



north central news

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A year of pandemic strains community

By Colleen Sparks

A year after the COVID-19 pandemic shook the country; all aspects of life in North Central are still strained with no clear indication as to when things could return to normal.

The highly contagious and sometimes deadly virus around the world has heavily impacted the mental and physical health and economy of the community and world.

While vaccines that are highly effective at preventing COVID-19 are being provided around the state, there are still tremendous challenges residents are struggling with as they attempt to support themselves, care for their families and stay healthy.

"It's just such a wonderful community," said Kenneth Baca, superintendent of the Madison Elementary School District. "Oftentimes in the midst of turmoil and change a community will reveal itself. For the most part our parents, our families have been

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Corey Loyd, director of baseball for Recreation Association of Madison Meadows & Simis (RAMMS) helps his son, Maddox, 9, practice ahead of the RAMMS' baseball season, which is scheduled to start March 13 (photo by Colleen Sparks).

Athletes eager for sports after COVID-19

By Colleen Sparks

Coaches and players are excited to get back into the swing of youth baseball, basketball, track and other sports in North Central after the COVID-19 pandemic forced many teams to stay on the sidelines or postpone games.

In order to protect the health of young athletes, coaches and parents, many local sports organizations and school teams have had to postpone and/or cancel games and practices since last spring. As children and teens return to play, there are new safety measures in place, including requiring everyone except the athletes to wear masks during games.

Coaches say while practices and games look different they are happy kids have a chance to exercise, learn athletic skills and socialize. They also say sports provide a sense of normalcy during this chaotic time.

Recreation Association of Madison Meadows & Simis (RAMMS) suspended fall sports because of the pandemic. Basketball season for RAMMS teams started a little later than usual and several games had to be canceled when some players tested positive for COVID, said Jon Simon, RAMMS director of the boys basketball program. Also RAMMS basketball teams practiced and played outdoors as experts say the virus spreads more easily indoors.

Players were required to wear masks walking to and from basketball courts but not while playing. Coaches, parents and referees were required to wear masks all the time at games.

Despite the challenges, the RAMMS basketball season went well, said Simon, who has two sons and a daughter who play RAMMS sports.

"Our goal was just get the kids out and moving, get exercise," he said. "The games have gone surprisingly well. The kids have adapted. Parents have adapted."

Opening day for RAMMS baseball teams is tentatively planned for Saturday, March 13, a few weeks later than normal, said Corey Loyd, RAMMS director of baseball. Loyd already has been helping his son

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Joe McCallum (left), Adam McCallum, Frank Malefors and Ryan Mapes sit in front of the former Eye Opener Family Restaurant, where they plan to open a vintage furniture store that will be called Eye Opener (photo by Miles McDermott).

Iconic spot will become vintage furniture store

By Colleen Sparks

A vintage furniture store is going to open in the spot where Eye Opener Family Restaurant used to be in Sunnyslope.

Joe McCallum and his brother, Adam McCallum purchased the building at 524 W. Hatcher Road, which had been home to the eatery until it closed several years ago. Joe said business partners Frank Malefors of Malefors Vintage Imports and Ryan Mapes of Fine Line Modern will be the main employees working inside the furniture store once it opens.

Joe collects vintage and modern furniture. Malefors and Mapes have sold furniture at various stores in the area but no longer had a physical business from which to sell items and the building on Hatcher Road intrigued the group.

"We had an interest in the building because it's interesting," Joe said. "My brother and I didn't have much desire to operate a restaurant. We saw a big, wide open space (that) was just ideal for a furniture storeroom."

He said customers can expect to find "curated vintage" items including sofas, chairs, tables and bedroom furniture, as well as artwork and lighting.

Joe added prices for the merchandise will be priced from affordable to more at the "collector's level." He said much of the pieces Malefors sells are made in Denmark while Mapes' collection is "a bit more eclectic" and

includes items he finds at estate sales and auctions around the Southwest. Besides Mapes and Malefors' items, there will be other items sold by various vendors who rent the space.

Joe said he hopes the store will open in May but it might be later this year. The goal is to also eventually offer a pop-up retail market with vintage clothing or art on the site and perhaps a farmers market.

Having grown up in Phoenix, Joe said he likes Sunnyslope and Adam has a degree in architecture.

"It's (Sunnyslope) always had its own kind of vibe that's unique in the Valley," Joe said.

He added many artists and prominent architects live in Sunnyslope and many residents' roots "go back a long way."

The business partners had to obtain a change-of-use permit as part of their work to open the business. Joe said city of Phoenix officials have been helpful as he and his team participated in the city's Adaptive Reuse Program. That program provides development guidance, a reduced timeframe, cost savings and streamlined processes for customers that want to alter older buildings for new business uses. Joe also praised the Hatcher Urban Business Alliance (theHUB) for its support and encouragement.

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COMMUNITY

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very understanding and patient."

However "public education wasn't set up" to teach students in the way it has had to since the pandemic began, Baca said. Students in the Madison district and other districts and schools around Arizona were forced to close their campuses last spring and switch to virtual/online learning. Some districts and schools brought students back for in-person learning but then closed campuses again and returned to online classes when the numbers of COVID-19 cases spiked in the Valley.

Students in the Madison Elementary School District could return to in-person classes or continue learning at home virtually, as of Feb. 22.

"We still need to ensure that we stick to our mitigation plan, continue to keep as much as possible the proper (social) distance, be totally masked and still make an effort to make sure staff and students are equally safe and protected," Baca said.

The Madison district and others around the state, as well as the city of

Phoenix provided laptops to students who did not have them at home to use for virtual classes and provided WiFi hotspots for families.

However, experts say some children have had difficulty learning online while others have handled it with ease. They also have said students have missed out on critical social-emotional development that they normally would gain in person.

The Osborn Elementary School District plans to bring students back for in-person learning on March 29, though that could change depending on COVID-19 cases in the community. Students who choose to can remain in classes online. Staff members and students will be required to wear masks at all times, except when eating.

"In Osborn we really stress the fact that we're not just here for that academic excellence side of things but also for reaching the emotional intelligence of students, so connections, building community," said Osborn district Superintendent Michael Robert.

Robert said he does not expect students will be performing at the same

levels academically they have been in previous years this year because of the pandemic. However, he said parents have learned how resilient children are and teachers have learned new ways of delivering instruction online.

At Xavier College Preparatory, about half the students have been taking classes online while the other half have been coming to campus for in-person classes since August, said Sister Mary Joan Fitzgerald, BVM, president of the private girls high school. The school had an advantage as it was already using Canvas, a Web-based learning management system, prior to the pandemic starting.

"We've had support from our parents," Fitzgerald said. "The teachers have just stepped forward and made it possible."

Non-profit organizations also have been going through hard times.

Many non-profit organizations have had to cancel in-person fundraising events that draw large crowds, switching to online formats, said Kristen Merrifield, CEO of the Alliance of Arizona Nonprofits. Many

non-profits rely on those in-person fundraisers to support their work.

Non-profit organizations have seen demand increase as residents need more help with housing, food and other basic needs. One benefit is operating costs have likely decreased with people working from home and in-person fundraisers canceled.

"Everyone has a voice and I encourage everyone to know who your elected officials are and send them an email, write a note, put a phone call in and just mention how important non-profits are to you personally," Merrifield said.

It is easy to see how the pandemic has hurt local restaurants, as they have had to reduce capacity in their buildings and adjust their menus to provide more carryout dishes. About 1,200 restaurants around the state have been forced to close.

Steve Chucru, president and CEO of the Arizona Restaurant Association, said there was \$13.5 billion in revenue generated from restaurants around the state in 2019 and that number dropped to \$11.5 billion last year.

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COMMUNITY

ATHLETES continued from page 1

Maddox, 9, practice.

Loyd and the other coaches are looking for fields where the baseball teams can practice as city of Phoenix parks are closed to organized sports practices. They may need to hold practices in other cities.

"For games we're not going to have a field shortage and we'll be just fine," Loyd said. "I think it will be a little challenging for practices."

AIMHIGH Elite Athletes Basketball Club had to temporarily shut down the program for a month at one time, then about three weeks another time, due to the pandemic, said Reggie Fox, director, owner and coach for the organization. Fox and his wife and five-year-old son had COVID-19 but have recovered from it.

AIMHIGH Elite is a basketball organization for boys and girls ages 5 to 18 that focuses on development and helping youths learn valuable life skills. The main location for practices is the Family Life Center at North Phoenix Baptist Church while it also holds ses-

sions at the Arizona Recreation Center for the Handicapped (ARCH) Gym on west Colter Street. Fox spent more than 10 years coaching and developing college and professional players and played basketball at the University of Wyoming and professionally.

"Sports is a microcosm for life," he said. "It's a vehicle for principles off the court and it's impacted us."

AIMHIGH Elite reduced practices from three times a week to once a week and now is holding them twice a week as the number of COVID-19 cases has decreased in the community. Coaches and parents must wear masks at all times and the players wear masks going into and out of the gym but not while playing.

So Swift Athletics, a youth track and field club in North Central, had to shut down in March of last year because it is a USA Track & Field (USATF)-affiliated organization. Then it resumed practices in November, said Tawnie Martin, coach and founder and CEO of the organization. Youths ages 5 to 18 practice at Sunnyslope High School and run in meets all over the Valley. The group has given children and teens an outlet

when other sports had to be canceled and running outside easily allows for social distancing, Martin said.

There were about 23 youths in the club before the pandemic started, then that number jumped to about 80 kids in November.

"You could tell the kids were happy to be able to see their friends," Martin said. "It brings good energy to them, just being outside in general."

To learn more about So Swift Athletics, visit facebook.com/SoSwiftAthletics.

The pandemic also caused delays and cancellations for games and practices in high schools around Arizona, said Seth Polansky, sports information coordinator for the Arizona Interscholastic Association (AIA). Winter sports started around late January, later than the usual start time of November.

Student-athletes on volleyball and other fall sports teams were required to wear masks when walking to and from games, but not while playing. Schools could decide how many spectators would be allowed in gyms, but the AIA requires fans to wear masks at all times,

Polansky said.

While students have been cooperative, he said some parents have criticized the new safety requirements and cancellation of games.

"We just hope that everybody just bears with us," Polansky said. "We're doing the best we can to get our championships going."

Find treasures at Holiday Spa yard sale

Find furniture, tools, jewelry, kitchen goods and other items during the Holiday Spa Mobile Home Park community yard sale this month.

The sale is open to the public and will be held from 7 a.m. to 3 p.m. Friday, March 19, Saturday, March 20 and Sunday, March 21 in the community at 10401 N. Cave Creek Road. All gates to the community will be open during the sales. Every home will place items for sale on their patios and in their driveways. Signs will be posted along Cave Creek Road at the main entrance to the community, as well as at Cheryl Street by the back entrance.



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COMMUNITY

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"We pivoted very well into going to takeout mode and to-go orders, which has really been the bridge to the huge gap in sales that we lost," Chucri said.

Phoenix City Grille owner Sheldon Knapp said the pandemic has impacted him professionally and personally. The long-time restaurant adapted its menu to make its dishes more carryout-friendly and several servers resigned as they were not earning as much money in tips as they could receive through unemployment benefits. Receiving a Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) loan "was a godsend," Knapp said.

"That loan got us through the darkest months and allowed us to continue doing what we're doing," he said. "Between the recession and pandemic, it's the two worst things I've faced."

Other locally owned businesses also are seeing fewer customers, said Thomas Barr, vice president of business development for Local First Arizona.

"The decrease in foot traffic, people staying home to stay safe has really affected sales," Barr said.

Many businesses have started selling their merchandise online. You can find small businesses in the state by visiting shop.localfirstaz.com.

Barr encourages businesses that qualify to apply for the Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) loans. To learn more, visit sba.gov.

