

# GO to downtown Gilbert for some fun

2.18.12

I have come to see the Heritage District in downtown Gilbert on a Saturday. It is a typical Saturday. I walk down main street, Gilbert Road, and I stand there absorbing the moment.



**TOM MCNALLY**

There are cars and there are people. Buildings, standing a mere two stories, appear majestic in the way they hover over the crowd. The crowd is dense and there is bumper-to-bumper traffic. There are many sounds and colors moving through the streets. People on the sidewalks move at an even slower pace along Gilbert Road and the side streets.

The bustle of people wandering in and out the retail shops and restaurants is engaging.

As I walk beyond Gilbert Road, I turn to the west if only to rest my eyes from the crowds and hustle and bustle of a Saturday morning in the district. Here I am only to find a similar envi-

ronment to that which I have just departed. To my surprise, I find even more activity as crowds of people walk casually about the farmers market held every Saturday morning.

Row upon row of white canopies welcome me to the market as I walk leisurely down Page Avenue to where the Gilbert water tower stands as a tribute to our wonderful town. The tower that stands high above our town to remind us of our heritage.

Mingled into the rows of canopies are throngs of people who have come to enjoy the food, fun and entertainment at the Gilbert Farmers Market. This market is entering its second year in the Heritage District and it continues to grow each week.

The variety of fresh produce, artwork and novelties intrigue visitors of all ages. The smell of gourmet coffee entices my nostrils as I pass through the converted parking lot of vendors.

Now totally into the atmosphere, I suddenly spy another more permanent edifice at the end of the parking lot as if an anchor to the community. Sturdy

looking and new, it stands undaunted to newcomers who see the high sign that simply says in very large, lighted letters, "GO." What is this "Go?" I think. The building is beautifully decorated and landscaped. The GO is a cleverly designed, created and uniquely named restroom.

The truth is there are lots of reasons for you to visit Gilbert's Heritage District. New businesses are popping up on a regular basis. Existing places have been redone and modernized. Many more activities are planned for the near future.

As my trip downtown on a Saturday has enlightened me and brought me to a new respect for the District so it has also done for many others. If you haven't already taken a tour of the old Gilbert downtown, the Heritage District, you may want to consider doing it. I encourage you to take your family, take your friends; and by all means GO.

*Tom McNally is a member of the Gilbert Redevelopment Commission.*