

Fall  
2021

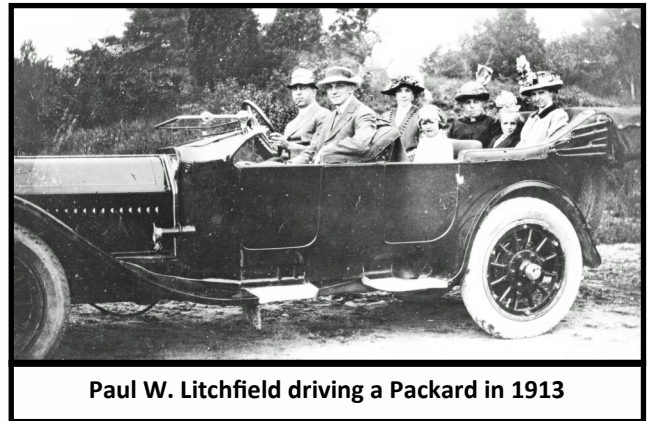
# Litchfield Legends

A publication of the Litchfield Park Historical Society and Museum

## *Rolling on Rubber*

### *How Need Inspires Innovation*

We are all aware of the fact that our ancestors who lived during the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century faced enormous struggles – the Spanish Flu Pandemic, The Great Depression, and two World Wars. What we may not have noticed is that they were a remarkably resilient group of individuals who believed that they could make the world a better place for their children and grandchildren – and for their country. They were confident that if they worked hard enough, they could accomplish anything. And they did – from winning two world wars to curing the ravages of tuberculosis and polio. We also might not have noticed that they were an extraordinarily innovative group of people who invented thousands of machines and equipment, appliances and gadgets that made the work we do daily easier and safer.



Paul W. Litchfield driving a Packard in 1913

Inventions flourished, thus improving the quality of life for the generations who followed them. One area in which we see this reflected is in the development of the rubber tire.

One would be hard pressed to find anyone today who hasn't benefited from the use of a rubber tire sometime in his or her life. Our experiences range from tricycles and bicycles to wagons and wheelbarrows, and from cars and motorcycles to trucks, buses, and planes. Tires seem to be everywhere. They have made our lives easier by allowing us to move goods and people from one place to another swiftly and comfortably. Imagine having to walk to the grocery store today; or hitch a team of horses to a buggy or wagon to go anywhere. One hundred and twenty years ago that was indeed the case.

The new exhibit at the Litchfield Park Museum shines a light on the extensive and rapid growth of the rubber tire industry from 1900 to the early 1960s – a time when rubber became one of America's great industries. Spurred on by the popularity of bicycles which gave people a new freedom and mobility, it only seemed logical for

### In This Issue:

- Rolling on Rubber
- President's Letter
- A Musical Homecoming
- Las Posadas Event
- Oral Histories
- Junior Historian Program
- Support Opportunities
- Sponsors



[www.LPHSMuseum.org](http://www.LPHSMuseum.org)



Tractor tire design patented by PW Litchfield

Continued on Page 4

## Board of Directors

### Executive Committee

Nancy Schafer, President  
Lisa Hegarty, Vice President  
Meredeth Stucky, Secretary  
Karen Krause, Treasurer  
Lisa Brainard-Watson, Past President

### Board Member Emeritus

Robert McMillan, DDS

### Board Members

Larry Baker	Judy Cook
Judy Fulton	Sara Homan
Linda Lamm	William Robey, MD
Ruben Rosales	Libby Hilton Rouse

### General Counsel

Paul J. Faith, Esq.  
Faith, Ledyard & Faith P.L.C.

### Research Consultant

Dr. Gloria Cuádras, ASU Associate  
Professor, School of Humanities, Art  
and Cultural Studies

### Special Thanks

The City of Litchfield Park  
Palm Gate RV & Self Storage

### Mission Statement

To connect generations by fostering an understanding and appreciation of the history, arts, and culture of the Southwest Valley.

### Office and Museum:

13912 W. Camelback Rd.  
Litchfield Park, AZ 85342

Phone: 623.535.4414

Website: [www.LPHSMuseum.org](http://www.LPHSMuseum.org)

## Letter From the President

I hope all of you have left room on your fall and winter social calendar for the great events we have planned for this upcoming season. Each month we will feature something special for you, your family, and your holiday guests.

