activities, and they'll enjoy pizza and a holiday movie. Don't miss out on this opportunity to give yourself the break you deserve while your child has a blast with us. Pre-registration is required. You can sign up online on the City of Cottonwood [Parks & Recreation Website](#) today.



The Community Angel Tree

The Parks & Recreation Department invites you to join The Community Angels and help spread holiday cheer to the children in our community. Help a local child in need by purchasing clothing and toys that are on their wish list. Visit our Christmas tree in the REC to pick out and register a tag. All tags and gifts must be returned by December 13, 2024.

Breakfast & Photos with Santa

Join us for breakfast and photos with Santa! Meet Santa at the Cottonwood Recreation Center, located at 150 S. 6th Street, on December 14, 2024, from 8:00 a.m. to 10:00 a.m. This is a free event perfect for kids of all ages. Feel free to come in your cozy pajamas or dress up in your best attire. The 6th graders from Desert Star School will also join us to sing Christmas carols. We look forward to seeing you all there.

Letters from Santa

We have great news! The elves have dropped off our Official Mailbox to Santa at the REC! Letters can be put in the mailbox until December 20, 2024. The sooner you send in your letter, the better the chance that Santa will have time to respond before Christmas. He gets quite busy during this time of year after all. Please include a self-addressed envelope with a return address with your letter to Santa (no postage needed), and he will personally answer with a letter all the way from the North Pole.

Tree Lighting Ceremony

The City of Cottonwood invites everyone to the 2024 Mayor & Council's Tree Lighting Ceremony. This celebration will take place at 6:00 p.m. on December 7, 2024, in front of the Cottonwood Community Club House. We will enjoy caroling by the Mingus Union High School Choir and turn on the tree atop the Cottonwood Community Club House to officially welcome the holiday season.

70th Annual Cottonwood Christmas Parade

Cottonwood's annual Christmas Parade is this Saturday, December 7, 2024, at 11:00 a.m. This year's theme is "An Aloha Christmas," honoring Pearl Harbor. Grand Marshals are Andy and Beth Groseta. The parade starts at the Verde Valley Fairgrounds, travels east on Cherry Street, turns left onto Main Street, continues into Old Town Cottonwood, and ends at North Cactus Street.



70th Annual COTTONWOOD CHRISTMAS PARADE
SATURDAY, DECEMBER 7TH | 11AM

PARADE WILL BE USING OUR ORIGINAL ROUTE

PARADE ROUTE UPDATE
The City of Cottonwood has professional road work as we will be able to close our original route. Routes that are closed during the parade will be posted on our website.

THIS YEAR'S THEME: AN ALOHA CHRISTMAS
IN HONOR OF THE LIVES AFFECTED BY PEARL HARBOR DAY

LED BY THIS YEAR'S GRAND MARSHAL: ANDY & MARY BETH GROSETA

THANK YOU TO OUR SPONSORS!

JONES
VERDE VALLEY
Taylor Waste

NICHOLS MECHANICAL
COTTONWOODCHAMBERAZ.ORG
929-634-7593
849 COVE PARKWAY, SUITE C



COTTONWOOD PARKS & RECREATION INVITES YOU TO JOIN
The Community Angels
HELP US SPREAD HOLIDAY CHEER TO CHILDREN IN OUR COMMUNITY!

How to Participate:

1. VISIT THE TREE INSIDE OF THE COTTONWOOD RECREATION CENTER.
2. PICK A TAG FROM THE TREE AND REGISTER IT AT THE FRONT DESK BEFORE YOU LEAVE.
3. PURCHASE THE ITEM(S) LISTED ON THE TAG. PLEASE DO NOT WRAP THE GIFTS.
4. RETURN THE TAG AND ITEMS YOU PURCHASED TO THE FRONT DESK AT THE COTTONWOOD RECREATION CENTER.

RETURN TAG AND ITEMS BY FRIDAY, DECEMBER 13, 2024
WE THANK YOU BY APPOINTMENT FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION & GENEROSITY!



BREAKFAST & PHOTOS WITH SANTA
SATURDAY, DECEMBER 14TH
8 - 10 AM
COTTONWOOD RECREATION CENTER

ENJOY PANCAKES & HOT COCOA!
TAKE A PHOTO WITH SANTA CLAUS!
COME IN YOUR PJ'S OR DRESS UP!

FREE EVENT!
ENJOY CHRISTMAS CAROLS SINGING BY DESERT STAR SCHOOL'S 6TH GRADE

SPONSORED BY **State Farm**
Irene Marie Coffins, Agent
15 S. 6th Street
1681 844 3886

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT
PARKS & RECREATION AT (928) 699-2200



LETTERS FROM SANTA

Cottonwood Recreation Center has an official mailbox to Santa again this year!

Children can mail their letters to Santa in our special mailbox inside the Cottonwood Recreation Center. Please send a self-addressed envelope with your letter to Santa, and he will personally answer you with a letter all the way from the North Pole.

The City of Cottonwood and Parks & Recreation Department will provide stamps.

Letters can be put in the special mailbox through **December 20, 2024**

Mailbox located at 150 S. 6th Street, Cottonwood, AZ (Entrance for letters)



MAYOR & COUNCIL'S TREE LIGHTING CEREMONY
DECEMBER 7, 2024 6PM
ENJOY CHRISTMAS CAROLING BY THE MINGUS UNION HIGH SCHOOL CHOIR!

