



# Beth Emeth

**BETH EMETH CONGREGATION**  
13702 W. Meeker Blvd., Sun City West, AZ 85375  
623-584-7210 bethemethaz@gmail.com www.bethemethaz.org

**Rabbi Leo Abrami**  
**Joseph Weintraub, President**

**"More Than Just The Conservative Congregation of the West Valley, We Are A Community".**

**AV 5776 - ELUL 5776**

**SEPTEMBER 2016**

## *From the President's Desk*



As we are about to celebrate Rosh Hashana, I would like to wish you a Happy and Healthy New Year.

The president, board of directors, congregant volunteers as well as the rabbi and the volunteer secretary, have devoted much time to planning and making all the necessary arrangements so that the High Holidays may be a memorable event in our congregation.

It is our trust that they will be most meaningful and inspiring to all of us.

For these very reasons, we would like to suggest that you all perform the additional mitzvah of inviting one guest from among your friends and acquaintances to join us for Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur. To share these outstanding services with others who might not have a chance to do so, is indeed, a most meritorious good deed.

This would be the simplest way of doubling the size of our congregation for the High Holidays 5777.

We hope and pray that will all take to heart to perform this mitzvah, even if you have to make an additional contribution to the congregation. These guests will be saluted by the rabbi and president at the conclusion of all our services.

**SHANAH TOVAH UM'TUKAH!**

**Joe Weintraub**

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**Watch this space!**  
The new and exciting redevelopment of our website should be up early September.

**Volume 2016,  
Number 15**

## High Holy Days schedule:

*Sermon titles are shown in italics*

Selihot	Sep 24	7:30 pm
Rosh Hashanah eve	Oct 2	7:30 pm
<i>The Path to Happiness</i>		
Rosh Hashanah first day	Oct 3	9:00 am
<i>No One Is Perfect</i>		
Tashlih		6:00 pm
Community service		7:00 pm
<i>We All Need A Second Chance</i>		
Rosh Hashanah second day	Oct 4	9:00 am
<i>Stories of Repentance</i>		
Kabbalat Shabbat	Oct 7	7:30 pm
Shabbat Shuvah	Oct 8	9:00 am
Community Memorial service		
at Sunland Memorial Park	Oct 9	10:00 am
Kol Nidre	Oct 11	6:30 pm
<i>Not Yet</i>		
Yom Kippur	Oct 12	9:00 am
<i>Do We Always Have To Forgive - essay endorsed by Dr Laura Schlesinger on the Internet</i>		
President's address		1:05 pm
Yizkor		1:15 pm
<i>Mrs. Ruth Saari will tell us how her father rescued a scroll of the Torah from his burning synagogue after Kristal Nacht in Germany</i>		
Minhah		4:30 pm
<i>Stop Complaining</i>		
Ne-ilah		

Everyone, whether a member of Beth Emeth or not, is welcome to attend all services.

For the sake of security over the High Holy Days, all services require a ticket and photo id for admission but there is no charge for certain services (e.g. second night of Rosh Hashana) and certain people (e.g. members of the armed forces). Please contact the office at 623-548-7210 for details.

For information on services for Sukkot etc, please see page 10.



## From the Rabbi's Desk

Why should I want to live?  
A meditation on the High Holidays

On the High Holidays, we pray for life and happiness. In the Rosh Hashanah Amidah, we say: "Remember us that we may live, O King, who delights in life." Some of us, however, are not entirely convinced that life is the highest goal to which we should aspire. They are asking themselves some perplexing questions: "What should I live for?" or "What is the purpose of my life?"

A hospital chaplain at UCLA Medical Center tells us a story which may help us understand this dilemma.

One morning, he received a phone call from a nurse in the psychiatric wing of the hospital asking for his assistance with regard to a patient who was being belligerent and had requested to speak to a rabbi.

"When I arrived," says the rabbi, "I was greeted by a very stern nurse who didn't seem to care much for chaplains. 'Rabbi,' she said, 'Rob is very sick and will try anything to avoid eating. He is a sixteen year-old and he was hospitalized for anorexia and severe depression. He says there's a Jewish holiday tonight, when Jews have to fast. To make sure, I checked in the hospital calendar, and 'Yom Kippur' isn't until October this year. I just think he's trying to trick us.'"