In October, we will pique your interest, educate, and amaze you with our exciting new exhibit; **“Rolling on Rubber”**. November will bring a fabulous concert, **“A Musical Homecoming”**, honoring Agua Fria High School’s talented alumni. The evening will feature six performers whose music will be remembered long after the evening has ended. Then, for the holiday season, we will be honoring the Hispanic heritage of the Southwest Valley with **“Las Posadas”**. Las Posadas traditionally commemorates Joseph and Mary’s journey from Nazareth to Bethlehem in search of safe refuge. This celebration will be a great addition to your family’s Christmas holiday. In addition to the walk, the event will feature the beautiful Ballet de Folklorico performing with all of the color and music of Mexico. For more information on all of the events, please visit our web site [www.lphsmuseum.org](http://www.lphsmuseum.org).

Our volunteer corps continues to grow! We have added three new docents to greet visitors, give tours and help at many of our events. In addition, we have resumed our Oral History program which was originally chaired by Sonja Hendrick. Since her passing in 2019 the program remained on hold waiting for the right people to form a committee with some of our new volunteers included. The new Oral History Committee, co-chaired by Karen Krause and Lisa Hegarty, is currently reviewing video equipment to be purchased through a generous donation from one of our members. The committee is also researching best practices for archiving the interviews once they have been recorded.

In closing, I want to extend a thank you from the LPHS to Tim Blake, Owner of Landcare Unlimited, Rocky Cochiola and crew for their services. Since 2010, Tim’s company has provided landscape maintenance as an “In Kind” donation to our museum. We appreciate your eleven years of landscape services provided for our organization; we wish you continued success!

My very best to all of you as we continue to bring you exciting events, fascinating history, and a sense of the great community in which we live.

Have a **wonderful holiday season** and a **HAPPY NEW YEAR!**



Nancy Schafer  
LPHS Board President



# One Night Only --- A Musical Homecoming

Join us for *A Musical Homecoming*, a special gathering of homegrown talent. This unique evening will weave storytelling with musical performances by six Agua Fria High School alumni who have appeared on the national and international stage.

Guitarist **Matt Cartsonis** has recorded with Pete Seeger, Jennifer Warnes, Beck, and Ringo Starr and toured with Glen Campbell and Warren Zevon.

A student of American jazz drummer Henry Adler, **Reade Whitwell** has performed in venues along the east coast and throughout the Pacific Northwest. He is the son of former Wigwam resort general manager, Reade Whitwell and Millicent Whitwell, a long-time central figure of the West Valley culture scene.

Musician **Tom Rhodes** learned to play several stringed instruments while growing up. He went on tour with multi top-10 Nashville recording artist, Tommy Overstreet and played in the first U.S. band to perform in Kenya. He's also toured throughout the U.S., Mexico, and Europe. Today he performs with various Tucson bands and in festivals throughout the West.

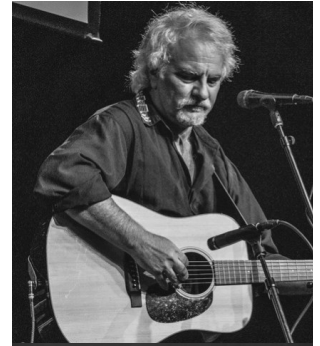
After **Paul "Pablo" Richards** studied piano, jazz, guitar, and music theory in college and went on to provide vocals, bass, guitar, and keyboards in several bands based in Arizona and Florida. Playing a wide range of styles, he also lends his talents to the eclectic Arizona rock band, OvO.

Vocalist **Kathleen Berger** has performed opera on the national and international stage and appeared in musical theater and zarzuela performances. She is the founder of Berger Artist Management, LLC and represents classical singers worldwide.

**Jesse Berger**, also a vocalist, is a founding member of the internationally renowned Frankie Valli and the Four Seasons Tribute, *December '63*. An alumnus of Arizona Broadway Theater, he has toured regionally and nationally.

Storyteller **Mark Compton** has been engaging Phoenix audiences around the Valley for more than ten years. During his time as president of West Side Story Tellers, the group has hosted storytelling festivals in collaboration with Glendale Public Library and storytelling workshops throughout the West Valley.