Marijuana dispensaries see jump in traffic

By Maryn Weeks

Dispensaries in North Central and around the Valley are experiencing more traffic as the possession and use of recreational marijuana in the state was approved.

Arizona Proposition 207 allows this use of marijuana for anyone at least 21 years old. It was passed late last year and already there has been a noticeable change in sales.

Steve Cottrell, president of Curaleaf Arizona, said sales at that dispensary, which has several locations, doubled within the first weekend of legal recreational use.

"So far, adult use sales have been

amazing here in Arizona," Cottrell said. Curaleaf, which has a location at 1040 E. Camelback Road, provides medical and recreational use cannabis to patients and customers in Arizona. It has seven other state-of-the-art medical and adult use dispensaries in the state with plans to add more locations.

Curaleaf expects the cannabis industry to see a major increase in demand. To accommodate the expected increase it is expanding its cultivation to produce several thousands more pounds of marijuana a month.

Sunday Goods, a dispensary which is at 1616 E. Glendale Ave., has also seen its sales increase.

"With Arizona passing adult-use we're now able to help even more people find that 'feel good' experience," said Nicole Cooper, senior director of marketing.

Sunday Goods offers cannabis to medical and recreational or adult-use customers with a variety of products at its dispensary in order to suit customers and their preferences. It also predicts its business will continue to grow with the legalization of cannabis underway and hopes to see more positive publicity around cannabis.

Maryn Weeks is a student in Arizona State University's Walter Cronkite School of Journalism and Mass Communication.

City Council to consider water rate increase

The Phoenix City Council is expected to consider a proposed 6.5 percent water rate increase spread out over two years at its meeting on March 17.

City of Phoenix Water Services employees held virtual public meetings to gather public input on the proposed rate hike last month and in January.

The proposed rate increase for the average single-family residential customer will be about \$2.40 a month or 8 cents per day. City officials say this recommended higher rate would offer funding for Phoenix's Capital Improvement Program. Phoenix Water Services said the higher rates would help pay for rehabilitation and replacement of water pipes, treatment plants, pumps, reservoirs and wells that guarantee reliable delivery of the city's drinking water. Infrastructure investment helps head off water main breaks before they become a problem.

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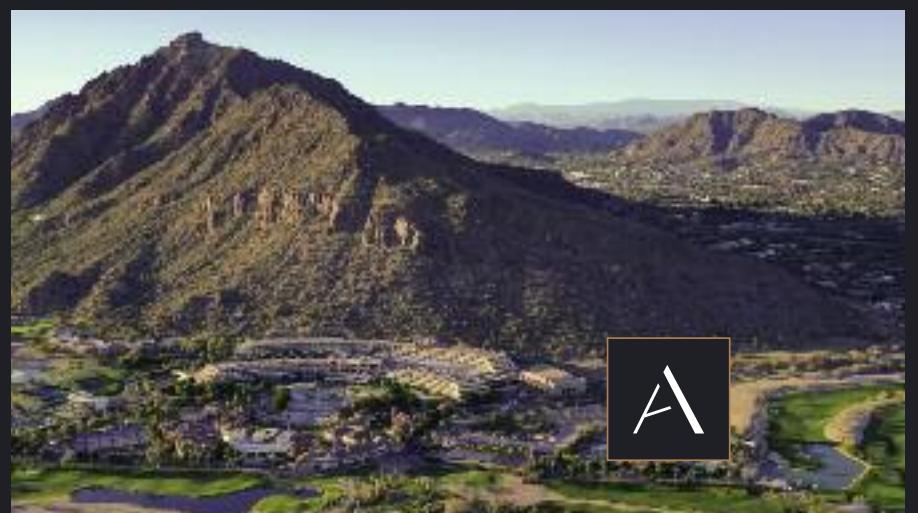
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Pet of the Month

Sweet white rat is sociable, loves snuggling

Little Daphne is as sweet as they come and loves playing with other rats.

This one-year-old white rat was taken to the Arizona Humane Society, along with a few of her rat friends through the organization's Project Reachout Program. That program allows the Arizona Humane Society to transfer pets from shelters that are overwhelmed when the non-profit has space to adopt them. This gives critters a second chance to find their "fur-ever" home.

Rats make great pets as they are friendly, loyal, intelligent and sociable. Like most small critters, Daphne might be a little shy at first, but over time she would love nothing more than to receive affection from her new family. You can earn Daphne's trust by bringing her yogurt pretzels and bell peppers, her favorite snacks. Her favorite activities include snuggling with her rat friends, asking for treats and finding the ideal hidey-hole in which to take a nap. Because Daphne is very sociable, it



Daphne is a sweet, one-year-old rat that the Arizona Humane Society is housing until she finds her "fur-ever" home. You can find her and other pets available to adopt by visiting azhumane.org/adopt (photo courtesy of Arizona Humane Society).

would be great if she has other rat roommates. The Arizona Humane Society often has other rats that are available for adoption that would be perfect companions for this cute girl. She also should go home with someone who has done their rat care research and since she is small, all children in the home need to be at least 10 years old.

Her animal number is 656190. While the Arizona Humane Society's

Adoption locations are temporarily closed, you can find pets to adopt through the organization's Virtual Adoption Matchmaking Program by appointment. To learn more, visit azhumane.org/adopt.

While Daphne might have been adopted by the time you have your Virtual Matchmaking Adoption by Appointment, there are dozens of other wonderful pets that also need loving homes. Visit the website to see which animals are available to adopt today.

Animal shelters struggle during pandemic

By Maryn Weeks

Like everything else over the last year, animal shelters in North Central and around the Valley have experienced troubling times during the COVID-19 pandemic, with the number of animals in their centers increasing.

"We're starting to see it a little bit," said Michael Morefield, the communications director at the Arizona Animal Welfare League. "We have been very lucky that we've been working with our

partners and strategically planning all of our intakes."

AAWL is the oldest and largest no-kill shelter in Arizona. During this pandemic it has continued to allow adoptions by appointment only, provide a low-cost clinic and allow volunteers to work at its locations. However, it is not accepting new volunteers. AAWL continues to rescue as many animals as possible and allow the transportation of animals from other shelters in rural areas in Arizona that don't have the funds to support the animals, to its own shelter in Phoenix.

"We'll sometimes drive four and a half hours each way to get to one of our partners and rescue animals," Morefield said.

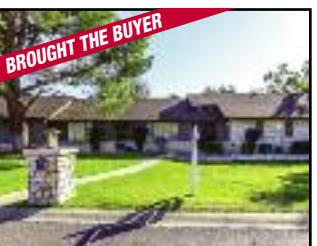
The Arizona Humane Society's Sunnyslope Campus also has had to change some things since the pandemic. Residents can no longer adopt out of the Sunnyslope campus but can still go on the website to set up a virtual adoption.

The Sunnyslope campus is focusing on the treatment of sick, injured and abandoned animals, according to

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Kelsey Dickerson, media relations specialist at the Humane Society. This campus also offers curbside services, for sick or injured animals, in order to treat animals and stay safe.

The Humane Society is a non-profit organization that appreciates any donation it receives. It will accept any pet food that is not already opened. To donate to the Humane Society visit azhumane.org/donate and to adopt a pet, visit azhumane.org/adopt.

Maryn Weeks is a student in Arizona State University's Walter Cronkite School of Journalism and Mass Communication.

New partnership helps support pets and owners

The COVID-19 pandemic has been difficult for everyone, including animals, but several organizations are working together to find critters homes.

Pet Housing Help AZ is dedicated to assisting four and two-legged friends who have been affected by the pandemic. The Arizona Humane Society, Arizona Animal Welfare League & SPCA, Altered Tails Barnhart Clinic, The Arizona Pet Project, Heidi's Village, Lost Our Home Pet Rescue and Maricopa County Animal Care and Control have partnered to provide PetHousingHelpAZ.org. Pet owners impacted by the COVID-19 housing crisis can seek resources to help take care of their pets, locate a temporary foster home or find a permanent home for their pet. This website also provides a way for people to offer a temporary foster home for a pet or to adopt an animal.

You also can find links to helpful resources including shelters and temporary housing for people and their pets, as well as veterinary services and assistance and ways to obtain aid buying pet food on the website. This site also provides information about tenants' rights from the Arizona Department of Housing for those who suspect they have been unfairly treated.

Heartworm impacts pets in Arizona, can be deadly

More than 1 million pets in the United States have heartworms, according to a recent American Heartworm Society survey.

Michael Morefield, marketing and communications director for the

Arizona Animal Welfare League, said this disease can cause cardiovascular collapse, as well as kidney or liver failure without proper treatment. Heartworm can be transmitted through a single, infected mosquito bite, which leads to foot-long parasites infecting the heart, Morefield said. He added that the Arizona Animal Welfare League has seen cases of heartworm infections in the Valley. Four years ago the organization rescued dogs with heartworms from its partners in Texas and southern states. Two years later Arizona Animal Welfare League rescued such dogs from partners in other areas of the state.

Last year the organization rescued animals around the Valley that are positive for heartworm and it expects to take care of more dogs this year that are infected. Heartworm is deadly if untreated but it can easily be prevented, Morefield said. After receiving a negative test from a veterinarian's office, you can start giving your pets chewables once a month or other treatment options to prevent heartworm. To learn more, visit aawl.org.

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COMMUNITY

Voters will elect two City Council members

The city of Phoenix is holding a runoff election on Tuesday, March 9 for residents in Council districts 3 and 7 to elect Council members.

This election is required under city charter and state law as no candidate for these positions received a majority of the votes cast in the Mayor and Council election in November. The candidates who receive the highest number of votes cast for each office in the March 9 election will be elected and take office for four-year terms that start April 19.

Voters are being asked to elect either incumbent Debra Stark or challenger Nicole Garcia for Council Member District 3. Stark was sworn in as the District 3 councilwoman in March of 2017. District 3 includes much of North Central, between 27th Avenue on the west and 54th Street on the east, heading south to Glendale Avenue and north of Yorkshire Drive.

District 7 covers a different part of Phoenix and is currently represented by

Phoenix City Councilman Michael Nowakowski. Voters will choose either Yassamin Ansari or Cinthia Estela to serve District 7. Nowakowski is not able to run again because of term limits.

The City Clerk Department mailed sample ballots to every home in City Council Districts 3 and 7 where there is a registered voter. This pamphlet has information about candidates, details about early voting and a list of voting center locations in the city. To learn more, visit phoenix.gov/cityclerk/elections/march-election.

Prove vaccinations through new app

An Arizona-based company is making it easier to prove that you have had a COVID-19 vaccination and to confirm your health status.

A mobile app called ConfirmD, which was developed by Arizona-based BuddyCheque, serves as a COVID-19 vaccination passport, allowing users to securely and easily confirm they have been vaccinated for the virus. It is available for free to download from the

Google Play and Apple stores.

Vaccination is required to travel to some countries and it is possible that it will be mandated to attend sports events, concerts and other large gatherings in the future. ConfirmD allows users to have an easy way to digitally store and share their vaccination status. The app equips people with a secure platform to record, verify and voluntarily share their health data, including antibody status, COVID-19 vaccination status and test results. It allows users to transfer data to a QR code to accurately confirm vaccination status in a cyber secure setting.

After a promotional period ends, the app will cost 99 cents a year to maintain. ConfirmD has been tested and used by various enterprises in Arizona including medical service providers, some facilities at Phoenix Sky Harbor International Airport and the Silverado Golf Club of Scottsdale.

Healthcare veterans Dr. Ramsey Kilani and Bob Ramsey and co-founders Karl Wagner and Alex Chatel head BuddyCheque. To learn more about the app, visit confirmd.io.

Two events will offer arts, games, bike rides

It is almost time for two cherished, annual community events in Sunnyslope - 'Slope Fest and Tour de Sunnyslope. Both events take place on Saturday, April 3.

