Quality of Life

By Lauren Serrato

 As the holiday season is in full effect, cities throughout the West Valley are providing residents with endless options to indulge in, including light displays, parades, entertainment and more.

 The once perceived notion of having to travel to find quality holiday displays and events is being put to rest as the West Valley continues to stake their claim in being home to notorious festivities to enjoy during the holiday season.

 Providing these options to the region creates communities where people want to live, play and stay. Evidence of this can be found all throughout the West Valley.

 For example, the city of Goodyear hosted Holidays on the Square, which features a tree lighting, a three-weekend holiday celebration featuring a new theme each week, even including an ice-skating rink.

“We’ve got over 500 feet of garland, thousands of lights,” Guylene Ozlanski, Goodyear’s Arts & Culture Administrator said, referring to the preparation of decorating the city’s 30-foot Christmas tree.

“It is in a great place for families to come out and take some pictures and enjoy the holidays. We also have a beautiful bench with Santa for that perfect selfie moment. Our team begins working on a lot of these events almost 12 months before the event happens to ensure that we have a great event.”

The RinQ is the newest addition to the city’s holiday festivities. Open daily until January 8, residents can skate for free and non-residents can join in on the fun for $10.

“It’s called synthetic ice and that’s what we have this year for our ice rink here at Goodyear Civic Square,” Ozlanski said. “It's going to be so much fun out here for our community. We’re really looking forward to having them here.”

 Glendale is home to some of the West Valley’s holiday favorites, including Glendale Glitters and World of Illumination.

 Glendale Glitters is back and better than ever with the various light displays, performances in the amphitheater, the Hometown Christmas parade and much more. Downtown Glendale will light up every night from 5 to 10 p.m. through January 7.

 World of Illumination, the world’s largest drive-thru animated light show is also located in Glendale. Open seven days a week through January 1, World of Illumination features 2 million animated lights, perfectly paired with synchronized music.

 Not to be outdone, the city of Peoria is lit up for the holiday season, ready to greet and spread the holiday spirit to residents and guests.

 The city values their residents’ quality of life, as stated in their general plan, “A prosperous economy supports a growing, attractive, and desirable community, translating to a high quality of life for all residents and thriving businesses. Peoria has positioned itself to become a leading economic engine within the valley, featuring the second largest population base in the west valley and several major assets that have yet to reach their full potential.”

 Providing a variety of diverse options for entertainment, retail and dining fuels quality of life. In order to do so, the city continues to support entrepreneurs, grow local businesses, and attract high-quality jobs, including strategic redevelopment.

“Peoria is an absolutely incredible community that is booming with growth and opportunity,” said Jennifer Stein, Peoria Economic Development Director. “Destinations like P83 and Park West are home to chef driven restaurants, amazing local business, arts and theatre, providing families and visitors an enhanced quality of life.”

 Quality of life represents the well-being of a community, and how that community serves and provides for its residents. It allows for the community to come together, whether that be through concerts at the park, new businesses opening, or hosting events.

 “In Surprise, we value the opportunity to bring our community together through a variety of events, and one of our favorite and highly attended is a December holiday event we’ve hosted for over 20 years! When people gather for a celebration, it strengthens bonds, enhances positive social interactions, and creates a sense of community pride,” Holly Osborn, City of Surprise Parks & Recreation Director said.

“To build on that pride, we launched something new this year – a holiday light display at our Surprise Recreation Campus called ‘Sparkling Surprise.’ It’s something beautiful that our community and the entire West Valley can enjoy strengthening their holiday spirit. We also host several smaller holiday themed events and experiences, but all have the same goal – to connect the community and make people smile!”

 People are drawn and attracted to cities that value and commit to constantly improving their residents' quality of life. In doing so, it attracts new residents as well as businesses. This cycle drives a city and its economic development.

 As we head into a new year, expect to see continued growth and commitment to enhancing quality of life throughout the West Valley.