Visit [www.LPHSMuseum.org](http://www.LPHSMuseum.org) for performers' full bios, to purchase tickets, and further details.



Don't miss this, it's really once in a lifetime!

## A Musical Homecoming

Saturday, November 27, 2021, 7pm, Agua Fria High School auditorium. Tickets \$25 on-line, \$30 at the door.  
[www.lphsmuseum.org/concert](http://www.lphsmuseum.org/concert)



Scan this QR code to connect to the artist's bios, concert information and on-line ticket sales.

businessmen to turn to the newly invented automobile for further opportunities. After all, each vehicle needed rubber tires. As a result, hundreds of companies set up shop overnight; and Akron, Ohio, soon became the **Rubber Capital of the World**. This was partly due to the ability to move goods via railroad and canals, but most importantly, it was because of the intersection of leadership and luck.

The first significant rubber company that was established in Akron was the **B.F. Goodrich Co.** in 1870 which made fire hoses and rubber belts. The second company of consequence was the **Goodyear Tire & Rubber Co.** established in 1898 by Frank and Charles Seiberling, and they produced carriage and bicycle tires. The brothers named the new company after Charles Goodyear, a man who never set foot in Akron and was dead by the time the company was formed. However, Charles Goodyear had discovered **vulcanization**, an innovation that resulted in the development of useable tires. Prior to that discovery, rubber was an unstable resource – melting in the heat of the summer, cracking and breaking in the cold of the winter.



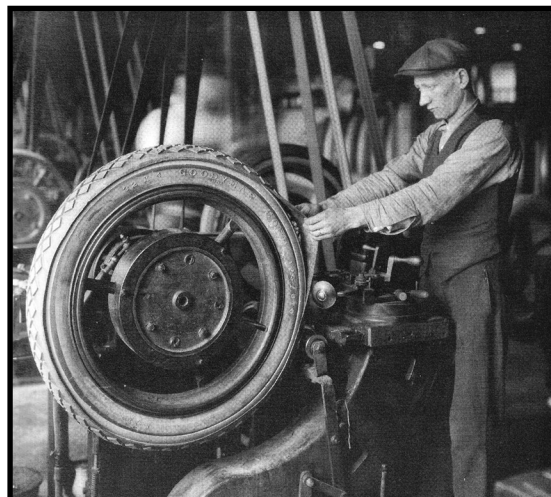
Harvesting cotton for use in tires.

Goodyear Tire & Rubber Co. eventually rose to become the worldwide leader in tire manufacturing. On display you will see several of the **patents** developed by Paul W. Litchfield who was hired as a factory superintendent for Goodyear in 1900. They are part of the reason Litchfield eventually

earned the title *dean of the rubber industry*. Many have said that Litchfield was to the rubber industry what Thomas Edison was to electricity. The last two companies of major significance in Akron were the **Firestone Rubber Co.** begun in 1900 and the **General**

**Tire Co.** which was established in 1915.

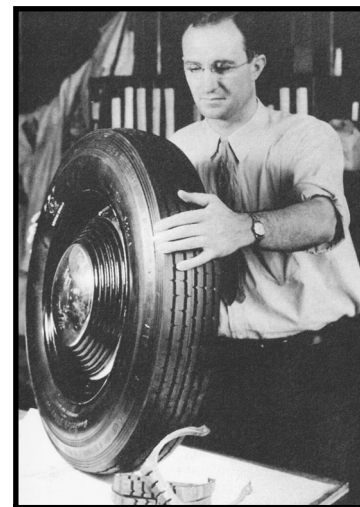
Manufacturing tires in the early part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century was extremely hard work. It was noisy, dirty, and sometimes dangerous. Just like farming, it took many



Tread in the early days of tire building.

strong men to accomplish the job. It was a complicated process which required a number of layers of materials – plies, sidewalls, beads and tread spread over a drum, bent and sewn, and finally vulcanized inside a mold. But as time went on, machines were invented to make the process easier and safer. Photos reflecting changes in the factories as the century progressed are on display. As you learn how a tire was built, you will understand how important the use of long-staple cotton was to tire durability.

Cotton was woven into a cloth, rolled with milled rubber through a calender, and formed into a ply that resulted in a more puncture-proof and longer-lasting tire on the road. When the usual sources of long-staple cotton disappeared during WWI, Goodyear established three ranches in the Salt River Valley to grow the valuable commodity. On display are Goodyear ads which feature our own Southwest Valley showcasing its fields of cotton.



