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PRESS RELEASE

WM PHOENIX OPEN

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DONATED \$40,000 AND MORE THAN 240,000 POUNDS OF UNUSED, NON-ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES FROM 2024 EVENT

**THE THUNDERBIRDS AND WM PHOENIX OPEN GIVE BACK TO ST. MARY'S FOOD BANK
FOLLOWING 2024 EDITION OF "THE PEOPLE'S OPEN"**

SCOTTSDALE, Ariz. – Giving back to the community is a major focus each and every year for the WM Phoenix Open and tournament hosts The Thunderbirds, and they gave back once again to one of their longtime charity partners, St. Mary's Food Bank, after the conclusion of the 2024 edition of "The People's Open."

On Tuesday of WM Phoenix Open week (Feb. 6), The Thunderbirds partnered with the PGA TOUR Wives Association to host the PGA TOUR Wives Golf Classic. This friendly competition featured TOUR Wives competing in a 9-hole shootout for charity while their PGA TOUR pro husbands served as caddies for the day – carrying golf bags, raking bunkers and tending pin flags. This year the PGA TOUR Wives Classic raised \$40,000 for St. Mary's Food Bank, which is the equivalent to 200,000 meals for those in need.

Additionally, The Thunderbirds and PGA TOUR Wives Association volunteered at St. Mary's Food Bank on Wednesday of tournament week (Feb. 7), a visit that resulted in the packing of hundreds of emergency food boxes and a collaboration with "Big Ass Fans", who also volunteered and stepped up by gifting two of their giant fans that will help keep St. Mary's Food Bank volunteers cool in summer months.

Following the tournament, The Thunderbirds also donated all unused non-alcoholic beverages to St. Mary's Food Bank, which took three semi-truck loads to deliver and weighed in at more than 240,000 pounds.

“The WM Phoenix Open, The Thunderbirds, and the PGA TOUR Wives are synonymous with giving back to the community. St. Mary’s Food Bank is so grateful for their continued support,” said Milt Liu, President and CEO. “Their donations of meals, beverages, and Big Ass Fans will have a lasting impact. This comes at a great time, too. More neighbors than ever before are leaning on the Food Bank to survive. The Thunderbirds and the golfing community always ask, ‘How can we help?’ We can’t thank them enough for their assistance in the fight against hunger.”

The Thunderbirds have been longtime supporters of St. Mary’s Food Bank, and most recently, over the last 10 years, have donated more than \$1.3 million to the food bank. Those grants have provided nourishment to children and families in need in many ways, from assisting in the expansion of after-school Kids Cafe Program to bolstering the School Pantry Program across metro Phoenix and rural Arizona. Additionally, in 2020 during the height of the COVID pandemic, The Thunderbirds provided \$100,000 to St. Mary’s Food Bank at a crucial time of need to help facilitate food distribution amidst widespread closures.

“Without a doubt, giving back to our communities is the most rewarding thing about what we do as tournament hosts,” said Pat Williams, Big Chief of The Thunderbirds and President of Thunderbirds Charities. “We’re so grateful for our partners at St. Mary’s Food Bank and the PGA TOUR Wives Association for their dedication and assistance to help those in need.”

The 2024 edition wrapped of the WM Phoenix Open wrapped up at TPC Scottsdale in mid-February, with Nick Taylor earning the win in two playoff holes over Charley Hoffman. The People’s Open” was named Tournament of the Year at the 2023 PGA TOUR annual meetings, garnering the award for the fifth time to acknowledge the tournament’s legendary status as one the most unique events in golf. The upcoming 2025 edition will mark the 90th playing of the event (one of the five oldest events on the PGA TOUR) and the 16th with WM as title sponsor. For more information visit www.WMPhoenixOpen.com.

The Thunderbirds were founded in 1937 with the mission of promoting the Valley of the Sun through sports. The Thunderbirds consist of 55 “active” members and more than 280 “life” members who have helped the tournament eclipse \$190 million in charitable giving since its

inception in 1932. For more information on The Thunderbirds visit www.WMPhoenixOpen.com/more-about-the-thunderbirds/.

