

Trumpets Restaurant Issues

by Anthem Voice Contributors

Trumpets is the name of the first-class restaurant established in **Sun City Anthem**.

It was initially opened and operated by Del Webb as a major amenity for the community members. But, when Pulte acquired Del Webb in 2002, the new owners required that it be converted into a leased operation.

The selected lease operator was "**S&D Café V**" owned and operated by well-known Las Vegas restaurateurs Victor Scotto and Michael Demitrius. This operation was successful for a couple of years before unresolved business disputes resulted in "irreconcilable differences" that eventually led to separation at the end of the lease period.

After the lessee was required to vacate the premises in October 2007, Sun City Anthem Boards and the Community Manager attempted to obtain a new restaurant operator - but the 7,000+ square foot, fully-furnished facilities remain vacant.

Meanwhile, many questions were raised by SCA members:

- (1) Should *Trumpets* be for members only? Since we have over 10,000 residents, why could it not be successful if limited to members and guests only?
- (2) Since the members have such diverse food interests, should the catering services serving SCA's various clubs, special interests groups, and official member activities allow more than one catering provider?
- (3) If public access was allowed to *Trumpets* in the future, should the lessee's profits be shared with SCA?
- (4) Should all SCA members be polled to express their opinions on the qualifications of the proposed lessee, the proposed menus, and the proposed operational intentions **before** a contract is finalized?

Currently, the Board majority's opinions on the above questions are as follows:

- (1) Public access **will** be allowed for both the restaurant and catering services. This would require SCA to continue to pay property taxes on the Anthem Center - which has been reported to be about \$24,000 for many years; including the past year when it was vacant.

(2) Catering services **will not** be limited to the lessee's offerings; even though that will mean outside catering prices will be much higher because other catering companies could not be allowed to use the SCA kitchen facilities.

(3) Revenue for both restaurant and catering services **will** be shared with SCA; even though such profit-sharing will force the prices of menu items and catering services to members to be much higher than necessary.

(4) Members **will not** be polled on anything concerning the *Trumpets* lease decisions; even though future losses could result in special assessments for members.

In the meantime, a few influential residents are aggressively advocating that any lessee is better than no lessee. That approach disregards the experiences of having to deal with lessees who are underperforming, but unwilling to improve or vacate.

If you are interested in the outcome of this lease process, please make your opinions and interests known to the Board.

In our opinion, it is best to get a *Trumpets* solution that the majority of our members will support - no matter how long it takes. These are our unique facilities, and we all suffer the consequences of additional mistakes.