I told the nurse I would like to have a private conversation with the patient. Rob was courteous; he told me that he grew up in a traditional family that attended synagogue services regularly and kept a kosher home. Rob himself had graduated from a Jewish day school. He said "I can assure you, Rabbi, I am not trying to trick the nurse; tonight is Erev Tisha b'Av and I want to observe the fast."

"Rob was about my height," said the rabbi, "but he weighed no more than a hundred pounds. His cheeks were gaunt and his shirt hung on his shoulders as though on a coat hanger. He complained to me about the fact that his nurse would not let him fast." I explained to Rob that his treatment included a strict eating regimen and that it was a matter of *pikuah nefesh* (a matter of life and death), that he was exempt from fasting, and that it was imperative for him to follow his doctor's instruction to eat. Though he didn't like my answer, he acknowledged that it was correct.

We read together a few verses of the biblical book of Lamentations (Eicha) from the Bible he kept in his room.

"Alas, how solitary does the city sit that was once so full of people! How has she become as a widow. She that was great among the nations and princess among the provinces, has become tributary. Bitterly does she weep at night. And her tears are on her cheeks; there is none to comfort her..."

Rob was crying. "I feel like the city of Jerusalem right now," he wailed, "I feel so alone in this awful place."

He then waited a moment and he said, "Rabbi, I have a question to ask you! No one has been able to answer it so far and I want to know what you think: Why should I want to live?"

(Continued over the page)

That question knocked the wind out of me! Rob surely didn't know that I had asked myself the same question when I was his age. I said to him, "Rob, only you

"Rob," I said, "I believe it's worth it. I know we live in a broken world, but I am convinced that we have it in our power to fix that which is broken. We call it Tikkun Olam, repairing the world. I do believe that healing is possible. At this very moment, you feel devastated, like Jerusalem, but even the author of Lamentations, states that there is hope awaiting us."

And we turned to chapter 3:

"Giving reply to my heart, I do have hope. How could God's compassion be consumed? His mercies never fail. Does not each dawn bring new hope?" (Lam 3:19-23). So, you see, Rob, every day brings a new opportunity. Two thousand years after it was destroyed, Jerusalem has been rebuilt, only the Temple has not, but we can feel the presence of God in our heart and soul".

After that first meeting, Rob and I met regularly over the next several weeks. I saw him regaining hope and experiencing the blessing of life, once again. As he began to search for the meaning of his life, Rob discerned a few goals he wanted to pursue. He was eventually able to overcome his existential anxiety and was discharged from the hospital.

Prof. Viktor Frankl who spent three and a half years in the camps during WW II, had to exercise strong willpower to retain a positive attitude toward life. While some of the prisoners were giving up hope and throwing themselves against the electrified barbed wires, he was studying the behavior of his fellow inmates and taking notes on pieces of

paper which he intended to use to write a book after the liberation. When a Nazi guard saw what he was doing, he confiscated his coat and the notes were lost. Instead he was given the tattered coat of another inmate who had been sent to his death. In the pocket of the coat, Frankl found the torn page of a prayer-book which contained the Shema Israel. This unusual experience convinced Frankl that there was hope and that he should not give up.

The professor eventually survived and wrote the book he had been planning to write and it became one of the most influential books of the twentieth century according the Library of Congress. Some fifteen million copies of the book have been published in English and it was translated into some 22 languages, including Chinese and Japanese.

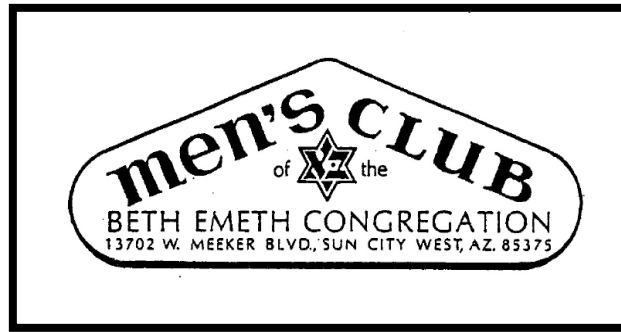
These are the words with which he concluded "Man's Search for Meaning":

"In the concentration camps, in this living laboratory of human interactions, we witnessed some of our comrades behave like swines and others like saints. Man possesses both potentialities within himself, which one is actualized depends on decisions [we make], not on conditions...After all, man is that being who invented the gas chambers of Auschwitz, but he is also that being who entered those gas chambers upright, with the Lord's Prayer or the Sh'mah Israel on his lips."

