

Your West Valley News: Sun City — 3/3/13



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Pops band severs ties to Sun City

By JEFF DEMPSEY, DAILY NEWS-SUN | Posted: Friday, March 1, 2013 11:32 am

When the Recreation Centers of Sun City announced its planned changes to the clubs policy, the performing groups were presented with two options:

- Pay the \$2 guest fee from which they were previously excluded, meaning all group members who are not Sun City residents would need to pay \$2 every rehearsal.

- Decertify as an official club but continue using the RCSC's facilities in exchange for concerts put on free of charge and without asking for donations.

The Sun City Pops Band unveiled a third option this week: completely sever ties with the RCSC.

Now known as the West Valley Pops Band, the musicians have announced a partnership with the Valley View Community Food Bank, where the band's spokesman Len Shykind said they also will conduct their rehearsals.

"Jesse Ramirez (food bank president) has been very good to us," Shykind said. "He has created space for us. He is allowing us to rehearse there free of charge. We've actually been rehearsing there now for about three weeks, but we didn't want to announce anything until we felt we had everything worked out."

RCSC General Manager Jan Ek said the band's decision came as a surprise.

"We received a letter at the end of January that all the groups planned to stay, and we met with every group individually about it," Ek said Thursday night. "So we had no indication the

band planned to leave until we got their notice a few days ago.

"It's unfortunate it came to this," she said. "We gave them some options. It's just that one of those options was not that one club is treated better than any other club."

Shykind said as part of the new partnership with Valley View, the West Valley Pops Band will coordinate with the food bank to put on their concerts, which will be free of charge save for a donation of a non-perishable food item.

"We think it's going to end up being a really good thing for the community," Shykind said. "It's going to bring in a lot of extra food."

Shykind said the band expects to have concerts around the West Valley and will continue to notify interested Sun Citians of when and where those shows will take place. He said the plan right now is to put on shows at local churches and high schools in conjunction with Valley View food drives.

More than anything, Shykind said, band members are happy to have the club policy ordeal behind them even if it means a future without official ties to the organization where the band began.

"We're all very excited," he said. "I think the real losers in this are going to be the people of Sun City because we're not going to be doing those same concerts we used to do."

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