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Avondale park getting fix-up

Shane McOwen

Avondale's Donnie Hale Park is getting a spruce up.

The city of Avondale and Hillshire Brand are heading up an effort to clean up, paint and add a mural to the park at 10857 W. Fourth St.

Both groups are looking to improve the park by painting the benches and tables and adding a mural to the snack bar building.

Hillshire Brand, formerly Sara Lee, has a mixing center in Tolleson off of 107th Avenue near the park. Hillshire Brand's more famous products include Ball Park hot dogs and Jimmy Dean sausage.



Phoenix volunteer Marilyn Mays-Van Epps paints a picnic table at Donnie Hale Park Feb. 27 in Avondale. A new effort to restore and beautify the park was recently started at the park, near 107th Avenue and Buckeye Road. View photo by Michael Clawson

"We're always looking for ways to partner with the community," said Yvonne Eggins of Hillshire Brand.

The goal is to improve the park and host a barbecue for the community at the project's completion, Eggins said.

Krizia Dayak, a student at Estrella Mountain Community College in Avondale, won a contest among art classes at the school to earn a chance to design and paint the mural for the park.

"It's awesome, it's something that's outside of school," Dayak said. 'I've always just done things for school."

Dayak said her design has the theme of sustainability.

"It's really cool to do something for the community," she said.

Nadine White, who is also with Hillshire Brand, said the overall theme of the cleanup is sustainability.

"We're big on sustainability," she said. "We want to promote it with the barbecue."

Hillshire Brand was looking for a community project and chose Donnie Hale Park for its close proximity to the company and the general interest and support from Avondale, Eggins said.

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"[Avondale] was kind enough to donate the supplies to clean and paint," White said.

The park, named after the son of the family that previously owned the land, will be much more colorful than in the past, with benches and tables to be coated with bright colors of green, yellow and red.

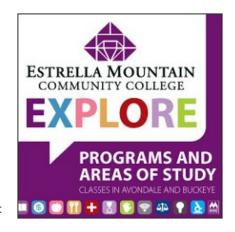
"Everything was gray," Eggins said. "We wanted to spruce it up."

The mural was one way to do that.

"We learned from the city that there is less of a chance for graffiti with the mural being up there," Eggins said. "It's about artists respecting other artists."

Hillshire Brands and Avondale hope to have the project completed by the end of March, and a community barbecue in April.

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