At the family friendly 'Slope Fest 2021, Sunnyslope's largest annual event, you can check out arts and crafts, games, animals and food, as well as demonstrations from 8:30 a.m. to 2 p.m. at Palma Park at 1135 E. Dunlap Ave. There also will be entertainment and special guests from the city and state will be mingling with residents.

The Tour de Sunnyslope is a bicycle ride led by the Phoenix Police Bike Squad for all ages. Participants must register for the ride, starting at 8:30 a.m. The group will leave Palma Park for the ride around Sunnyslope at 9 a.m. Expect to see police patrol cars flashing lights for children to see on the route. Riders are required to wear helmets and closed-toe shoes.

To learn more about both events, visit slopefestaz.org.



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After being on vacation this summer with my family, I came home to a broken pipe and a partially flooded home. We needed a remodel. As many of you know, whether out of choice or necessity, that can be an overwhelming experience. I am pleased to say my family and I are back in our home after 8 months and could not be more pleased. We were fortunate to avoid any major pitfalls and that is a direct result of our contractor, who also happens to be a good friend. We are so blessed that Roger (last name not included because he does not like platitudes) decided to help us out. It was incredibly comforting to have someone so organized and who cared about the process and our needs so thoroughly. We could not have done this without you. An even bigger blessing than the job completed was re-connecting with an old friend whose fiber is such that it makes those around him better. **Thank you for everything you did for my family!**

\$100 TRIVIA CONTEST

Hopefully we will have March Madness this year!

Who was my first favorite college basketball player?

First to answer correctly will receive a \$100 gift card to The Bevy. Only 1 guess per person.

HINT: It is not a U of A Wildcat. He played in the late 70's and early 80's.

ONLY 1 GUESS PER PERSON. First person to correctly answer the trivia question via email, text or phone call will get a \$100 gift card to The Bevy. Winner will be notified via the same channel in which they enter. By entering this contest you agree that if you are the winner your name will be publicly announced in Bay Equity's North Central News ad next month.

Winner for Last Month – Patrick Burch | Last Month's Answer – The Cleveland Browns



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COMMUNITY

Real estate industry helps local homeless

North Central resident Bobby Lieb, an associate broker with HomeSmart, and his friend and neighbor Tim Sprague are doing their part to help give people in need the ability to acquire affordable housing.

Sprague, who is a member of the advisory committee for the Arizona Housing Fund (AHF), recently approached Lieb to suggest he join as a partner for the philanthropic effort. The fund is a way to raise money to build and operate needed affordable housing and help thousands of individuals and families in the state experiencing homelessness.

Howard Epstein, another North Central resident, founded the Arizona Housing Fund in 2019. An executive with Bank of America, Epstein has been fighting homelessness as a volunteer on many non-profit boards for decades. Epstein said the support of Lieb and other Realtors is “driving the growth of the fund,” which he expects will be able to provide its first grants later this year.

The program has raised more than \$500,000 so far, largely via its Escrow Donation Program, in which real estate brokers, title companies, home buyers and home sellers are asked to donate at least \$25 when a home sale closes. That money is deposited directly from the escrow company into the AHF, which is housed at the Arizona Community Foundation. The money will be used to offer grant funding to Arizona non-profit organizations with experience building and running permanent, supportive, affordable housing.

Lieb said he has known Sprague for 25 years, first meeting when their children played baseball together. Sprague also hired Lieb to sell his house recently. After hearing that thousands of people in the state are suffering from homelessness, Lieb said “how can you not be sympathetic to that?” He added he and others are fortunate to be selling homes and had a chance to “do something good to help our community.” Lieb is contributing \$50 to the AHF for every home he sells.

In addition to the Escrow Donation Program, AHF also raises funds through direct donations and a rental application donation program.

To learn more, visit azfoundation.org.



Bobby Lieb, an associate broker with HomeSmart, Howard Epstein, Bank of America executive and founder of the Arizona Housing Fund and Tim Sprague, owner of Habitat Metro and member of Arizona Housing Fund Advisory Committee, are giving back by helping house individuals and families in the state. Epstein founded the Arizona Housing Fund, which raises money to build and operate affordable housing (submitted photo).

Support non-profits on Arizona Gives Day

Arizona Gives Day is just around the corner and it will be an important time for the public to help non-profit organizations that have been struggling due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Registration and re-enrollment is available for non-profits in the state that want to participate in the 24-hour online fundraising event. Last year the virtual event led to \$6.1 million donated to non-profits around Arizona.

This year's Arizona Gives Day 2021 will take place on Tuesday, April 6. The deadline for non-profits to enroll is March 4 and they can do that by visiting www.azgives.org.

Arizona Gives Day is an annual movement that brings together non-profits of all sizes that are new and established to celebrate and boost philanthropy in Arizona through online donations at AZGives.org. This event helps increase awareness about the vital role Arizona non-profits play in communities and inspires residents to give generously to create a stronger, thriving state for everyone.

Non-profits that register or re-register for Arizona Gives Day 2021 will discover a “roadmap” to steer them through the registration process, the chance to submit support requests online, the ability to include any matching grant amount and their fundraising goals on their profile pages, incentive prizes and other benefits.

days a week from 6:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. with pick-up locations at all the district's schools. Residents can obtain meals for the week, including breakfast, lunch, dinner and snacks. Cartwright also is delivering meals through 15 to 20 bus routes Mondays through Fridays. The district assists people suffering from homelessness and those with special needs.

To learn more about Cartwright's food distribution visit csd83.org.

Pierson Place supports small businesses

The Pierson Place Historic District has an effort underway to support small businesses in the area during this COVID-19 pandemic.

Neighbors in the district created a flier that listed a variety of local businesses including restaurants, auto repair shops and grocery stores. They delivered these fliers door-to-door around the neighborhood and plan to keep doing so every few months.

Pierson Place Historic District recognizes that the owners and employees of these small businesses are part of the community, as they live, work and play in North Central.

This neighborhood organization also plans to try to reduce crime in the area by doing a project funded by a Block Watch grant. Neighbors will paint address numbers on curbs and alley fences. They plan to paint the address numbers on the curb of every house and about every other fence in the alleys in the neighborhood. Pierson Place Historic District intends to obtain bids from private providers and contact the owners of fences in alleys. Clearly marked addresses allow police to find locations quickly during emergencies, which could save lives.

From 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. on March 6 there will be a grand finale celebration and paint party, where artists will be painting along the Grand Canalscape from 15th Avenue to Seventh Street. Pierson Place officials will talk to the artists and show the public their work in progress on the organization's Facebook and Instagram live feeds.

Pierson Place Historic District was formed in 1996 to encourage residents to become active in maintaining and enhancing their neighborhood. To learn more, visit facebook.com/PiersonPlace or piersonplace.com.

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TAKING CARE OF BUSINESS

Bookworm opens online bookstore

By Colleen Sparks

A North Central bookworm, mother and entrepreneur is thriving in her new business, where she hopes to reach people on the same page.

Genevieve Seivert began selling books online through her business, The Bookaholic's Outlet, which the public can access through Facebook. She collects books from thrift stores, yard sales and stores in a wide range of genres and then posts about them on Facebook. Customers can join the Facebook group and check out the offerings anytime and arrange to pick them up or ask that the books are mailed to them. Books are shipped anywhere in the United States and to U.S. Army bases around the world.

Seivert said she has always loved reading and was looking for a fun outlet now that her children are older. Her daughter, Abbey, is a senior at Sunnyslope High School, and her son, Peter, is a sophomore at Northern Arizona University. Seivert and her husband, Paul, own a contracting company, Tyson Development. The family's dining room has been converted into a library and many books are stored in Peter's bedroom.

"It's been a lot of fun," Genevieve said. "It just kind of fell in my lap. I've had a lot of help from friends. A dear neighbor and friend helps me box (books) every month. My group members are also a lot of fun."

Members can buy young adult fiction, children's books, fiction books for adults, fantasy books and books in a variety of genres, most of which are in great condition, Genevieve said. Some of them are anniversary editions. One customer recently bought 30 children's books. Genevieve said sales began slowly when she started the business in January of last year but have picked up tremendously with a recent sale of 1,523 books. There are about 3,200 people in the Facebook group.

"I've earned more profit than I ever expected last year," Genevieve said.

She said she has been reading more since the COVID-19 pandemic started. The books she sells typically range in price from \$1 to \$12.



Genevieve Seivert, far left, started selling books online through The Bookaholic's Outlet in January of last year. Pictured with her are her husband, Paul, and friend and neighbor Trina Cook (submitted photo).

To join The Bookaholic's Outlet online, visit facebook.com/thebookaholicoutlet. Learn more by visiting <http://thebookaholicoutlet.com>.

Business Briefs

Mazvo Auto Care Center warns about converter thefts

Mazvo Auto Care Center is warning the public about thieves stealing catalytic converters.

The business at 4610 N. Seventh St. said since the COVID-19 pandemic began there have been more thefts of these materials, which have precious metals including palladium and platinum. Mazvo owner Shahe "Shawn" Kouloukian said while most vehicles have catalyst systems to regulate emissions exhaust and provide clean exhaust air, the Toyota Prius is the most popular hybrid vehicle thieves are targeting to steal the catalytic converters.

Kouloukian recommends drivers ask their vehicle's insurance company what type of comprehensive coverage it provides for repairs and replacements. He suggests people park in well-lit areas or as close to the entrance to a business as possible. Some repair shops provide etching of a unique serial number on the converter so it is easy to identify if it is stolen. Kouloukian said one of the best things vehicle owners

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please see THREATS on page 18

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TAKING CARE OF BUSINESS

THREATS continued from page 16

can do is have a catalytic converter security shield installed to deter thieves. The security shields are for hybrid Toyota Prius, Nissan NV200 and Chevrolet City vehicles.

Mazvo Auto Care Center is open from 7:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Mondays through Fridays. To learn more, visit mazvo.com.

WaFd Bank warns about tax season scammers

Tax season is upon us and WaFd Bank is warning people to be careful about sharing information because scammers will try to deceive them.

Lisa K. Davey, vice president, Northeast Arizona Retail Division manager for WaFd Bank said scammers will use regular mail, telephone and emails to trick individuals and business owners. The IRS said every year thousands of people lose hundreds of dollars, as well as their personal information when they become victim to tax season scams. Davey said criminals most commonly prey on consumers via

emails or with factitious websites that pose as authentic government agencies.

She said people need to know when they are filing their taxes that the IRS and governmental entities will not contact consumers. Fake emails often will have unusual attachments and threatening language directing the user to click a link to access their locked account. Davey said poor spelling and punctuation, as well as the type of email greeting can be signs of a scam. If a business name is misspelled and there is a non-personal email salutation including "sir" or "madam" instead of the person's name that is another indication that the email might be a scam.

You can determine whether an email address and website are legitimate if you hover over a URL with your mouse to see the full website name and expand a message to reveal the full email address of the sender. Davey also recommends you carefully read each email before clicking a link or sharing any personal information.

WaFd Bank has a location at 2198 E. Camelback Road. To learn more, visit wafdbank.com.

Best Glass donations will help feed people in need

Best Glass is showing its heart as it plans to donate money to St. Mary's Food Bank while celebrating its 30th anniversary.

The business is donating \$30,000 to the food bank to help feed people in need during the COVID-19 pandemic. Its founder Bob Hittenberger said the business also is asking customers, employees, vendors, friends and others to donate money in order to reach \$60,000. A financial donation of that amount would provide 420,000 meals to the community, Hittenberger said.

Rather than provides sales, promotions and giveaways to mark the anniversary, he said he wanted to help people who have lost jobs or been forced to close their small businesses during this pandemic.

You can make a donation on behalf of Best Glass by visiting smfba.convio.net/BestGlass.

Best Glass is a full-service company that provides glass for remodels, new construction and other purposes in addition to auto glass. Located at 5049

N. Seventh Ave., it is open from 7:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Mondays through Fridays and 8 a.m. to noon on Saturdays. To learn more, visit bestglass.com.