### **Misheberach for Healing**

As is customary, during services we pray for those who are sick. Names are listed in the weekly bulletin and are read aloud. If anyone wants a name listed for a *mishebeirach*, please call the office by Wednesday of the week and the name will go into the bulletin for that particular week.

A prayer for healing can be said at any time and does not require a minyan. The Amidah (page 113 in Siddur Sim Shalom) shows a format that can be used: "May it be your will, Lord our God and God of our ancestors, to send perfect healing, of body and soul, to \_\_\_\_\_, along with all others who are stricken".



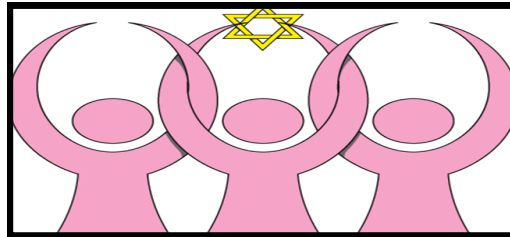
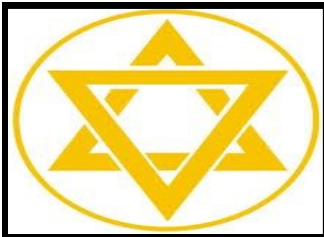
Men's Club co-presidents Norman Kurtz & Gene Cooper have set the date for the "Kick-Off Kosher Hot Dog Day", Nov.6. There were so many requests for another day besides the annual spring affair that it was decided to have another hot dog party. The date chosen is the football team's off day, so it won't interfere with plans to view a game.

Plans are also being made for the Men's Club to host other affairs this Fall. Dates will be announced when confirmed.

The Men's Club will work with the Sisterhood to serve as ushers for the High Holidays. Members will be contacted to perform these duties

We urge all male members of BEC who are not already Men's Club members to join with us to help BEC into the future.

## SISTERHOOD



### Sisterhood Calendar 2016

Usually all Board Meetings are held on the first Thursday of the month at 9:30 a.m. All Sisterhood Membership Meetings are held the second Thursday of the month usually at 1:00 p.m. Please mark the dates of the Sisterhood Meetings. Any woman who has joined Beth Emeth Congregation since March 2016 is a member of Sisterhood until Dec. 2016.

Sept. 8	Thursday	9:30 a.m.	Board Meeting
Sept. 18	Sunday	10:00-12:00 p.m.	Welcome Back Breakfast w/Cong.
Oct. 6	Thursday	9:30 a.m.	Board Meeting
Oct. 13	Thursday	1:00 p.m.	Meeting Program TBA
Nov. 3	Thursday	9:30 a.m.	Board Meeting
Nov. 10	Thursday	11:30 a.m.	Game Day/Luncheon
Dec. 1	Thursday	9:30 a.m.	Board Meeting
Dec. 25	Sunday	Time TBA	Hanukkah Party - All Invited

## Temple Dues and Don'ts

**This interesting article is for information only and to give people something to discuss besides the election! Similar topics will be presented in later editions of The Observer. It originally appeared on [www.jweekly.com](http://www.jweekly.com) and is reprinted with permission.**

A synagogue does not exist to raise money. It exists to be a community. Only about 30% of North American Jews are members of a temple or synagogue. While plenty of Jewish leaders bemoan the pitiful rate at which Jews support and participate in congregations, few mention one of the key reasons.

Unlike the houses of worship of other faiths, Jewish temples and synagogues in North America require their members to ante up large annual dues payments. For many congregations, dues are in the lofty neighborhood of \$1,800 a year or more. Some large urban congregations have annual dues that are two or three times that amount.

Almost all congregations have a process to reduce dues for members who cannot reasonably afford the standard rate. Often, members seeking a reduction must meet with or write to congregational leaders to explain their need. Some congregations require them to provide documentation of their financial situation. For those who find that process humiliating, insulting or aggravating, the only alternatives are to pay full-freight or to not affiliate.

Anyone who has held a leadership position in a Jewish congregation should understand the ideas behind this system. The Temple needs money to exist and everyone has to pay his or her share. Without requiring members to give at a level that will allow the congregation to meet its budget, how could the congregation survive?

For a long time, this system worked. Many Jews thought of Temple dues as "the Jew tax" — the price that they were required to pay to make sure that there would be a place for them to worship, to give their children a Jewish education, and to bury their dead. It was part of the Jewish social contract. A few people always grumbled about it, but as long as their numbers were few, it did not matter.

