



SUN CITY WEST FOUNDATION, INC.

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PRESS RELEASE

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SCW FOUNDATION ENDS BUS SERVICE – OFFERS BETTER OPTIONS

After almost a year of serious deliberation, the Sun City West Foundation Board of Directors has decided to end its bus service and transfer the program to Northwest Valley Connect and to Valley Metro Dial-A-Ride. The Board believes that both of these transportation providers will bring enhanced service to Sun City West residents, aware that many residents are already using these agencies for their transportation needs. Enhanced services include greater travel distances, more flexibility in scheduling, more comfortable passenger vehicles and the option of regular group trips to shopping and entertainment venues.

Now in its third year of operation, Northwest Valley Connect, started through a partnership with Sun Health and Benevella, provides the “gift of mobility” to homebound seniors and those with limiting disabilities. Through its Call Center, the nonprofit “connects” people with a variety of transportation providers for trips to the doctor, grocery shopping and to social and religious activities. Calls to this agency more than doubled in 2016 reaching more than 3500. This nonprofit also owns three vans, one that is wheelchair accessible, that it uses for everyday trips and, on specific days, for the group trips mentioned above.

Kathy Chandler, Executive Director of Northwest Valley Connect, will be conducting training classes about the various transportation options and how to access them on a succession of Friday mornings beginning February 17, from 9:00 to 10:30 AM, in the Grand Canyon Room at the Sun City West Foundation. The other Fridays are March 3, March 17 and March 31. Free rides to and from the classes for Sun City West residents can be scheduled by calling 623-544-3020. You can also reserve a seat at the classes by calling the same number.

Sun City West Foundation, formed more than thirty years ago, will continue to serve the local community through its Helping Hands division and banquet and meeting rooms. The Foundation provides free space to several local community organizations such as PRIDES, the Community Fund of Sun City West, AARP Tax-Aide program, American Red Cross emergency shelter and many more. Sun City West Foundation also recently granted Northwest Valley Connect \$8,000 for low-income qualified resident rides and \$36,500 for part-time staff positions needed during the transition of Foundation bus service.

Never intending to go into the transportation business, it was in 2008 when the Foundation took on the responsibility of providing rides to its residents due to the closure of SCAT (Sun Cities Area Transit). The Foundation purchased two buses and committed significant financial resources exceeding \$80,000 annually to meet this need. The current decision to transfer this responsibility to more experienced providers makes sense on many different levels and is made with the intention to provide Sun City West residents with improved service and better options when it comes to their transportation needs.