Planet Fitness gyms receive cleanliness accreditation

Planet Fitness locations around the Valley have been recognized for following a stringent cleaning, disinfection and infectious disease prevention program.

More than 30 Planet Fitness centers in the Valley received GBAC STAR Facility Accreditation from the Global Biorisk Advisory Council, a Division of ISSA. They are among nearly 350 additional facilities, including 170 Planet Fitness locations owned and operated by United PF, that have completed the GBAC STAR Facility Accreditation Program around the world. This accreditation is critical because of the risks that the COVID-19 pandemic presents.

Planet Fitness has a Sunnyslope location at 8921 N. Seventh St. and one at 1625 W. Camelback Road. To learn more, visit planetfitness.com.

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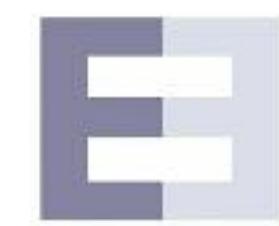


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CURRENT LISTINGS/ESCROWS

777 E Circle Dr	In Escrow	5093SF	4BR/5BA	\$1,650,000
17 W Sierra Vista Dr	In Escrow	4670SF	4BR/3.5BA	\$1,395,000
2685 E Cannon Pl	In Escrow	5880SF	6BR/4.5BA	\$1,100,000
21 E Cactus Wren Dr	In Escrow	6718SF	4BR/2.5BA	\$1,075,000
1364 E Victor Hugo Ave	Just Listed	4742SF	5BR/5.5BA	\$ 975,000
5501 E Beryl Ave	In Escrow	2996SF	4BR/2.5BA	\$ 949,000
6846 N 3rd Ave	In Escrow	2914SF	5BR/3BA	\$ 925,000
6520 N Central Ave	In Escrow	2903SF	5BR/4BA	\$ 850,000
5428 E Cannon Dr	In Escrow	2548SF	4BR/2.5BA	\$ 825,000
1309 W Linger Ln	In Escrow	2400SF	4BR/2BA	\$ 695,000
340 E Osborn Rd #3	In Escrow	2441SF	3BR/3.5BA	\$ 669,000
340 E Osborn Rd #4	New Construction	2441SF	3BR/3.5BA	\$ 669,000
1 W Cheryl Dr	In Escrow	3002SF	4BR/2.5BA	\$ 659,900
340 E Osborn Rd #1	New Construction	2255SF	3BR/3.5BA	\$ 619,000
340 E Osborn Rd #2	New Construction	2255SF	3BR/3.5BA	\$ 619,000
15 W Cochise Dr	In Escrow	1726SF	3BR/2BA	\$ 550,000
4231 W Monte Cristo	In Escrow	2276SF	4BR/2BA	\$ 525,000
2040 W Trotter Trail	In Escrow	2470SF	3BR/2.5BA	\$ 500,000
117 W Oregon Ave	Just Listed	1548SF	3BR/2BA	\$ 475,000
1 E Butler Dr	In Escrow	1744SF	3BR/2BA	\$ 420,000
6922 N 129th Dr	In Escrow	2903SF	5BR/3BA	\$ 385,000
100 W Maryland Ave L1	In Escrow	1640SF	3BR/1.75BA	\$ 349,999
2019 E Campbell Ave #115... In Escrow	1256SF	2BR/2.5BA.....	\$ 299,900	



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Featured Homes for March



340 E Osborn Rd #3 • \$669,000



1309 W. Linger Ln. • \$695,000



340 E. Osborn Rd. #2 • \$619,000



100 W. Maryland Ave. L1 • \$349,999



2019 E Campbell Ave #115 • \$299,900



1 W Cheryl Dr • \$649,000



15 W Cochise Dr • \$550,000



5338 N Questa Tierra Dr • \$540,000



1 E Butler Dr. • \$420,000

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SOLD HOMES FOR 2020

2205 E Colter St.....\$4,100,000	6312 N 4th Pl\$ 930,000	902 W Claremont St\$ 610,000	6302 N. 11th St.\$ 439,900	4808 N 24th St #705\$ 325,000
5350 E Orchid Ln\$3,149,000	11 W San Juan Ave\$ 900,000	517 W. Lamar Rd.\$ 600,000	8145 N 13th Pl\$ 434,000	1102 W Glendale Ave #102\$ 304,000
5450 E Arcadia Ln\$2,500,000	3146 E Maryland Ave.....\$ 865,000	216 E Keim Dr\$ 600,000	3137 E Hazelwood St\$ 426,250	3346 N 28th St\$ 289,000
7020 N. Wilder Rd.\$2,400,000	209 W. Lamar Rd.\$ 860,000	724 E Claremont St\$ 599,900	6811 N 11th Ave.\$ 420,000	8008 N Central Ave #10\$ 275,000
5600 N 4th St\$2,001,000	4714 E Lewis Ave\$ 812,000	202 E Berridge Ln\$ 595,000	1711 E Solano Dr.\$ 420,000	1411 E Orangewood #230\$ 265,000
6020 E Doubletree Ranch Rd.\$1,860,000	34920 N 23rd Ln\$ 810,000	5125 N 34th Pl\$ 595,000	902 E Rovey Ave.\$ 420,000	3302 N 7th St #120\$ 208,000
*2240 E Georgia Ave\$1,850,000	8051 N 15th Ave\$ 799,900	1516 W. Winter Dr.\$ 585,000	1902 E Coolidge St\$ 415,000	1005 E Northern Ave\$ 203,900
5726 N 2nd Ave.....\$1,595,000	5112 N. 34th Pl.\$ 784,000	6217 N 7th Ave\$ 575,000	3120 E Coolidge\$ 400,000	100 W Maryland Ave N1\$ 190,000
7151 N 3rd St\$1,400,000	719 W Claremont St\$ 769,000	77 E Missouri Ave #37\$ 575,000	7340 N. 11th St.\$ 400,000	6240 N 16th St #34\$ 187,400
8255 N 18th St\$1,175,000	6522 N 14th St.\$ 750,000	701 W Las Palmaritas\$ 568,000	6163 N 28th Pl\$ 399,000	7141 N 16th St #228\$ 170,000
6611 N Central Ave\$1,175,000	1512 W Palmaire\$ 710,000	4430 N. 22nd St. #13\$ 550,000	7747 N 13th St.\$ 397,500	750 E. Northern Ave. #2003\$ 147,000
9824 N 53rd Pl\$1,700,000	1439 E Echo Ln\$ 750,000	11 W Cheryl Dr\$ 550,000	3015 E Coolidge #6\$ 385,000	1525 E Cortez Lot\$ 65,000
210 E Cactus Wren.....\$1,320,000	126 W. North Ln.\$ 748,840	14 E Laurie Ln\$ 530,000	1810 W Butler Dr\$ 370,000	SOLD HOMES 2021
2939 N Manor Dr\$1,300,000	1441 E Missouri Ave\$ 740,000	4827 E Weldon Ave\$ 529,900	720 W. Thunderbird Rd.\$ 369,000	6035 N Central Ave\$ 3,500,000
10825 N 55th St\$1,275,000	1002 E Kaler Dr.\$ 726,000	534 W. El Camino Dr.\$ 515,000	509 W. Missouri Ave.\$ 339,800	6 E Cactus Wren Dr\$ 1,075,000
6138 E Rose Circle Dr\$1,250,000	544 E Belmont Ave\$ 699,000	1611 N 11th Ave\$ 512,000	1102 W Glendale Ave #125\$ 369,000	7140 N 9th St.\$ 901,000
321 E. Pomona Rd.\$1,250,000	3824 E Melody Dr\$ 690,000	27525 N 113th Pl\$ 510,000	1636 E Cactus Wren Dr\$ 365,000	1555 E Ocotillo Rd #17\$ 627,500
10432 N 48th Pl.\$1,200,000	303 W Stella Ave.\$ 695,000	6811 N 11th Pl\$ 505,000	1102 W Glendale Ave #114\$ 359,500	1345 E Missouri Ave\$ 609,000
816 E Circle Rd\$1,120,000	505 E Missouri Ave\$ 688,000	6050 N. 10th Pl.\$ 502,500	4301 N. 21st St. #61\$ 335,000	5338 E Questa Tierra Dr\$ 540,000
3611 E Mariposa St\$1,050,000	5301 N. 6th St.\$ 675,000	8710 N 6th Dr.\$ 480,000	7330 N 11th St.\$ 330,000	6301 N 14th Pl\$ 495,000
9904 E. Quarry Trail\$1,050,000	6621 N 14th Pl.\$ 675,000	1133 E Gardenia Ave\$ 475,000	732 W. Pierson St.\$ 301,000	3920 W Sandra Terrace\$ 460,000
245 E Ashwood Pl.\$ 990,000	3853 E Crittenden Ln.\$ 675,000	6118 N 9th Ave\$ 475,000	1124 E. Rose Ln. #6\$ 255,000	1026 E Waggon Wheel Dr\$ 450,000
2214 E San Juan Ave\$ 975,000	412 E. McLellan Blvd.\$ 659,000	1025 E Denton Ln.\$ 456,500	350 W Maryland Ave\$ 239,000	5 E Butler Dr\$ 429,900
815 E Circle Rd.\$ 975,000	1404 W. Gardenia Ave\$ 655,000	1312 W Georgia Ave\$ 445,000	8225 N Central Ave #15\$ 238,500	1232 E Palacio Ln\$ 395,000
10436 N Central Ave\$ 932,000	15638 N 18th St.\$ 618,000	1525 W Vernon Ave\$ 445,000	507 W Beverly Ln\$ 327,650	*represented both buyer and seller



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HEALTHY LIVING

Health Briefs

COVID-19 vaccines being provided around state

If you are looking for a place to obtain a COVID-19 vaccine, there are many places to go in North Central and around the Valley.

The vaccine rollout began late last year and earlier this year for first responders, healthcare workers, long-term care center residents and employees, as well as residents ages 65 and older and many other groups. In collaboration with the Arizona Department of Health Services COVID-19 Vaccination Plan, Maricopa County has been working with hospital and healthcare systems, emergency response agencies, community-based organizations and others to coordinate vaccine distribution. The vaccine is being rolled out in different stages at medical offices, Walgreens drugstores, as well as Safeway and Albertsons grocery stores, Fry's

Pharmacy stores, State Farm Stadium in Glendale and other locations around the state. Distribution of the vaccine is being prioritized in accordance with Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and Maricopa County guidelines.

The FDA issued Emergency Use Authorizations for the Pfizer-BioNTech and Moderna COVID-19 vaccines. These vaccines are given in two doses. Health officials say the vaccines are highly effective in preventing COVID-19 and experts believe those who obtain a vaccine are less likely to become seriously ill if they do contract the virus. The most common side effects of the vaccines are redness and pain at the injection sites, as well as fever, chills, muscle aches and headaches.

Even once people receive the vaccines, the CDC recommends they keep wearing masks that cover their noses and mouths in public and stay at least 6 feet apart from others who are not in their household. Experts also recommend you wash your hands frequently or use hand sanitizer.

To get vaccinated you must make an appointment online. You can find locations by visiting the Arizona Department of Health Services website at azdhs.gov. Or you can check out the Maricopa County website at www.maricopa.gov/5641/COVID-19-Vaccine.

Take care of your teeth to help your heart

Did you know there is a connection between the health of your mouth and your heart's well-being?

So says North Central resident Dr. Alvin Matthews, a dentist and member of the Delta Dental of Arizona Board of Directors, which manages projects around North Central. Matthews said researchers have discovered that people with gum disease are roughly twice as likely to have coronary artery disease, which is the most common type of heart disease in the United States. One theory about the connection is that bacteria from diseased gums enter the bloodstream, and then once it is in the blood the bacteria might attach to fatty plaques in the heart's blood vessels. That can lead to clot formation, possibly causing a heart attack.

