

# Sons of Orpheus will hold benefit concerts

By Loni Nannini  
SPECIAL TO THE ARIZONA DAILY STAR

It's the most wonderful time of the year and Sons of Orpheus has a special present for Tucsonans.

Tucson's male choir will give the gift of song at two concerts: The 19th Annual Holiday Benefit Concert and Food Drive for the Community Food Bank and the 20th Annual "Christmas at San Xavier" to benefit the restoration and preservation of the Mission San Xavier del Bac.

The chorus was founded "to fill a void" 26 years ago by tenor Grayson Hirst, a recently retired professor of voice at the University of Arizona whose career included more than 70 major roles and performances throughout the United States and abroad.

"The Orpheon movement began in the 19th century in Europe when millworkers and factory workers and coal miners all came together to sing and enjoy brotherhood and friendship. There was no male voice choir in Tucson when we began and I thought it was something that was important for the musical life in our community," said Hirst.

Since then, the choir has thrived. It has completed five Eu-



JIM PALKA

The Sons of Orpheus' concerts will support San Xavier and the food bank.

ropean tours and a tour of Mexico and has performed at the White House and the Vatican. Comprised of 45 active members, it presents more than 20 concerts each season and collaborates with groups such as the Tucson Arizona Boys Chorus, the Tucson Girls Chorus and many UA soloists and musicians.

Over the years, Hirst said it has earned a reputation as "the chorus that cares" for its gratis work to

benefit local nonprofits and music scholarships.

"We think it is important to reach out to the community. There is a lot of taking going on and there can always be more giving back, especially at this time of year. It is a way of saying thanks for our blessings, which are manifold," said Hirst.

Contact freelance writer Loni Nannini at [ninch2@comcast.net](mailto:ninch2@comcast.net)

## SONS OF ORPHEUS CONCERTS

### The 19th Annual Holiday Benefit Concert and Food Drive for the Community Food Bank

- **When:** 7 p.m. Dec. 7
- **Where:** Berger Center for the Performing Arts, 1200 W. Speedway.
- **Cost:** Free with a nonperishable food item and/or tax-deductible monetary donation.
- **Details:** The benefit has raised more than \$82,000 and four tons of food for the Community Food Bank over the years. The program features the Sons of Orpheus and students of the Arizona State Schools for the Deaf and Blind along with special guests Soprano Lindsey McHugh, Violinist Kai Skaggs, Pianist Brent Burmeister and El Mariachi Tapatio.
- **For information:** Visit [www.sonsoforpheus.org](http://www.sonsoforpheus.org) or send an email to [contact1@sonsoforpheus.org](mailto:contact1@sonsoforpheus.org)

### 20th Annual "Christmas at San Xavier" featuring the Sons of Orpheus in collaboration with the Tucson Arizona Boys Chorus

- **When:** 6 p.m. and 8 p.m. Dec. 13-15.
- **Where:** Mission San Xavier del

Bac, 1950 W. San Xavier Road.

- **Cost:** \$100 per person; advance ticket purchase required.

- **Details:** Sponsored by the Patronato San Xavier, the concert has raised more than \$2 million over the past two decades to benefit the restoration and preservation of Mission San Xavier del Bac.

- **For information:** Or to purchase tickets, visit the Patronato San Xavier website at [www.patronatosanxavier.org/tickets/](http://www.patronatosanxavier.org/tickets/) or call 262-4441.

### A special "Christmas at San Xavier" concert featuring the Sons of Orpheus, the Tucson Arizona Boys Chorus, the Tucson Girls Chorus and renowned Native American Flutist R. Carlos Nakai

- **When:** 4:45 p.m. Dec. 12.
- **Details:** The benefit begins at the Arizona Inn with drinks and heavy hors d'oeuvres and includes transportation to and from the mission.
- **Cost:** is \$250 per person. Tickets can be purchased online at [www.patronatosanxavier.org/tickets/](http://www.patronatosanxavier.org/tickets/) or by calling 407-6130.

# Giving Tuesday spreads holiday cheer

By Loni Nannini  
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If you are feeling generous after scoring cyber-bargains and nabbing doorbusters last weekend, consider giving it up Tuesday, Nov. 29, for #GivingTuesday, the latest in the line-up of post-Thanksgiving days that herald the arrival of the holidays.



COURTESY OF INTERFAITH COMMUNITY SERVICES

Interfaith Community Services' holiday program links donors with families needing clothing, toys and food.

cial assistance programs — which provide money for rent, utilities, transportation and job assistance — for families in need and programs such as Mobile Meals and other assistance for low-income seniors. Last year, the agency served more than 1,300 seniors — an increase of more than 30 percent over the prior year — and Carr said resources are not keeping pace.

"The Tucson area is the third most rapidly aging city in America according to Forbes Magazine. We are seeing those numbers translate into more requests for assistance, particularly for seniors who are low income or living on extremely fixed incomes," Carr said.

Every donation matters, according to Carr. She said that \$30 buys two monthly bus passes so people can travel to work; \$50 pays for 12 meals for seniors or disabled people through the ICS Mobile Meals program and \$1,200 can pay a month's rent for two families.

Alternately, according to ICS research, the estimated cost to house a family of

four in an emergency shelter for one month and help them access the resources they will receive if they are homeless is \$3,448.

"It is much more cost-effective — and less stressful on the family and the children — to keep a family together in their home. Anytime we can lessen a family's reliance on systemic assistance and point them in direction of self sufficiency, it is really a cost savings for the community. We work with people to develop plans and identify barriers to being self-reliant and help them get back on a path toward long-term independence," she said.

