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Happy Holidays!

Best of Our Valley just ended, and it was a fun 60 days. We look forward to featuring all the winners in the March issue of Arizona Foothills Magazine. We will be having the annual Best of Our Valley celebration in March at the Scottsdale Beach Club. (For more details, visit AZFoothills.com.) We are also doing something new and looking for the most eligible Phoenicians to feature in the February issue of AFM. No voting here; just some people who are very successful but have not found that perfect match. Please let us know about deserving bachelors and bachelorettes at mosteligible@azfoothills.com.

December is a great time of the year and living in Arizona makes it even better, thanks to the nice weather. I used to miss the snowy days I experienced growing up in Chicago. However, as we grow new habits form, and I can say I no longer miss snow and gloomy days. Arizona is my home, and we are blessed to live in one of the best places ever. In December, everyone seems to have spirit, even though the last four years have been a bit of a challenge with the economy. The great news is Arizona is now seeing a recovery, and we see it each and every day. It is so great to see so many new places opening up across the Valley. Every week I see and meet new people and feel their energy. The attitude is great and people are investing in Arizona. Here are some of my new favorites. Be sure to check them out with your out-of-town guests.

The House Brasserie is the best little escape in the heart of Old Town Scottsdale. This was created by Chef Matt Carter, Terry Ellisor and Brian Raab. The group also heads up The Mission in Old Town, one of the best places to dine, along with Zinc Bistro in Kierland Commons.

Isabella's Kitchen in Grayhawk is, by far, my favorite new place. The patio is amazing, it has a great casual feel and, yes, you will see kids outside running around at times. This is one of the best things to happen to North Scottsdale. The food is Italian with great pizzas. It is a must-try for residents and visitors.

Market Street Kitchen in DC Ranch is a success with Chef Robert McGrath making his magic happen. It's nice to see some life in DC Ranch and Market Street.

UNION at Biltmore Fashion Park is a unique concept that puts together a collection of shops that offer everything from custom-made perfume to kids' toys to great eats. (This is next to Stingray Sushi.)

Wherever you decide to go, the most important part of the holidays is spending time with the people you love the most. We wish everyone the very best this holiday season.

Happy holidays.

Michael S. Dee *President and Publisher*

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Michael Dee of Arizona Foothills Magazine welcomes your comments or questions at Mdee@azfoothills.com.