There is increasing evidence, though, that this system is breaking down in the early 21st century. Many Generation X Jews no longer feel obliged to pay large amounts annually to be part of the Jewish community. For some, Judaism just isn't a high priority compared to other demands for their dollars. Others would prefer to pay for their Judaism à la carte, hiring a rabbi when they need a wedding, bar mitzvah or funeral. There are also Jews who say that synagogues and temples have become hypocritical, caring more about their members' money than about living a Jewish life. And it is not just the Gen Xers. I have heard plenty of Jewish grandmothers and grandfathers tell me that Temple dues are insulting.

Here is the truth as I see it: In some congregations, the present system of dues has become destructive to our mission. We are supposed to be promoting values of compassion, generosity and inclusion. But, sometimes, we are making people feel coerced into paying what they don't think they

Articles questioning the dues system in North American synagogues have appeared in [eJewish Philanthropy](#), [Reform Judaism Magazine](#), [The Forward](#), [The Washington Post](#), [Newsweek](#), and [The New](#)

should have to pay. Our leaders often feel resentful toward Jews who don't "pay their share." We risk creating the impression that our congregations are country clubs. A religious organization cannot sustain itself if it harbors and promotes such coercion, resentment and negative impressions. If the institution of the synagogue is going to survive the 21st century, it has to adapt.

Articles questioning the dues system in North American synagogues have appeared in eJewish Philanthropy, Reform Judaism Magazine, The Forward, The Washington Post, Newsweek, and The New York Times. Asking out loud if we should get rid of dues is no longer a cutting-edge or anti-establishment posture. It is the opening to a necessary conversation about the future of the Jewish community.

There is now a small movement of congregations that are asking just these questions. This spring, the congregation I serve joined them. We are scrapping dues. Temple Beit HaYam in Stuart, Florida, recently sent a letter to its members announcing that it is changing from a dues system to a pledge system. Instead of telling members how much they have to pay, the congregation asks members to pledge the amount they wish to give as their annual financial commitment. Each year, the congregation will calculate the average level of giving needed to support its programs and services based on its budget, membership, and other sources of income. Members will be urged to try hard to reach or exceed the "sustaining amount," but each member family will decide for itself how much to give.

Also under the new system, families headed by adults under age thirty-five are asked to pay no more than \$500 a year, no questions asked. Those are the folks who are going to build the congregation's future. We need them a lot more than we need their money.

Of course, adopting this system is risky. Everyone involved in the decision to do away with dues worried that, given the choice, many members would pay less. The results so far, though, have validated our hopes, not our fears. A large majority of those who have responded to the letter have committed to give to the Temple at the sustaining level or to exceed it. Phew. We really do have a generous congregation where people care about community. I think that most congregations are like that.

I am not advocating this exact system for every congregation. It is entirely possible that our congregation will need to adjust the new system in the coming years. It is still early in what I believe will be a new chapter of the history of the North American Jewish community. Congregations are different and every community will need to do what works best for itself. Yet, I applaud our congregation's lay leaders for trying something new to respond to a real change in our society.

The purpose of a Jewish congregation is not to raise money. It is to celebrate our tradition, to find joy in being a community of compassion and giving, and to express our yearning for God. When the workings of our institutions get in the way of those goals, we need to find a way to do things better. When we unintentionally turn so many Jews away from our congregations, we need to open the doors and let them in.



# ***Birthdays & Anniversaries***

## ***September 2016***

Birthdays		
4	Donald Stevens	
5	Marion Wolf	
8	Marilyn Newberg	
10	Efrem Schwartz	
21	Ronald Paul	
25	Herbert Bistriz	
29	Sonia Marshall	
30	Wilma More	
30	Gerald Rich	
Anniversaries		
5	Max and Sherry Lazar	
12	Louis & Marion Koshar	
16	Marvin & Sue Geller	
16	Michael & Teri Maureen Goldman	

### **Beth Emeth Congregation Tribute Cards & Donations**

Beth Emeth Congregation wishes to thank all those listed below for their generous donations to our Congregation. Their thoughtfulness & consideration is greatly appreciated.