Gum disease is an infection in which

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HEALTHY LIVING

a sticky film of bacteria called plaque forms on the teeth, mainly along the gum line. If treated in its early stages, gum disease, also called gingivitis, can be treated and often reversed, Matthews said.

He recommends everyone brush their teeth with a fluoride toothpaste at least twice a day, but brush gently under the gum line around every tooth. Matthews also urges people to floss their teeth at least once a day and to schedule regular dental check-ups and cleanings.

Tips for avoiding COVID-19 complications

Taking care of your heart health and adopting healthier behaviors is more important than ever amid this COVID-19 pandemic.

Dr. Michael Kleven, primary care physician at 4C Medical Group, part of OptumCare, said heart disease and other conditions that can impact the heart, including high blood pressure and diabetes, are common. About one in three people who have contracted COVID-19 has cardiovascular disease, according to the American Heart

Association. Data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) reveals COVID-19 patients who have underlying conditions including cardiovascular disease are six times more likely to be hospitalized. The CDC reports these patients also are 12 times more likely to die than patients who do not have any chronic health problems.

It is important for people who have cardiovascular risk factors, heart disease or a history of heart attack or stroke to obtain vaccines as soon as they are available due to their higher chance of suffering complications from COVID-19, according to the American Heart Association. Kleven recommends patients talk to their primary care provider or other medical professional to ask any questions about the vaccine.

Living a healthier, longer life starts with taking care of the heart. Kleven recommends people find support, especially to end unhealthy habits including smoking, which is a major cause of cardiovascular diseases. Kleven also urges everyone to engage in physical activities they enjoy, including biking, swimming, yoga, walking or tennis. Regular moderate to vigorous physical activity decreases

heart disease by 30 to 40 percent and stroke by 25 percent, according to the American Heart Association. Talk to your doctor before significantly boosting your activity level.

Colorectal cancer is common, early screening saves lives

It is National Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month, time for men and women to take steps to prevent this deadly disease.

Dr. Tara Ostrom, associate medical director for OptumCare Primary Care, said colorectal cancer is one of the most prevalent and deadly types of cancer in the United States. It is the third most commonly diagnosed cancer and the third leading cause of cancer death in men and women, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

Ostrom said this year's Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month is even more important because at the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic many clinics were closed and appointments, including for cancer screenings, were cancelled or delayed. She said it is impor-

tant to detect colorectal cancer early. When this type of cancer is found at Stage 1, before it has spread elsewhere in the body, the five-year survival rate is about 90 percent, according to the American Cancer Society.

It is recommended that people age 50 or older get a colorectal screening, which is a critical preventive measure. While some patients might be hesitant to visit a hospital due to the pandemic, hospitals and clinics are following protocols to sanitize, socially distance people and to keep infected people in isolated areas. There also are in-home colon cancer screening tests available.

The CDC recommends several cancer screening tests including fecal immunochemical testing (FIT) kits that detect blood in the stool, FIT-DNA, a test that detects changed DNA in the stool, flexible sigmoidoscopy, which detects cancer or polyps inside the rectum and lower third of the colon and colonoscopy exams, where a tiny camera transmits images from the inside of the colon. A virtual colonoscopy that uses X-rays and computers to create images of the whole colon is another cancer screening test the CDC recommends.

Attention Deficit Disorder

Adults often describe attention deficit disorder as feeling like everyone else is on the escalator, while they're taking the world's most tortuous staircase. Eventually they arrive at the destination, but it takes exponentially more effort to get there.

ADHD is estimated to affect 5-10% of the population, and is widely under-diagnosed. A common symptom is feeling like your brain is trying to take a straight path, but is constantly being pulled off course. You may find yourself trying to set reminders and using tools to avoid even simple oversights like forgetting your keys three times before leaving the house.

Attention deficit disorder is one of the most common mental health conditions we encounter at Uptown Psychiatry. Although the diagnosis is often made in adulthood, the symptoms of ADHD have been present since childhood. Once the diagnosis is discovered, clients often look back and realize the impact it has had throughout their lifetime. Fortunately, ADHD is one of the most treatable conditions we encounter, and it doesn't take long to realize the benefits of treatment.

If you want to learn more about ADHD or schedule an evaluation, please visit UptownPsychiatry.com or call 480-542-8202.

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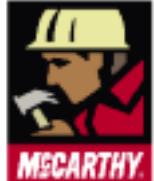
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Monica Gaspar, on the far right on the end, head coach for Xavier College Preparatory's Spiritline, recently was named 2019-20 West Section Girls Spirit Coach of the Year. Pictured here are the Spiritline, as well as Sister Lynn Winsor, Xavier vice principal for activities and athletic director, next to Gaspar, Sister Joan Fitzgerald, BVM, president of Xavier, on the end on the far left in the second row, and Dani Behrens, assistant coach, on the end on the far left in the front row (photo by Duke Photography).

Xavier coach receives regional recognition

A Xavier College Preparatory head coach known for lifting student-athletes' spirits has been recognized by a regional organization for her dedication to the school's spiritline.

The National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) Coaches Association chose Xavier's Monica Gaspar as the 2019-20 West Section Girls Spirit Coach of the Year. Gaspar, the head coach for Xavier's Spiritline, was selected based on her performance last school year, as well as lifetime community involvement, major contributions to the school and her philosophy of coaching. The Arizona Interscholastic Association nominated Gaspar for the award and the NFHS Coaches Association confirmed her as the winner. Arizona, California, Hawaii, Nevada and Utah make up the West Section.

Gaspar, a 1992 graduate of Xavier, said the recognition is not for her but for "all the hard work of my students and coaches."

"I am here after many years because these girls, my assistants, and administration have inspired me to push harder, to do better and to keep going," she said.

Gaspar participated in Spiritline herself when she was a student at

Xavier, before she graduated from the private, all-girls Catholic school in 1992. She has turned Xavier's Spiritline into a "powerhouse program" over her 26 years with the team, said Sister Lynn Winsor, Xavier vice principal for activities and athletic director. Winsor added that the student-athletes love and admire Gaspar "as she runs a first class team."

Xavier's Spiritline cheers for Brophy College Preparatory's varsity football team and also competes in various events. To learn more, visit xcp.org/athletics/team/spiritline-2020-21.

School Briefs

GLENDALE UNION HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT

Three seniors receive GCU scholarships

Three students in the Glendale Union High School District are already making names for themselves on the college level.

Sunnyslope High School senior Bryann Osborn and Washington High School seniors Rubicel Pita Martinez and Jose Pacheco recently received the Students Inspiring Students Scholarship from Grand Canyon University. This scholarship is awarded to students from inner city high schools who keep a

SCHOOL DAYS

grade-point average of at least 3.5 and complete 100 or more hours of required work, including college preparedness exercises and academic help in the university's Learning Lounge.

To learn more, visit gcu.edu/financial-aid/scholarships-grants.

Senior scores national honor for community service

A Sunnyslope High School senior is receiving national recognition for his service in the community.

Seamus Simmons recently was given an engraved bronze medallion after being chosen as a 2021 Prudential Spirit of Community Awards Distinguished Finalist. This awards program is the country's largest youth recognition operation based exclusively on volunteer community service. It honors middle level and high school students for their tremendous service to others on a local, state and national level.

Prudential and the National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP) started the awards program in 1995. To learn more, visit spirit.prudential.com.

Make tax credit donation to help schools

When you are preparing your taxes to file, you also can make a donation to benefit the Glendale Union High School District or public schools in other districts.

Arizona tax law allows taxpayers to earn credit for contributions they have made or fees they paid to a public school to support extracurricular activities. This is a dollar-for-dollar credit that is equal to the amount donated or the amount of fees paid. State law permits taxpayers to receive a tax credit of up to \$400 if they file personal taxes as

"married filing jointly" or \$200 for those filing as "head of the household" or "single" if they provide funds to a public school. Besides extracurricular programs, your donation also will go toward supporting district students and community school meal programs, among other items. The deadline to file your contribution is April 15.

To donate to the Glendale Union district, visit guhsdaz.org.

MADISON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL DISTRICT

Virtual academy to start in district this fall

Enrollment is underway for a new online school that will kick off in the 2021-22 academic year in the Madison Elementary School District.

Madison Virtual Academy is a unique online offering for students in grades third through eighth. It provides 90 to 135 minutes of live teaching and about 90 to 120 minutes of asynchronous (independent) learning per day. Students will be taught in the core subjects of math, science, English Language Arts and social studies with special area opportunities. There will be a focus on students' social/emotional wellness. Students do not have to live in the district boundaries to enroll for the virtual academy. The online school is free of charge.

To learn more, visit madisonaz.org.

OSBORN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL DISTRICT

District finds ways to help meet community needs

The Osborn Elementary School District has been serving as a source of support in the community during the

please see NEEDS on page 26



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SCHOOL DAYS**NEEDS continued from page 25**

COVID-19 pandemic.

It has been finding creative ways to stay connected to its parents, students and the larger community over the last year. Adults who have a child enrolled at Longview or Clarendon elementary schools or Osborn Middle School were invited to participate in adult language classes provided in Spanish and English online. Longview Elementary School provides a free little library and visitors there also recently were treated to fresh cilantro, arugula and lettuce harvested in the school's gardens, as well as other treats.

Clarendon Elementary School has been offering learning opportunities for families experiencing stress, using tools illustrated in a social-emotional program called Conscious Discipline. This program teaches children how to regulate and manage emotions so they can make safe and healthy choices. Adults are taught in order to help children most effectively they need to first display self-control. Participants are given a learning link to review independently

and then they can talk about what they have learned with others virtually.

Encanto Elementary School's attendance team has been providing resources and support to families that are experiencing hardships and/or grief related to COVID-19. When the school is notified that a family member of a student has died, the family is contacted by an Encanto social worker, who expresses her condolences and offers her counseling services to the family. The social worker also tells families how to talk to their children about the death and provides resources in the community to help with burial expenses and other basic needs.

Learn about dual language program

You can help immerse your child in two languages – English and Spanish – at an early age in the Osborn Elementary School District.

Enrollment is taking place for the district's Spanish Dual Language Program, which is offered at Clarendon, Encanto, Longview and Solano elementary schools and Osborn

Middle School. There will be informational meetings online/virtually for parents to learn more about the program at 5 p.m. in English on Monday, March 15 and then at 5 p.m. on Thursday, March 25 in Spanish through Zoom. Informational meetings also were held last month. Registration forms for the program will be accepted through May 20.

This dual language program offers a 50/50 English and Spanish model that promotes language proficiency through reading, writing and speaking in English and Spanish. It follows Arizona academic standards and delivers rigorous curriculum, instruction and assessments, according to Monica Artea, curriculum specialist for Language Acquisition and Biliteracy in the district, as well as a parent.

This program is free-of-charge. Students have the opportunity to expand their minds academically, develop strong social-cultural awareness, to excel as a bilingual community member and to eventually earn the Arizona Seal of Biliteracy when they graduate from high school. To learn

more, visit osbornnet.org, then click on "Parents" and then select "Spanish Dual Language."

PHOENIX UNION HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT

Students receive help applying for financial aid

The Phoenix Union High School District is trying to make it easy for seniors to apply for financial aid for college.

It held the AZ Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) Drive-In at Central High School, in partnership with Access ASU and the Be a Leader Foundation last month. High school seniors and their families drove to the school and received assistance with completing the FAFSA forms, which offer financial aid and scholarships to students to help cover their college costs. One \$500 scholarship is being given every month to a Phoenix Union student who finished their FAFSA. The student will be randomly selected.

Another drive-in FAFSA event was held at The Academies at South Mountain late last month. The drive-up events gave students a chance to seek help safely as participants wore masks during the COVID-19 pandemic.

District celebrates value of career, technical classes

Did you know that students in the Phoenix Union High School District are able to explore and learn skills they can use in future jobs in 35 programs?