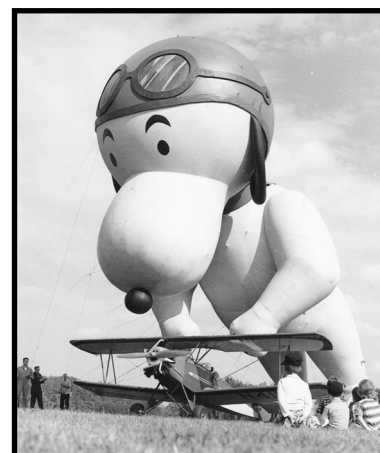
Synthetic rubber tire—1940

Did you know that Goodyear launched the **trans-continental trucking industry** with its **Wingfoot Express**, and developed the idea of using **tandem wheels** on the back of trucks? These innovations inspired the need for paving roads and strengthening bridges across our country which in turn resulted in the building of our national highway system in the 1950s. Imagine how difficult it would be to get goods from one part of our country to another without the thousands of trucks we see daily.

Goodyear also cornered the market on airplane tires for over twenty years, leaped into the airship industry, and is still a significant part of the market for race car tires today.

A particularly interesting portion of the exhibit shows a few of the many derivative products that were made from rubber. Some of these products are blimps and dirigibles, Neolin soles, rubber horseshoes, doll heads, golf balls, rubber tiles for flooring, and the use of vulcanite for false teeth. A second topic in the exhibit features the magazine advertisements of the day. In a time before TV and the internet, companies attempted to sell their wares through ads in magazines. Not only did they try to convince customers that their products were the best on the market, but the ads have become fascinating short history lessons that are a reflection of the time.

Make plans to visit this extremely interesting exhibit soon. You will come away with a new appreciation of what it means to be **rolling on rubber**.



Goodyear-made Macy's Thanksgiving Day parade balloon

Rolling on Rubber exhibit has been underwritten by a grant from Wilbur E. Kaufman, Author and Lifetime Member.

## LPHS Hosting First Annual Las Posadas Event December 17th

The Litchfield Park Historical Society is proud to host it's first annual ***Las Posadas of Litchfield Park: A Journey Together to the Mission*** on **Friday, December 17<sup>th</sup>**. LPHS is partnering with Ballet Folklorico Esperanza for this evening candlelight procession. Based on the Christmas tradition from Mexico, Las Posadas reenacts the Biblical story of Mary and Joseph seeking shelter before the birth of Jesus. In this tradition, procession participants go from place to place as pilgrims asking for shelter in song. After being turned away at earlier stops, participants are recognized as the holy pilgrims and welcomed at the final destination by the innkeeper with a special song verse and a fiesta.

***Las Posadas of Litchfield Park*** will emphasize the cultural aspects of the tradition with the core themes of hospitality and welcoming others. The event is free, and all members of the community are invited to participate.

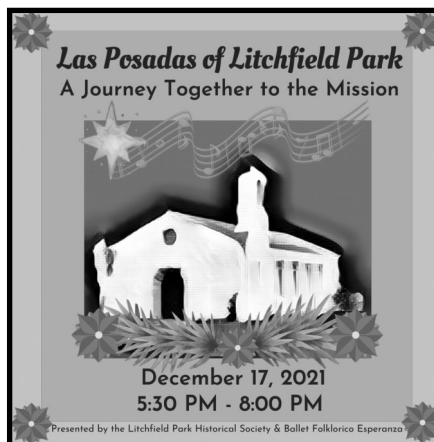
Participants will gather at 5:30 pm in the Litchfield Elementary School south parking lot to briefly practice the songs of the procession. At 6:00 pm the candlelight procession will begin heading north along Old Litchfield Road, east on Wigwam Blvd and end at the original St Thomas Aquinas Mission church at Neolin Avenue and

Wigwam Boulevard.

The event will close with a fiesta which will include dance performances, food vendors, music, and activities on the lawn surrounding this mission style building with a 100-year-old history. We invite you to be a part of this special evening which celebrates the holiday season and Litchfield Park's cultural roots!