During the holidays, short-term assistance include the ICS Holiday Gifts of Love program, which allows individuals, groups, businesses and faith organizations to adopt a family receiving ICS assistance. Almost 100 families have been adopted this year, but more than 200 families are still awaiting adoption.

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## GIVING TUESDAY

Make a donation for #GivingTuesday, go to [www.givingtuesday.org](http://www.givingtuesday.org). The website allows you to search by organization or location.

Here are some ways to help locally:

### Jewish Federation of Southern Arizona

Donate online to one of six agencies affiliated with the Jewish Federation of Southern Arizona at [southernaz.secure-fed-web.jewishfederations.org/page/contribute/giving-tuesday-test-2](http://southernaz.secure-fed-web.jewishfederations.org/page/contribute/giving-tuesday-test-2) or call 577-9393 to make a contribution.

### Humane Society of Southern Arizona

Donate to animals who have been abandoned and neglected through Fund the Forgotten at [www.crowdrise.com/giving-tuesday-2016-fund-the-forgotten/fundraiser/humanesociety-ofsouth2](http://www.crowdrise.com/giving-tuesday-2016-fund-the-forgotten/fundraiser/humanesociety-ofsouth2) or call 327-6088 for information.

### Interfaith Community Services

Donate to Interfaith Community Services at [www.icstucson.org/giving-tuesday](http://www.icstucson.org/giving-tuesday) or support the Holiday Gifts of Love Program to provide clothing, gifts, toys and/or food for a prescreened family during the holidays. Individuals, groups of friends, businesses, religious groups and civic organizations can be "matched" with a family of their choice through Dec. 16 in order to provide clothing, gifts, toys and/or food for the holidays. For more information visit [www.icstucson.org/](http://www.icstucson.org/) or call 297-6049, ext. 219.

## NONPROFITS' WISH LIST



A.E. ARAIZA / ARIZONA DAILY STAR

A baby night heron stands inside the eagle flight enclosure at the Tucson Wildlife Center.

### LITERACY CONNECTS

- **Mission:** Connecting people of all ages to a world of opportunities through literacy and creative expression.
- **Wish list:** Full-size iPad with wall mount, easels for displaying books in the library, platform hand truck for moving boxes of books, small to medium patio furniture for more courtyard seating, volunteers to work with children and/or adults on literacy and life skills, gently used children's books, monetary donations to support literacy programming at all stages of life.
- **Address:** 200 E. Yavapai Road, Tucson, AZ 85705; 882-8006; [www.literacyconnects.org](http://www.literacyconnects.org)

[www.tucsonwildlife.com](http://www.tucsonwildlife.com)

### HOLY NEEDLES

- **Mission:** Donating handmade items to babies, children, homeless, veterans in need within Tucson.
- **Wish list:** Washable fleece material in solid and print suitable for children and babies, worsted weight yarn in all colors, baby weight yarn.
- **Address:** Casas Church, 10801 N. La Cholla Blvd., Tucson, AZ 85742, 797-3230.

### SOUTHERN ARIZONA GREYHOUND ADOPTION

- **Mission:** Transitioning healthy and injured retired racing greyhounds to beloved pets, matching them with forever homes.
- **Wish list:** Dog food: Nature's Domain (Costco) turkey and sweet potato, Authority (PetsMart) chicken, large breed; dog snacks (made in U.S. only); donations for medical care; sturdy dog toys, squeakers preferred; large collars, martingale collars and leashes; Kong snack filler toys, large/x-large; XXL wire crates; exercise pens.
- **Address:** Twin Peaks Veterinary Clinic, 7555 W. Twin Peaks Road, Marana, AZ 85743, or Briarcrest Veterinary Care Center 7313 E. Tanque Verde Road, Tucson, AZ, 85715; 955-7421; [www.sagreyhoundadoption.org](http://www.sagreyhoundadoption.org)

### TUCSON WILDLIFE CENTER

- **Mission:** Dedicated to the rescue and emergency medical care of sick, injured and orphaned wildlife in preparation for release back into the wild, while promoting habitat protection and coexistence through education.
- **Wish list:** Copy paper, postage stamps, gas cards, grocery cards, Kleenex, unscented kitty litter, toilet paper, large plastic trash bags, gallon-sized Ziploc bags, large white towels, monetary donations and volunteers to help maintain the grounds.
- **Address:** 13275 E. Speedway, Tucson, AZ 85748; 290-9453,

## BEN'S BELLS



- **What:** Ben's Bells promote kindness and community involvement. Each week a person who makes Tucson better is "belled."
- **Last week's recipient:** Laura Davis.
- **Nominated by:** Leticia

Saldivar Weaver.


- **Why:** For her work with families with children battling serious illnesses. Davis is a pediatric social worker at Banner-University Medical Center. Weaver said she met Davis after her stepson, Josh, was

diagnosed with terminal brain cancer. She said her stepson was a big sports fan and Davis worked to get him to many sporting events as he could. Weaver said Davis' compassion, love and hard work were "unparalleled." "Laura was our

guiding angel through this journey called cancer," Weaver wrote in her nomination letter. "Her dedication and commitment does not only come from an incredible work ethic but from deep rooted love and kindness for mankind. She

works tirelessly for children and families every day."

- More info and to nominate someone: Go to [bensbells.org/BellingForm](http://bensbells.org/BellingForm) to submit a name. Go to [bensbells.org](http://bensbells.org) or call 622-1379 for more information.



# POWERING OUR COMMUNITY

TEP employees volunteer hundreds of hours every month to make our community better. From packing food boxes to planting trees at local parks and schools, TEP is committed to energizing our neighborhoods and strengthening the place we call home.

For more details, visit us at [tep.com/community](http://tep.com/community)