The district celebrated the value and accomplishments of all its Career and Technical Education programs in February in honor of National CTE Month. Classes are taught using modern equipment, giving students career-ready skills they can use after graduation. There are a variety of classes offered in finance, business and management, as well as education, industry and engineering technology, information technology, arts and communication, law and public safety, health sciences and human services. Students learn culinary arts, pharmacy support services, automotive collision repair, digital filmmaking and many other diverse topics. The classes embody a contextualized approach to language arts and math integration with an emphasis on CTE content.

To learn more, visit pxu.org/cte.

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SCHOOL DAYS

The Washington Elementary School District recently held drive-thru kindergarten registration events on its campus (photo courtesy of Washington Elementary School District).

WASHINGTON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL DISTRICT

Explore options for kindergarten online

If your child is gearing up for kindergarten, you can explore the programs in the Washington Elementary School District from the comfort of home.

Registration is underway for the 2021-2022 school year and the district hosted drive-thru events recently on its campuses to share information about its kindergarten classes. The district provides free, full-day kindergarten programs that provide developmentally appropriate, research-based curriculum that addresses reading, writing, science, math and social studies, as well as physical education, art and time for fun. The program offers various chances for kindergartners to learn and practice vital social-emotional and problem-solving skills.

Children are eligible to enroll in kindergarten for the next school year if

they turn 5 years old on or before Aug. 31 of that academic year. If children will turn 5 in September or October, they are eligible for the Early Entrance Kindergarten Screening. To learn more, visit wesdschools.org/Kindergarten.

Meal kits provide dinners for families

Families in the Washington Elementary School District who need help putting food on the table can receive free, dinner meal kits every week.

These kits have fresh ingredients and recipes to cook complete dinners for children. Some recent kits included tacos, chips, tortillas, meat, salsa and vegetables, as well as milk, and one with tangerine and teriyaki chicken, fried rice, sunshine carrots, bell peppers, edamame, oranges and milk.

Interested families must register by 4 p.m. on Thursdays to pick up the kits the following week from 8 to 10 a.m. on Fridays. To sign up, visit <http://bit.ly/WESDMealKits>.

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SCHOOL DAYS**PRIVATE AND
CHARTER SCHOOLS****Xavier to engage girls
in STEAM activities online**

The COVID-19 pandemic is not stopping students at Xavier College Preparatory from planning their next Girls Have IT Day (GHITD).

This school's Computer Science Department chairwoman Catherine Wyman and her students will host the 12th annual event, which aims to spark excitement, engagement and encouragement of middle school girls to pursue science, technology, engineering, arts and math (STEAM) activities. Student chairwoman and senior Joey Hernandez Mena, as well as Xavier's whole GHITD Committee, are working hard to reach girls around the Valley.

About 500 middle school students are expected to participate in the event, which will be held online from 1 to 3 p.m. on March 18 through Webex. That means everyone interested can get involved in the fun while staying socially distant and safe. Every experiment and activity will be done live on Webex using common household items. There will be hundreds of hands-on activities including "elephant paste volcano," "edible models of DNA," "make your own Playdough," and "making movie sound effects."

Any middle school girl in the Valley can participate. The event is free but guests must register ahead of time at ghitday.org.



Talia Novak, on the left, a senior this school year, and Katie Harris, also a senior at Xavier College Preparatory demonstrate a centrifugal force activity during last year's Girls Have IT Day (GHITD) (photo by Dominique Paplaczky).

**Brophy seniors preparing
for graduation events**

Seniors at Brophy College Preparatory are gearing up for the festivities that will take place in the coming months.

The high school is planning to celebrate its Baccalaureate Mass at 7 p.m. on Friday, May 21 at St. Francis Xavier Church at 4715 N. Central Ave. In order to allow for appropriate social distancing and due to limited capacity, only seniors and faculty members will attend this Mass. It will be livestreamed for students' family members and friends.

Commencement will be held at 9 a.m. on Saturday, May 22 in Robson

Gymnasium on campus. Due to social distancing and the size of the gymnasium, only the seniors' parents or guardians can attend commencement. Brophy creates a commemorative commencement program that has a section called "Beyond Brophy." Seniors are being asked to tell the school about any merit-based scholarships or awards they have received from organizations not affiliated with Brophy between June of 2020 and April of this year. They should submit their information no later than April 16 to <https://brophycollegeprep.wufoo.com/forms/2021-beyond-brophy>.

To learn more, visit brophyprep.org.

**Madison Highland Prep
hosts robotics tournament**

Madison Highland Prep is programmed for technological fun as it recently hosted its 7th annual VEX tournament.

The school held the socially distanced event with two competition fields inside its gymnasium last month. Several volunteers in the community worked with Madison Highland Prep's sponsor, Blue Orthodontics and school staff members to support the 24 participating teams from around the Valley. Also, 18X18 AZ provided the referees and set-up while also livestreaming the event. Matches consisted of two periods – a 15-second autonomous time and a one-minute-and-45-second driver-controlled activity. Madison Highland Prep's three VEX teams competed for a spot at the AIA State Championships this month.

Shane Jones, a science faculty member, is the team coach while the competition was organized by Nathan Schulz, science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) coach.

**Midtown Primary volunteer
provides art supplies**

Midtown Primary School is grateful to a special volunteer, who takes time to serve as the "fairy art godmother."

Mary Hulings has been donating time and resources to the school to ensure all students have the chance to create, even during this COVID-19

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SCHOOL DAYS

pandemic. Third-grade teacher Mandy Mitchell said Hulings is the school's own "fairy art godmother" and she is very thankful to have her support. Hulings prepares individual craft kits for all students in the school. She has delivered hundreds of craft kits over the last year.

Hulings also takes time to communicate with teachers to ensure the art projects complement good things already occurring in the classrooms. For example, if a teacher is going to read a story about a raccoon, she will prepare a raccoon craft for students to make. Her creativity and time are helpful to teachers and students look forward to making artwork.

Because of the pandemic Hulings has not been on the campus lately but she has someone deliver the art supplies to the school.

Speech and debate group earns chapter award

The National Speech & Debate Association recently gave the Brophy/Xavier Speech & Debate Team the 2020 Leading Chapter Award in



The National Speech & Debate Association recently gave the Brophy/Xavier Speech & Debate Team the 2020 Leading Chapter Award in the Arizona District and also honored it as a member of the prestigious 200 Club (photo courtesy of Brophy College Preparatory).

the Arizona District. This team also was honored as a member of the prestigious 200 Club and was distinguished for its 40th time attending the National Speech & Debate Tournament, which the association said is "an achievement few schools can claim."

Three Brophy seniors also were commended for individual achievement. Will Hays, Carl Justice and Davis McHenry earned the National

Speech & Debate Association Academic All American Award.

Two Brophy seniors nominated for honor

Two Brophy College Preparatory seniors, Luke Maledon and Henry Palmer, were recently nominated for the U.S. Presidential Scholars Program. About 40 high school seniors in each state are nominated for

this honor based on academic achievement and their scores on the SAT and ACT exams.

Xavier honored for focus on computer science

Xavier College Preparatory is the recipient of a national award for helping to shatter the glass ceiling in computer science.

The school recently earned the College Board AP Computer Science Female Diversity Award for high female representation in AP Computer Science and A and AP Computer Science Principles. Schools distinguished with this award have expanded girls' access in AP Computer Science classes. This is the third year in a row Xavier has obtained this honor.

Xavier was one of 56 schools recognized for closing the gender gap in both AP computer science courses.

Data show that female students who take AP Computer Science Principles in high school are more than five times as likely to major in computer science in college, compared to girls who did not take that course.

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GENERATIONS

Senior Living

Explore art, celebrate St. Patrick's Day online

If you are an older adult looking for safe, at-home entertainment with a chance to socialize and learn something new, you might want to participate in one of the Zoom programs that the Jewish Family & Children's Service offers.

The non-profit organization's Center for Senior Enrichment has been providing its programs online/virtually for the safety of participants due to the COVID-19 pandemic. It is delivering classes in music, movement, history, art and other topics this month.

The Phoenix Art Museum will present "The Art of Illusion," where there will be discussion and a demonstration of how artists make people see objects that are not the way they seem, at 11 a.m. on Thursday, March 11.

Enjoy the luck of the Irish when Begged and Borrowed, a Celtic music

duo, performs for a St. Patty's Day Celebration at 1 p.m. on Wednesday, March 17.

Watch "Tea for Three," a Betty Ford monologue featuring Kandyce Hughes as part of the Herberger Theater Center's Lunch Time Theater at 11 a.m. on Thursday, March 18. To learn more, visit jfcsaz.org/our-services/older-adult-services/creative-aging-classes.

FreshStart offers free rides to vaccine appointments

Older residents looking for transportation to their appointments for COVID-19 vaccines can take advantage of a free service from FreshStart.

The healthcare staffing, recruiting and training agency offers free transportation and help registering for the COVID-19 vaccine to any Maricopa County residents who are at least 65 years old. FreshStart does not have the vaccines but rather they are given at locations that the Arizona Department of Health Services has designated.

Registration must be done through state-issued websites. FreshStart is providing transportation to vaccine appointments on a first-come, first-serve basis.

To sign up for a free ride to your vaccination site and/or receive help registering, visit freshstartagency.com/covid-vaccine-assistance.

Adult daycare members receive COVID-19 vaccine

HonorHealth, in partnership with Maricopa County, provided the COVID-19 vaccines to 33 residents at least 75 years old at the Adult Day Healthcare center at 303 E. Eva St. on the HonorHealth John C. Lincoln Medical Center campus. Older residents come to the center for activities on a regular basis, Mondays through Fridays. A nurse works on site. The seniors received the first and second doses of the COVID-19 vaccines.

Most of the members of the Adult Day Healthcare center are over 60

years old and many have dementia and other medical issues. The center provides a place for mature residents to stay engaged while their caregivers get a reprieve from the demands of tending to a loved one. It costs \$85 per day for access to the healthcare center with funding available to qualified people through the Arizona Long Term Care System, Area Agency on Aging and the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs. Arizona Caregivers Coalition and scholarships also can provide financial help to those who need it.

To learn more, call 602-870-6374 or visit desertmission.com/programs/adult-day-health-care.

Kids & Family

Sing, dance with children during virtual concert

Sing songs with your children during a free online concert for a cause.

The Virtual Benefit Concert featuring Uncle Gerry will take place on Zoom at 5 p.m. on Sunday, March 7. Described as being like a small Woodstock festival of family fun, this concert will be delivered by Gerry Dignan, also known as "Uncle Gerry," who has been traveling the world virtually to bring communities together with music. Gerry and participants will sing songs from the Music Together collections.

You can choose to make a donation to Caring Coalition AZ, which provides food to local children in need. Music Together in Phoenix offers an early childhood music program. To register for the concert, visit musictogetherphx.com. For more information about Caring Coalition AZ visit caring-coalitionaz.org.

Kids will take stage in virtual theater camps

Valley Youth Theatre will host its 2021 Virtual Spring Break, a day camp delivered online in order to try to keep students safe during the COVID-19 pandemic. Youths ages 9 and older can participate in the camp from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. Monday, March 8 to Friday, March 12 and then from Monday, March 15 to Friday, March 19. Participants will engage in dance, music and acting warm-ups and activi-

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GENERATIONS

ties, play games and rehearse in their focus area. Students will work in groups to create original works with teaching artists that will be performed virtually on the last day. This camp costs \$250.

Children ages 5 to 8 can sign up for the VYT Virtual All-Stars Spring Break Camp in session one with the theme of "A Royal Affair" from 10 to 11:30 a.m. March 8-12. During session two, kids ages 5 to 8 can take part in the virtual camp with the theme "Super Heroes Unite!" from 10 to 11:30 a.m. March 15-19. There also will be a virtual performance, created by the ensemble. The cost for the camps for kids in this age group is \$175. To register, visit vyt.com/education/virtual-spring-break-camps.

