

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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GLENDALE CELEBRATES SWEET SUCCESS WITH DOWNTOWN FESTIVAL SEASON

GLENDALE, Ariz. – Glendale is attracting large numbers of visitors to its downtown due to the city’s series of winter events, including Glendale Glitters, December holiday weekends, Glitter & Glow and the Glendale Chocolate Affaire. Thus far, the festivals have brought approximately 400,000 to the area.

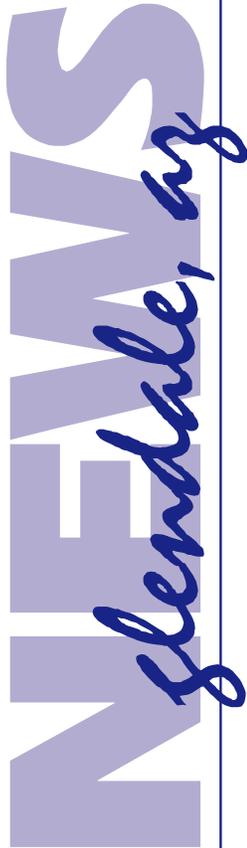
Last year, Glendale’s entire season totaled about 400,000. So this season will certainly surpass that number, with the upcoming Jazz & Blues Festival adding to attendance overall.

The city’s series of Glitters-related festivities drew approximately 275,000 – an increase over 2010-11. Opening weekend attendance was 80,000; Spirit of Giving Weekend was 25,000; Winter Wonderland Weekend was 30,000; Jingle Bell Rockin’ Nights was 40,000; and Glendale Glitter & Glow drew 100,000 in a single night!

“It’s remarkable just how much our festivals continue to grow in popularity,” said Jerry McCoy, Glendale’s deputy director of Marketing/Communications. “During our most recent chocolate event, we had visitors from as far away as Washington, Montana, Ohio, Maine and Canada. The Glendale Visitor Center staff was non-stop in handling phone calls and walk-in traffic before and during the event. Most importantly, downtown and other area businesses are the ones benefitting now that we are attracting a greater portion of the Valley’s ‘snowbirds’ and other winter visitors.”

There are accolades to celebrate, as well. Glendale Glitters was named one of the top five festivals events in the state of Arizona by AAA’s *Highroads* Magazine. The Glendale Glitters Spectacular event was an officially-sanctioned state Centennial event, as was the Glendale Chocolate Affaire.

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Glendale's Special Events

Add 1.1.1

In addition, Glendale Glitters contributed to the community by providing more than just twinkling lights. The Spirit of Giving Weekend involved a food drive for St. Mary's Food Bank, which not only collected food during the event, but partnered with various downtown merchants to further promote the collection of meals for needy families during the holidays. The food drive collected more than 1,200 pounds of food, equating to 4,219 meals for Valley residents, which is more than double the amount collected in 2010.

Merchants in the downtown area reported increased sales and the importance of the downtown festival season to their businesses. "Another fantastic special event and they just keep getting better and better," said Linda Moran-Whittle, owner of Papa Ed's Ice Cream. "There is so much hard work behind the scenes and we as businesses in Downtown Glendale are truly blessed to be a part of it."

"The year 2011 and now starting 2012 proved financially successful retail seasons due in a very large part to the draw of thousands of visitors to Downtown Glendale for Glendale Glitters," said Ray Ralls, owner of A Mad Hatter's. "After 15 years of owning a business in Downtown, I look forward to Glendale Glitters, Glendale Chocolate Affaire, and the Glendale Jazz and Blues Festival to help boost traffic in my store, and I know that many of the merchants feel exactly the same way. There were many customers that I either overheard, or they told me directly, that they have made the lights of Glendale Glitters and shopping the merchants of Historic Glendale a holiday tradition for their family. Some of these people live close by, while others travel from the other side of the Valley or even further."

Glendale's sweet success continued into February, with the Glendale Chocolate Affaire, matching its highest-ever attendance at 95,000! The Glendale Visitor Center reported an increase in foot traffic to the downtown, most from outside of the Valley and from out of state. Many downtown merchants reported this year's Chocolate Affaire as their 'best-ever' sales. One business noted a 17% increase in sales over last year's event weekend.

In addition, the popularity of the event was reported all across the country, with media coverage spanning news outlets from coast to coast, resulting in nearly \$75,000 in media value for the event overall.

To top off the success of the Glendale Chocolate Affaire, Glendale 11 debuts an all-new edition of the Chocolate Affaire show, where viewers can get a taste of the sights and sounds of Glendale's sweetest event. The show will debut Wednesday, Feb. 15 at 7 p.m. on Cox Cable Glendale 11.

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Glendale's Special Events
Add 2.2.2

The city of Glendale's Office of Special Events wraps up its festival season April 14-15 with the Glendale Jazz & Blues Festival.

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