**Date:** Friday, December 17, 2021

**Time:** 5:30 pm – 8:00 pm; Procession begins at 6:00 pm



**Starting Location:** South parking lot of Litchfield Elementary School on Old Litchfield Rd

**Ending Location:** Original St. Thomas Aquinas Mission Church on Neolin Ave & Wigwam Blvd

# LPHS Oral History Project

**“To be a person is to have a story to tell.”  
- Isak Dinesen**

At more than 180 recordings, our oral history collection is a major part of the LPHS archive. During the past twenty years, we have sought out individuals who were willing to share their memories through a recorded interview process.

**What is Oral History?** Oral History is the practice of preserving the people’s memories in their own words, using recordings and written transcripts.

**Why are they important?** Oral histories help fill the gaps in our understanding of the past. These recordings are first-person accounts that document ordinary lives and important events from various perspectives. Some interviews are the only source that we have about people and events that have been left out of other records. Future researchers will have a wealth of information and personnel insights to help them interpret history.

**How are oral histories conducted?** LPHS has adopted the practice of video recording our oral histories. The interviewer’s job is to help the narrators tell their stories in a comfortable atmosphere without fear of judgement. We ask them to tell their family’s story and to give us a fuller picture of the past by

sharing personal experiences and points of view in their own words, with their own voice.

**Oral History Committee.** Our oral history collection has been safely stored in our archives; however, many have not yet been fully transcribed or indexed. The newly organized Oral History Committee has been established to help with this backlog and expand the collection. In memory of our late, past-president Sonja Hendrick, a LPHS member has donated \$1000 to help fund the equipment needed for this project. Sonja was instrumental in scheduling, conducting, and transcribing our oral history collection. This large collection of recordings is due to her efforts over many years. Sonja understood the value of documenting the lives of many early residents while there was still time to do so. The oral history committee will begin conducting new interviews at the start of the 2022 – focusing on the people, events, and communities that will fill the gaps in our knowledge. In the process, we hope to honor the memories and life stories that have been entrusted to us.



**Sonja Hendrick**

## With New Junior Historian Program, it’s All Fun and Games

When Girl Scout Cadettes Olivia Ransom and Laurel Warkomski were looking for ideas for their Silver Award Project, they thought working with the Litchfield Park Historical Society Museum would be a benefit to the community and a learning experience at the same time.

The Silver Award is the highest Girl Scout Cadette achievement and the second highest award offered by Girl Scouts USA. Cadettes seeking the award are prompted to explore their community to find a way to help and create a project with a long-term impact.

Creating the LPHS Junior Historian program was one way the Cadettes thought they could make a sustainable contribution. “We wanted to have something that could be here forever and could continue to make an impact,” says Laurel. Based on the Junior Ranger program in the US National Parks system, the LPHS Junior Historian program is geared toward young museum visitors and provides an opportunity for scouting groups to earn a special badge.

The Cadettes put in long hours creating a booklet full of activities such as a scavenger hunt, crossword puzzle, matching and fill in the blank. “The booklet is to help kids get involved

and learn the history of the town in a more fun and interesting way,” says Olivia. Kids are also encouraged to reflect on interesting information they learn from the galleries and museum docents. Upon completion, participants take the Junior Historian pledge and are awarded a certificate, making them official LPHS Junior Historians.



**Olivia Ransom and  
Laurel Warkomski**

While creating the program, Laurel and Olivia became interested in Litchfield Park’s origins and the historical relationship between the tire industry and locally grown cotton. They also found fascinating items in the museum that helped bring history to life. For Olivia it was the extensive exhibit full of dental implements used by the town dentist, Dr. McMillan. For Laurel it was a special letter addressed to Paul Litchfield that brought home the significance of the people who are part of Litchfield Park’s history. “I remember when I first saw that letter from Orville Wright to Paul Litchfield

it was really like, ‘Wow, this really happened! It’s history!’”

To find out more about the LPHS Junior Historian program contact the museum at 623-535-4414 or [office@LPHSMuseum.org](mailto:office@LPHSMuseum.org) or visit our website at [LPHSMuseum.org](http://LPHSMuseum.org).