Play in sand at children's museum events

Experience the feel of the beach with your children during two days of special, outdoor events at the Children's Museum of Phoenix.

SandFest will feature more than 200 tons of sand in the Adventure Play area from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Friday, March 12 and 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. March 13 outside of the museum at 215 N. 7th St. Teams from Valley businesses will compete to create sand structures worthy of a golden shovel.

Capacity is limited and there is timed ticketing to try to provide safer play during this COVID-19 pandemic.

To learn more, visit childrensmuseumofphoenix.org.

'Escape' from virtual library, access classes, free Wi-Fi

Find lots of online programs to view anywhere and access to Wi-Fi coverage outside of nearly 50 libraries and other centers in Phoenix.

Plan your escape from Burton Barr Central Library in a virtual adventure. With the Phoenix Public Library Escape (Burton Barr Central Library Edition) you will find yourself in a fictitious situation where you explore the library after being locked inside with everyone having left. To learn more, visit phoenixpubliclibrary.org.

Children and their parents can learn the social, academic and classroom skills the kids will need to succeed in school during the Phoenix Public Library's Kindergarten Bootcamp Online programs in English and Spanish. Sessions in English will be held several days this month. The interactive series has two parts: a weekly pre-class video with instructions on activities for adults and children to do together and a live WebEx class.

Kindergarten Bootcamp En Linea, in Spanish, also will be held over several days this month.

To learn more about the bootcamps, visit phoenixpubliclibrary.org.

The city expanded its Wi-Fi coverage outside of libraries, community, senior and recreation centers to offer access to the internet during the pandemic. Residents can sit outside of the facilities to connect their devices from 8 a.m. to 9 p.m. daily. To learn more, visit phoenix.gov/its/wireless-network.

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We are a more-than-175-member-strong group of actively selling agents who have a vested interest in the community, the real estate market and North Central Phoenix. This tour is a cooperative effort among the active REALTORS of the Central Corridor. The tour has been in existence for more than 35 years and is an all-volunteer organization.

Location & Meeting

Our meetings are held on the first, third and fifth Friday of each month beginning at 9:00 am. Because of the COVID-19 pandemic, our meetings are held through Zoom. Following the meeting, we virtually "tour" 10 homes new to the market. We require those REALTORS who have a property on the tour to attend the meeting and then participate in the virtual tour of all houses on that day's tour. Each agent provides constructive feedback on price, condition, and key features of the home. The goal is to network with fellow REALTORS who also specialize in North Central Phoenix neighborhoods and help sell the property.

Tour Boundaries

Tour boundaries are Campbell Avenue to the south, 40th Street to the east, 19th Avenue to the west, with the northern border running south of the North Phoenix Mountain Preserve (roughly Peoria) and just north of Lincoln from 16th Street east to 40th St. The Phoenix Country Club area also is included.

Join Us!

We love working with new members. Join our team and receive news and information about new homes on the market in the North Central Region of Phoenix.

**For more information or to become a member,
visit our website at**

<https://northcentraltour.com/>



ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

LUNAFEST

Film festival aims to inspire women

A local fundraising film festival aimed at inspiring women and girls will be delivered online this month.

LUNAFEST, which will be held in a virtual format this year amid the COVID-19 pandemic, will feature seven short films highlighting strong women with powerful images and impactful language.

In its sixth consecutive year, the festival starts at 4 p.m. on Sunday, March 7. The co-emcees for the event will be Mary Jo West, Phoenix's first prime-time anchorwoman, and Gayle Bass, host of the TV show "RightThisMinute."

All proceeds from LUNAFEST will help Soroptimist International of Phoenix, which aims to empower girls and women by providing access to and support of their educational objectives, as well as Chicken & Eggs Pictures. The non-profit Chicken & Eggs Pictures aids women, non-fiction filmmakers whose work sparks social change. Tickets for LUNAFEST cost \$25 per home and give viewers 24-hour access to the movies. To learn more, visit lunafest.org/screenings.

Celebrate Irish parade, faire in online format

If you are a wee bit Irish, get excited about four-leaf clovers or are just looking for entertainment online, check out the 38th Annual St. Patrick's Day Parade & Irish Faire delivered virtually.

Because of the COVID-19 pandemic, the classic parade in Phoenix will shift to an online format from noon to 8 p.m. on Saturday, March 13. The telethon-type party is possible because of collaboration with the Irish Cultural Center and McClelland Library. Irish bands will perform live and there also will be interviews with area celebrities and community members. This year's Arizona Colleen, from the Arizona Colleen Program, a heritage pageant, will be the host for the virtual event.

It is free to watch the parade and

faire. You can support local, long-time faire vendors through the online booths. To learn more, visit <https://stpatricksdayphoenix.org>.

Take a 'Journey' with Phoenix Boys Choir

Phoenix Boys Choir is keeping the music flowing with a virtual concert this month.

The choir's next concert of its 73rd season, "A Courageous Journey," will be broadcast at 3 p.m. on Saturday, March 13. You can watch it on the choir's YouTube Channel at youtube.com/user/PhoenixBoysChoir and by clicking on a link on the organization's website at boyschoir.org/events. This concert will honor past and present leaders, dreamers and visionaries, who beat the odds and used their voice and actions to make a positive impact on the world. The songs are designed to boost the choir's important work and will keep the long tradition of boys singing music created for them.

It is free to watch these concerts. To learn more, visit boyschoir.org/events.

Chorale blends old, new in virtual concerts

Enjoy diverse music that aims to inspire in two upcoming virtual concerts the Phoenix Chorale will be delivering online this month and in April.

The choir will broadcast its "Cosmos," a free virtual concert at 7 p.m. on Saturday, March 6. Christopher Gabbitas, artistic director, will host this concert, which will take viewers on a journey through ancient and modern cultures, with pieces inspired by the night sky's beauty. You can watch highlights from the Chorale's "Cosmos" performances last year, including songs by composers Johannes Brahms, Ola Gjeilo, Felix Mendelssohn, Morten Lauridsen and others.

Watch the Phoenix Chorale's virtual broadcast "LUX" at 7 p.m. on Saturday, April 24. This show will feature songs that stir up feelings of the inspiration of light shining on us. There will be performances from Phoenix Chorale's "Lux Aeterna" held in 2019, including a choral arrangement of Sir Edward Elgar's "Nimrod" and works by

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

Palestrina and Poulenc. Soloists from the Phoenix Boys Choir will join the Phoenix Chorale for Gabriel Faure's "Pie Jesu" taken from his "Requiem."

You can access these concerts by joining the chorale's email list, following it on its Vimeo channel at vimeo.com/phoenixchorale when it airs and by following it on Facebook at facebook.com/phoenixchorale. To join Phoenix Chorale's email list, visit phoenixchorale.org/spring2021.

North Central woman joins arts board

A North Central woman is one of the new board members for the Free Arts for Abused Children of Arizona.

Amanda Ho recently became part of the board, along with five other new members. Free Arts for Abused Children of Arizona is a non-profit organization that alters children's trauma to resilience by engaging them in the arts. It provides programs that promote self-expression, safety and a sense of belonging.

Ho is director of State Regulatory Affairs at Arizona Public Service, where she works with state regulators and external stakeholders on public policy and compliance issues. She likes serving on the board and on the Free Arts Development Committee. Ho grew up in Arizona and said she wants the state and Phoenix to "be a place where people want to live, and want to raise their children."

Free Arts for Abused Children of Arizona, founded in 1993, delivers programs through 900 volunteer mentors and artists, who serve more than 8,000 children a year via partnerships with 43 social service welfare agencies across Maricopa County. It is based at 352 E. Camelback Road. To learn more, visit freeartsaz.org.

Read, discuss book for national event

If you love to read, you might want to participate in the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) Big Read Phoenix this month.

Phoenix Public Library is urging people to read and discuss "The Round House" by Louise Erdrich through March 31. The NEA Big Read, in partnership with Arts Midwest, aims to broaden the public's understanding of the world, communities and ourselves

via the joy of sharing a good book. Blending a coming-of-age story with elements of suspense, detective novels, a memoir and storytelling/oral history, "The Round House" is about a 13-year-old boy's investigation and desire to seek revenge after a brutal attack on his mother. The book tells the tale of the boy and his father, a tribal judge, who is helpless as he tries to bring the attacker to justice. While the main theme in the novel is justice through the lens of tribal law and indigenous history, the book also delves into family, sexuality, relationships and religion.

The Virginia G. Piper Center for Creative Writing at Arizona State University is one of 78 not-for-profit organizations to obtain a grant to host an NEA Big Read project between September of 2019 and June of 2020. To learn more, visit phoenixpubliclibrary.org/services/online-programs/big-read.

Podcast delves into religious ideas

Connect with others to discuss religious ideas and the effect they have on you, society and culture through a podcast from the Beatitudes Church.

Tony Minear, pastor of Beatitudes Church, will deliver a weekly podcast called "Between the Lines 1-2-3" talking about one article, two headlines and three quotes from religious news and events. It provides a space where people can learn the latest religious news and be encouraged to question and ponder new and different concepts in a way that motivates you to seek others' perspective. The podcast is 10 to 15 minutes long and is available to download and stream from a podcast platform every Thursday or on Beatitudes Radio from Transistor.

The show airs at 10:15 a.m. on the first and third Sunday of the month. It is complemented by "A Closer Look," an online live-streamed podcast that reviews an article or topic of discussion from the previous week's podcast at a deeper level. Minear and Janelle Tapphorn, who has a master's degree in journalism, and Charity Gleason-Davis, podcast producer, produce that one-hour podcast. Viewers can participate in the live event via the Facebook chat function or by texting comments and questions to 480-389-4974.

To learn more, visit beatitudescurch.org/media/podcasts.

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Chris Laukenmann, left, and her sister Andrea Keehn serve up traditional German baked goods and groceries at the family's Old Heidelberg German Bakery. They'll be offering a small selection of traditional European Easter chocolates and cookies this season. Chris owns the bakery, which her and Keehn's parents started in 1969 (photo by Marjorie Rice).

Café Chat

Bakery serves bread you can chew on

By Marjorie Rice

Old Heidelberg German Bakery serves up bread with attitude. No soft-spongy white "sandwich loaves" here. This is bread you can chew on. Staff of life stuff.

Seedless light rye, coarse rye, hard rolls, chewy, bagel-like pretzels – traditional German breads the Laukenmann family has been serving to Phoenicians for more than a half-century.

Heinz and Eleonore Laukenmann, who operated a bakery in Germany, near Stuttgart, before immigrating here in 1968, opened the local bakery a year after moving here. They initially opened it on Seventh Street next door to Schreiner's Fine Sausage.

It seems like a location marriage made in heaven for customers, but four years later the Laukenmanns moved to a new store at Camelback and Seventh Street. Their customers followed – many of them European immigrants and Canadian snowbirds with European roots that longed for an authentic taste of home.

The family bought the current location, on Indian School Road at 22nd Street, in 1995, transforming it from offices to a combination bakery and small grocery store. Heinz and

Eleonore's daughters, Chris Laukenmann and Andrea Keehn, and son Tom Laukenmann worked in the family business for decades. Tom started training at age 16 with his dad and is still baking there at age 64, turning out all those fragrant loaves with just one helper. Andrea has retired, but frequently helps out at the store. Her daughter, Emily, works behind the counter. Chris bought the company five years ago.

Tom's seedless light rye, in rounds and long loaves, is the best-seller. Customers know to come in early because popular items can sell out.

Other bakery favorites include palm leaves, almond horns, macaroons and strudel.

While some bakeries have expanded with sandwiches and other prepared food, the Laukenmanns decided to offer groceries instead. It was a response to customer conversations, Andrea said. She said that "people would come in and say 'I wish I could get ...'"