#### **Yahrzeit Donations**

Rose Doyschen  
Ann Goldfarb  
Gail Grossman  
Shirley Gubin  
Solomon & Shula Kantor  
Sheldon & Judith Koven  
Norman Kurtz  
Max & Sherry Lazar  
Peggy Markowitz  
Alice Mason  
Ronald Paul  
Kathleen Todora  
Evelyn Walter

#### **Yizkor Donations**

#### **In Honor Donations**

Berel & Gloria Greenberg  
for Marilyn Newberg and  
for Evelyn Walter

Marilyn & Bob Newberg for  
Rhoda Lessner's 80th birthday

Norma Weintraub for  
Sharon & Marvin Smelkinson's 60th anniversary

#### **General Donations**

Rosa Chavarria  
CC's Adult Care Two, Inc.



## ACADEMY OF JEWISH STUDIES

Beth Emeth Congregation will offer the following program of adult classes in September. They will be taught by Rabbi Leo M Abrami, MAHL, Hebrew Union College, Cincinnati OH and director of the Arizona Institute of Logotherapy, accredited by the Viktor Frankl Institute of Vienna, Austria.

### **Kabbalah: a Spiritual Path beyond Organized Religion**

Wed., Sept. 7, 14, 21, 28; 9:30 - 10:30 am

Tuition: \$10 (members); \$24 (non-members)

### **History of Zionism and the State of Israel, from Theodor Herzl to our days**

Wed., Sept. 7, 14, 21, 28; 10:30 - 11:30 am

Tuition: \$10 (members); \$24 (non-members)

### **Reading Hebrew with the Mnemonic Method (two sessions)**

Mon., Sept. 12, 19; 9:30 - 10:30 am

Tuition: \$6 (members); \$12 (non-members)

### **Biblical Hebrew; a Textual Study of the Book of Jonah (Chapter I)**

(must be able to read Hebrew, see previous course!)

Mon., Sept. 12, 19, 26; 10:30 - 11:30 am

Tuition: \$8 (members); \$18 (non-members)

## **REGISTRATION**

I wish to sign up for the following course(s);

- . Kabbalah ☐
- . Zionism ☐
- . Reading Hebrew ☐
- . Biblical Hebrew ☐

Name:.....

Address: .....

Email: ..... Tel.....

Please send your registration and check, made out to Beth Emeth Congregation, to  
Beth Emeth Congregation  
13702 Meeker Blvd, Sun City West, AZ 85375



### Join us for the Pilgrimage festivals after the High Holy Days

Erev Sukkot	Sunday Oct 16	7:30 pm
Sukkot	Monday Oct 17	9:00 am
Sukkot 2nd day	Tuesday 18	9:00 am
Hoshana Rabbah	Sunday Oct 4	8:00 am
Erev Shemini Atzeret	Sunday Oct 23	7:30 pm
Shemini Atzeret	Monday Oct 24	9:00 am
Erev Simhat Torah	Monday Oct 24	7:00 pm
Simhat Torah	Tuesday Oct 25	9:00 am

The mitzvah is to “dwell (sit) in the sukkah”.  
Can’t sit in the sukkah if there isn’t one!

Call the office to volunteer with the building of this  
annual reminder of our heritage.



\*\*\*\*\*  
 \* **Honor this very important date...** \*  
 \*  
 \* On Sunday, September 11 Beth Emeth will host a commemora- \*  
 \* tion of those who died, those who rescued and those who were \*  
 \* otherwise affected by the horrendous attacks on that date in \*  
 \* 2001. \*  
 \*  
 \* Lunch will be served and there will be a community honor cere- \*  
 \* mony in which leaders of Sun City West clergy will participate \*  
 \* and the guest speaker will be Congressman Trent Franks. \*  
 \*  
 \* This function is open to the public, not only to Beth Emeth mem- \*  
 \* bers, so please invite friends of all faiths. There is no charge but \*  
 \* reservations are required so please call the office at 623-584- \*  
 \* 7210 between 9 am and noon. \*  
 \*  
 \* \*\*\*\*\*

### The Rebbetzin's Little Project

You might have been to hotels or on a cruise during your travels and collected some of those little bars of soap or bottles of shampoo or body lotion. If you are not using them, please bring them to the office, marked for my attention. They will be donated to organizations that help the homeless. The small size is very important because most of those less fortunate people don't have place to store possessions. You can even bring them to services and give them to me then, if that saves you a trip to the office. Thanks.  
 Rosemary Abrami

### Jewish Family and Children's Service

Ellie Schwartzberg of Jewish Family and Children's Service (JFCS) offers individual counseling, referral to appropriate resources and advocacy to Jewish people living in the Sun Cities and surrounding communities.