## Support Opportunities Include...

### The CARS Program

We are the **#1** Vehicle Donation Organization in the West Valley



Running or not, if you have a car, truck, trailer, RV, motorcycle, off-road vehicle, farming, heavy equipment, boat, or plane you would like to donate let us know. We can help you convert your donation in to a fair market value tax deduction to the Litchfield Park Historical Society.

As the owner, you must confirm you have a clear title to the vehicle. Then, the next step is to call [844-569-4483](tel:844-569-4483) to make arrangements for your donation to be picked up. The CARS Program, fixes up the vehicle to earn the highest dollar and then auctions it off. The LPHS receives as a donation the proceeds from the auction vehicle. The CARS Program, also a non-profit organization, does all the paperwork for the state owner transfer and taxes, and you receive the tax deduction. One phone call and they do all the work for you and us.

If you think your vehicle is too expensive to repair or you don't want to bother selling it on-line, please consider this opportunity to help support the Museum.

### Amazon Smile Program

Sign onto <https://smile.amazon.com> and select the Litchfield Park Historical Society as the non-profit you wish to support. LPHS will receive a percentage of certain purchases – just like the cash-back rebates on credit cards.– every time you shop at [smile.amazon.com](https://smile.amazon.com)



### Aluminum Can Recycling

The LPHS will recycle your aluminum cans for you. Leave them at the garage door of 610 N Old Litchfield Road, Litchfield Park. The money will help the LPHS pay its utility bills. \*Aluminum only. No tin cans please.



Scan this QR code to connect to our **Support Page**. It is through your dues and fundraising support that we are able to continue our efforts.

## Sponsors

### Tier 1—\$1000 Level



LA LOMA VILLAGE

[www.SunHealthCommunities.org](http://www.SunHealthCommunities.org)  
14154 Denny Blvd, Litchfield Park, AZ 85340  
623.537.7450

### Tier 3 - \$500 Level



[www.Océano-Rentals.com](http://www.Océano-Rentals.com)  
PO Box 2357, Litchfield Park, AZ 85340



[OriginsBedandBreakfast.com](http://OriginsBedandBreakfast.com)  
5180 E Comanche Dr, Cottonwood, AZ 86326



[www.TireAZ.com](http://www.TireAZ.com)  
800 N Dysart, Goodyear, AZ 85338



[www.wigwamresort.com](http://www.wigwamresort.com)  
300 E Wigwam Blvd, Litchfield Park, AZ

### Tier 4 - \$250 Level

Mickey Ollson,  
Wildlife World Zoo & Aquarium

### Tier 5 - \$100 Level

Mary Cavanaugh-Marsh, Financial Advisor,  
EDWARD JONES

Paul J. Faith, Esq., Faith, Ledyard & Faith, P.L.C.

Victor Fierros, Jewelry by Victor

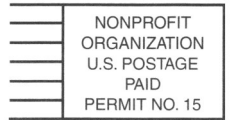
Peter Mahoney, Park Café, Old Pueblo Café, and  
Papa Paul's



PO Box 1936  
Litchfield Park, Arizona 85340

Location Address: 13912 W Camelback Rd.

Email: [office@LPHSMuseum.org](mailto:office@LPHSMuseum.org)  
[www.LPHSMuseum.org](http://www.LPHSMuseum.org)



**The new 2022 Membership Brochure will be out soon. But you can join us NOW!**

**Contributor Level Members will receive a copy of the *White Tank Mountains Field Guide*, a wonderful introduction to the Sonoran Desert. Benefactor Level Members will receive the *Field Guide* and 25% off a gift shop item.**

**Become part of an organization that cares passionately about the unique cultural history of the Southwest Valley.**

### LPHS 2022 Membership/Special Donation Form

January 1 – December 31, 2022 membership year

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Spouse's Name \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

**Annual Membership Dues**    Single Adult \$25    Family \$35    Business/Professional \$60  
 Contributor \$125    Benefactor \$300

**I would like to make an additional Special Donation of:**    \$25    \$50    \$100    Other \_\_\_\_\_

**Please make your check payable to:**   **Litchfield Park Historical Society**  
**PO Box 1936**  
**Litchfield Park, AZ 85340**

Would you be interested in volunteering for our organization?    Yes

The Litchfield Park Historical Society is an official IRS 501 (c)(3) non-profit corporation, and membership dues and other donations are tax deductible for persons who itemize.



Scan this code to link to our online membership form.