Customers can pick up pickles of all description, cookies, noodles, dumplings, gravy mixes, salad dressings, sauces, German mustards, sardines in mustard and all sorts of sauces. And lots of herring is available at Old Heidelberg.

If you're cooking a German recipe, this is the place to go for ingredients that give it that authentic flavor, Andrea said. "Like German potato salad, with vinegar and oil. I've tried

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

American vinegar; it just doesn't work. It's weird."

So Old Heidelberg has a shelf packed with a variety of German vinegars.

You can pack a mean picnic from the bakery and grocery shelves. Start with bread, then head to the cold counter for brie and camembert. And try sausages from Stiglmeier Sausage Co. in Illinois. The Laukenmanns discovered the company on a visit to Chicago, Andrea said.

Heidelberg's sausages all are fully cooked, though some, like the pork and veal brats, benefit from grilling. Choose from veal bologna, blood sausage, fresh liver sausage made with calves liver and goose liver, and smoked pork belly, ready to slice and eat. (Many of these products are seasonal, only available in the winter.)

If some of the names aren't familiar, ask. They're happy to explain.

One item that might not be familiar to non-Europeans is crackling fat with fried onions. Sounds awful but ambrosia to those who have acquired the taste of this pure pork fat. It substitutes for butter in frying, and for a true taste of Germany, try it spread on rye bread or thin slices of Sonnenblumenbrod (thin dark bread packed with sunflower seeds), with a sprinkling of salt and pepper.

Take a final turn in the grocery area for cookies and chocolates for dessert (to go with the strudel and macaroons) and you're ready for a feast.

Old Heidelberg German Bakery is located at 2210 E. Indian School Road. It is open from 9:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. Tuesdays through Saturdays. For information, call 602-224-9877.

Dining Briefs**Toast St. Patrick's Day with Irish soda bread**

If you want to get into the St. Patrick's Day spirit this month, you might "knead" to try Mediterra Bakehouse's Irish Soda bread, available in several locations.

This bread is made with whole wheat flour, buttermilk, sea salt, caraway seed and golden raisins. Roll over to the Uptown Farmers Market at North Phoenix Baptist Church and any AJ's Fine Foods and Whole Foods locations in the Valley from March 13-20 to find this festive creation. The farmers market is open from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. every Saturday and 9 a.m. to

noon Wednesdays at North Phoenix Baptist Church at 5757 N. Central Ave. It costs \$5.99.

Nick Ambeliotis started Mediterra Bakehouse in 2002 in Pittsburgh, Pa., and then expanded it to Arizona in 2012. The business models its baking on old world European style, using less yeast, more time, as well as cold water and heritage wheat. The bakery grows three types of heritage wheat on a 35-acre farm, and then mills it to use the flour in the bread. Mediterra Bakehouse makes more than 20 flavors of bread, as well as seasonal choices, selling it at stores around the Valley. It is the toast of the town, being served at resorts and restaurants. To learn more, visit mediterrabakehouse.com.

Enjoy a taste of Ireland at Match Market & Bar

Enjoy a taste of the Emerald Isle in honor of St. Patrick's Day when you visit Match Market & Bar.

The restaurant and bar at 1100 N. Central Ave. will serve a traditional Irish meal and drinks from 11 a.m. to 10 p.m. on Wednesday, March 17. Feast on corned beef sliders with traditional corned beef, Swiss cheese, sauerkraut, horseradish aioli and pickles piled on a sweet roll with roasted vegetables on the side for \$13. Quench your thirst with Jameson shots for \$6 each and green beer for \$5 each.

To learn more, visit matchphx.com.

Pita Jungle expands menu and launches food truck

Soak up some new offerings at Pita Jungle either inside its restaurants or from its new food truck when it rolls through the neighborhood.

The locally owned and operated restaurant group that offers award-winning Mediterranean cuisine recently began serving customers with its new food truck. This 20-foot vehicle features a full, custom-built kitchen that allows employees to serve dishes from its menu outside of its 22 Valley locations. The menu includes various starters, salads, pitas, sandwiches, bowls and desserts. This food truck will offer some new items created just for the on-the-go experience and provide special meal combinations including a sandwich and salad for a set price.

Pita Jungle also recently expanded its bar menu and retail products with its own private label wines called

please see PITA JUNGLE on page 36

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FOOD FOR THOUGHT**PITA JUNGLE continued from page 35**

Jungle Vino. Its two varietals are Cabernet Sauvignon and Chardonnay. Customers can buy Jungle Vino while dining in-person in the restaurants and for take-out. Each bottle costs \$18 and you can sip a glass of Jungle Vino for \$5 during happy hour. Matchbook Wines, a family-owned winery in northern California, produces and bottles these two wines. The Cabernet Sauvignon opens with leather, smoke and mesquite to provide a blend of dark fruit, black cherry and blackberry intertwined with subtle spices, star anise and clove. Pita Jungle's Chardonnay delivers a meticulous balance of fruit and subtle oak with a weighty, long finish and explosion of apricot, butterscotch and honey.

To find the location of the Pita Jungle food truck or learn more about the restaurant, visit facebook.com/PitaJungle.

Aunt Chilada's offering St. Patrick's Day specials

Visit a popular Mexican restaurant to indulge in spirited dishes and drinks for St. Patrick's Day.

Aunt Chilada's will feature Mexican Black and Tans, which is Guinness beer mixed with Modelo Especial for \$5 a pint or \$6.50 for a 22-ounce drink on March 17. You can drink a large Black and Tans paired with a green corn tamale for \$10 that day and night. The restaurant will be open from 3 to 10 p.m. on St. Patrick's Day.

Check out Aunt Chilada's on Fridays every week for social distance line dancing from 6 to 9 p.m. and visit for BINGO night from 6 to 8 on Tuesdays.

Aunt Chilada's, a family-owned restaurant, is located at 7330 N. Dreamy Draw Drive. To learn more, visit www.aunchiladas.com.

Feast on Irish treats at Miracle Mile

Enjoy a culinary pot of gold when you visit Miracle Mile Deli on and around St. Patrick's Day.

The restaurant at 4433 N. 16th St. will offer corned beef, cabbage, Irish potatoes and bread and butter for \$15 from March 15-20. If you are working or staying home that day, you can order food to be catered on Wednesday, March 17. To set up catering and learn more about deliveries,

call 602-776-0992.

Want to quench your thirst with something festive? Miracle Mile also offers various craft beers on draft, including green beer in the middle of this month for \$6 a pint. Miracle Mile Deli is open from 11 a.m. to 7 p.m. Mondays through Saturdays. To learn more, visit miraclemiledeli.com.

Spice up lunch, dinner with Taco Guild packs to-go

It is easier than ever to enjoy tacos at home with help from Taco Guild.

The restaurant offers family taco packs for curbside carry-out customers. Every pack has your choice of two types of protein, two side dishes, one dessert, as well as chips and housemade salsa. Various toppings also are included in the packs so guests can customize the tacos to their tastes. The protein choices are chicken, carne asada, carnitas, gringo, shrimp and jackfruit. You can pick two of these side dishes: Spanish rice, borracho beans and street corn off the cob. The dessert is either churros or horchata chocolate cake.

These taco packs come in three serving size options - \$50 for four people, \$72 for six customers and \$120 for 10 guests. Taco Guild is located at 546 E. Osborn Road. To order items online, visit tacoguild.com or call 602-264-4143.

Tap into Irish luck with Phoenix City Grille meal

Hoping to catch a little luck of the Irish on St. Patrick's Day?

Check out Phoenix City Grille, which will serve a traditional Irish meal on Wednesday, March 17. The restaurant at 5816 N. 16th St. will offer a plate of house-braised corned beef with chipotle Dijon glaze, scalloped cabbage and roasted root vegetables for \$16 during lunch and \$22 for dinner.

Make reservations by calling 602-266-3001 or by visiting www.phoenixcitygrille.com.

Get take-and-reheat meals at Sierra Bonita Catering

Indulge in flavorful, hand-crafted cuisine influenced by Italian, Korean, Mexican and American culinary styles when you order from Sierra Bonita Catering.

Sierra Bonita provides take-and-reheat meals customers can pick up every Friday. These meals are served in

individual portion sizes and combine scratch-made fare created using local, high quality ingredients. Sierra Bonita Catering's culinary team makes soups, salads, sandwiches, desserts and heartier entrees that change weekly. The company's owner, Kim Hopper, said these take-and-reheat meals are a big success and keep the chefs busy during a time when there is not much demand for event catering. Kim founded the catering company while her husband, Nate Hopper was the operating partner of the recently closed Sierra Bonita Grill.

Long-time regulars can enjoy the culinary selections they came to love at the restaurant through the catering business. Every week at least one best-selling item is featured, including buttermilk chicken, green chile posole and smoked red chili pork. Sierra Bonita Catering also provides full catering services, with meals that can be individually plated or packaged in single-serving containers for safety. The company is located at 8522 N. 7th St. To order items, visit sb-catering.com.

Find Lent-friendly meals amid safety precautions

Culver's is adjusting to the COVID-19 pandemic while offering fresh, non-meat meals ideal for Lent.

The restaurant, which has a North Central location, began providing a drive-thru-only model when the pandemic first began. This change involved adding lanes to accommodate more traffic, addressing increased call volume for carry-out orders and designating team members to walk through the lines with their tablets in hand to take orders from customers in vehicles.

As dining rooms in restaurants have gradually reopened, Culver's is still making safety its top priority, including by providing more space between tables and decreasing dining room capacity. It also requires daily wellness checks for its employees and frequently sanitizes its restaurants.

Culver's offers a North Atlantic Cod sandwich or dinner year-round, featuring cod that is wild-caught in the cold Arctic waters of the Barents Sea, then hand-battered in its recipe of herbs and spices, fried after you place your order. Try it with Culver's family-recipe tartar sauce.

Check out Culver's Butterfly Jumbo Shrimp Value basket or dinner. You will be able to feast on six pieces of lightly breaded shrimp with a side dish and

soft drink in the value basket. Or pick a six-piece or 10-piece dinner paired with Culver's famous Crinkle Cut Fries, coleslaw and a dinner roll.

There is a Culver's at 825 E. Camelback Road. To learn more, visit culvers.com.

Sip new cocktail at Phoenix City Grille

Quench your thirst with an unusual, new cocktail you can find at Phoenix City Grille or make at home.

The restaurant's executive chef Micah Wyzlic recently partnered with Garrison Brothers to create an exclusive recipe for "The Best Damn Old Fashion." The recipe includes Garrison Brothers' bitter flavored cotton candy in it, as well as Garrison Brothers Small Batch Bourbon, a Luxardo cherry, an orange slice and cherry bitters. It will be on the menu through this spring and possibly on a permanent basis.

To make this drink you need to muddle one cherry and the orange slice, then add ice to a glass. Then you should add the bourbon and bitters and stir it for 15 seconds. The next step is to strain it into a new glass with a fresh ice ball or ice cube and top it with a pinch of Garrison bitter flavored cotton candy.

You can buy Garrison Brothers Small Batch for \$84.99 at local Total Wine & More stores or online by visiting garrisonbros.com/shop. To learn more about Phoenix City Grille visit phoenixcitygrille.com.

Sweeten the day with new Starbucks drinks, desserts

Starbucks is offering two new drinks and a new dessert just in time for spring.

Check out the Honey Almondmilk Cold Brew, which boasts a creamy finish, and a Pistachio Latte that features a salted brown buttery topping.

For those with a sweet tooth, a new Earth Cake Pop is a rich chocolate cake on a stick, dipped in blue, chocolaty frosting, with green and white sprinkles on top.

The new drinks and Earth Cake Pop are being sold for a limited time, while supplies last.

To learn more, visit starbucks.com.

For local restaurant listings, visit our Dining Guide online at www.northcentralnews.net

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