This is a free program underwritten by the Jewish Federation. Ellie has a Master's degree in counseling from ASU and has been at JFCS for the past 32 years working with an older population. She is currently the Vice President of Geriatric Services at JFCS. Ellie offers this program at the Sun Cities Community Services Building on Tuesdays (9451 N. 99<sup>th</sup> Ave. Sun City) and at Beth Emeth Synagogue (13702 W. Meeker, Sun City West) on Thursdays. Counseling addresses such issues as coping with bereavement and loss, care-giving stress, long term planning and decision making, adjustment to chronic health problems, loss of independence, depression, couples' issues, communication and problem solving with adult children, etc.

Ellie facilitates a Bereavement Support Group at Beth Emeth Congregation every Thursday from 1:00-2:00 PM. This group is open to anyone who has lost a spouse or significant other within the past two years.

Please call Ellie Schwartzberg at 602-452-4660 for more information or to make an appointment.

## You can help Beth Emeth , at no cost to yourself

Amazon Smile is a web site operated by Amazon that lets you enjoy the same wide selection of products and prices as on Amazon.com. The difference is that when you shop on AmazonSmile, you will be prompted to select a charitable organization which will receive 0.5% of the purchase price donated by Amazon.

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## Help Support Beth Emeth!

Did you know you can support Beth Emeth just by shopping at Fry's? It's easy when you enroll in Fry's Community Rewards! To get started, sign up with your V.I.P Card , and select Beth Emeth Congregation as the local organization you wish to support. Once you're enrolled, you'll earn rewards for Beth Emeth every time you shop and use your V.I.P Card!

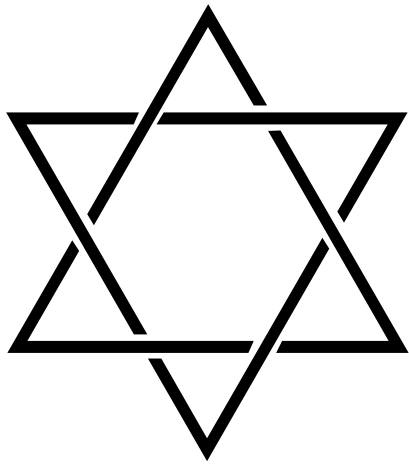
### Recruiting

#### **EVERY MEMBER GET A MEMBER**

The membership committee requests that you forward any names, addresses and phone numbers of prospective members for Beth Emeth Congregation.

We appreciate your LEADS.  
Let's grow together!  
Thanks for your assistance.

**Contact the Office  
(623)584-7210 or Email:  
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- David & Iris Silverman, Freedom Plaza Residents since 2013



**Contact 623-815-4013 to schedule your  
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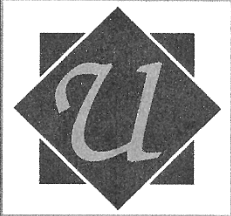
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Bryan Updegraff, MD



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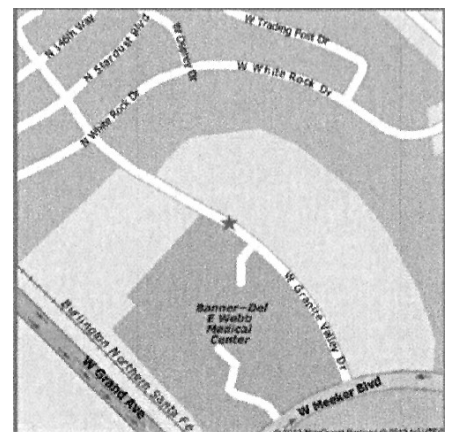
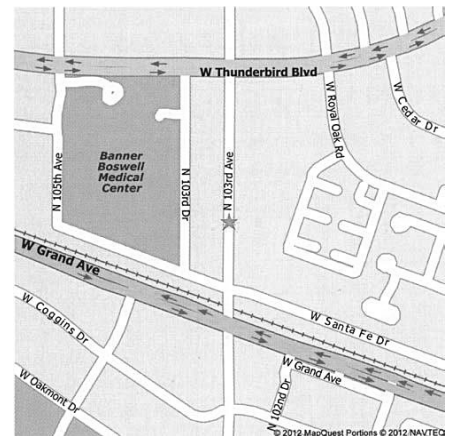
### *Sun City Location*

13000 N. 103rd Avenue, Suite 60  
Sun City, AZ 85351  
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### *Sun City West Location*

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**623.975.4244**





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