YOU'RE INVITED TO JOIN YOUR CITY COUNCIL AS WE WELCOME THE HOLIDAY SEASON TO COTTONWOOD! THE CHRISTMAS TREE ATOP THE CLUB HOUSE AND THE LIGHTS WILL BE OFFICIALLY TURNED ON FOR ALL TO ENJOY DURING THE HOLIDAYS!

31st Annual Chocolate Walk

The annual Chocolate Walk is scheduled for Saturday, December 7, 2024, from 3:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. in Historic Old Town. Ticket holders will have the opportunity to sample handcrafted chocolates from various participating merchants, shops, and restaurants. Tickets are priced at \$27 each and can be purchased online at chocolatewalk.com.

Human Resources


GEM Card Recognitions

See an employee **Going The Extra Mile** or performing a **GEM-like** action? **Recognize them!** Show your appreciation for your peers by filling out a **GEM** Card to explain why a particular employee deserves recognition. Once you have completed the card, present it to your colleague in person and let them know how much you value their actions or work. After you express your support for their positive contributions, the employee can take the card to HR to redeem their gift.

The following employees received a **GEM** Card from their peers.



Debbie Breitkreutz, Assistant Director of Utilities

“Debbie graciously helped us with interviews last minute and provided valuable insight. I appreciate her willingness to step up when needed.” Submitted by Scott Ellis, Community Development Director on October 10, 2024.

 <small>"Inspiring a Better Community"</small>	Describe the GEM-like Action:
Thanks for Going the Extra Mile and being a positive representative of the City of Cottonwood!	<u>Debbie graciously helped us with interviews last minute and provided valuable insight. I appreciate her willingness to step up when needed.</u>
Your GEM -like action has scored you a small gift of appreciation!	_____
Bring your card to HR to collect your appreciation gift.	_____
To: <u>Debbie B</u>	_____
From: <u>Scott Ellis</u>	_____
Date: <u>10-10-2024</u>	_____

Alejandra Ramirez, IT Tech I


“I locked myself out of my city PC and could not get in after 20 attempts. Alex came to my rescue and got me in.” Submitted by Katelyn Dotson, Network Administrator on April 2, 2024.

<i>aw</i>	 <small>"Inspiring a Better Community"</small>		Describe the GEM-like Action:
Thanks for Going the Extra Mile and being a positive representative of the City of Cottonwood!			<u>I locked myself out of my city PC + couldn't get in after 20 attempts. Alex came to my rescue and got me in :)</u>
Your GEM -like action has scored you a small gift of appreciation!			_____
Bring your card to HR to collect your appreciation gift.			_____
To: <u>Alejandra Ramirez</u>			_____
From: <u>Katelyn Dotson</u>			_____
Date: <u>April 2, 2024</u>			_____

Alejandra Ramirez, IT Tech I

“Alex contributed significantly to the ECC Center new console project by helping to take ownership of the project and label, re-wire, and re-cable the moved consoles plus the new ones and worked 3 days towards project completion.” Submitted by Steve Hensyel, IT Technician II on March 14, 2024.

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Thanks for **Going the Extra Mile** and being a positive representative of the City of Cottonwood! Your **GEM**-like action has scored you a small gift of appreciation! Bring your card to HR to collect your appreciation gift.


To: Alejandra Ramirez
 From: Steve Hensyel
 Date: 3/14/2024

Describe the GEM-like Action:
Alex contributed significantly to the ECC center new console project by helping to take ownership of the project and label, re-wire and re-cable the moved consoles plus the new ones and worked 3 days towards project completion.

Alejandra Ramirez, IT Tech I

“Alejandra Ramirez has demonstrated exceptional dedication in supporting our incoming Mayor-Elect and Councilmembers-Elect, during this transition period. She has efficiently organized the setup of laptops, configured email accounts, and established phone numbers for the new officials. Her responsiveness to last-minute requests has been impressive, ensuring that any urgent needs are addressed promptly. Additionally, she consistently communicates updates on the progress of their tasks, keeping the entire team informed and prepared for the upcoming changes in leadership. Her efforts have been invaluable in ensuring a smooth onboarding process for everyone involved.” Submitted by Sandra Salas, Executive Assistant to the City Manager and City Council on November 19, 2024.

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Thanks for **Going the Extra Mile** and being a positive representative of the City of Cottonwood! Your **GEM**-like action has scored you a small gift of appreciation! Bring your card to HR to collect your appreciation gift.

To: Alejandra Ramirez
 From: Sandra Salas
 Date: November 19, 2024

Describe the GEM-like Action:
Alejandra Ramirez has demonstrated exceptional dedication in supporting our incoming Mayor-Elect and Councilmembers-Elect, during this transition period. She has efficiently organized the setup of laptops, configured email accounts, and established phone numbers for the new officials. Her responsiveness to last-minute requests has been impressive, ensuring that any urgent needs are addressed promptly. Additionally, she consistently communicates updates on the progress of their tasks, keeping the entire team informed and prepared for the upcoming changes in leadership. Her efforts have been invaluable in ensuring a smooth onboarding process for everyone involved.

If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to reach out.

Thank you.

Tom Whitmer
Acting City Manager