



north central news

the voice of the north central phoenix community since 1999

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Restaurants struggle to find workers

By Colleen Sparks

Restaurants in North Central and around the state are struggling to find employees to stay afloat as customers are flooding their businesses now that COVID-19 vaccines are readily available.

The owners of several eateries say they had to lay off several workers, cut their hours and shrink the number of items on their menus earlier in the pandemic as state restrictions placed on restaurants caused huge losses of revenue. While they were able to bring back many employees after the state allowed restaurants to resume in-person dining, they say some workers chose to pursue other careers, return to school or stay home.

Steve Chucuri, president and CEO of the Arizona Restaurant Association, said since many people have been able to get their COVID-19 vaccines in recent months, restaurants around the state have become much busier.

"We have people (employees) that decided to go
please see STRUGGLE on page 6



Children receive donations from the Assistance League of Phoenix's Operation School Bell program. They step aboard a "department store" bus, where they pick out clothes, hygiene kits and books with help from volunteers (photo courtesy of the Assistance League of Phoenix).

'School Bell' offers clothes, books and hope

By Colleen Sparks

Going back to school can be an exciting time to shop for new clothes, backpacks and supplies but many families in North Central and around the Valley are not able to provide those items to their children as they struggle financially.

Luckily for them, the Assistance League of Phoenix, a North Central non-profit organization, provides clothes, underwear, shoes, socks, hygiene kits, books and other supplies to kids living in poverty. Through its innovative Operation School Bell program, kids in kindergarten through eighth grade board luxurious "Delivering Dreams" buses driven to their schools to pick out their clothes and other items with loving assistance from volunteers. The program helps about 8,500 children a year in the Valley.

"For a lot of kids that we serve they've never tried on clothes," said Aimee Runyon, CEO of the Assistance League of Phoenix. "It just makes them feel special. This is the first time they know what it's like to have a community wrap their arms around you."

Often the children who receive the donations have only worn hand-me-down clothes previously and are wearing shoes that are two sizes too small. The children receive three tops and two bottoms, which can

include pants, skirts and shorts, as well as a sweatshirt, socks, underwear, a belt, shoes and a hygiene kit with deodorant, toothpaste, toothbrushes and other supplies. Kids also receive a book of their choice.

The buses are set up like department stores with dressing rooms and areas to try on shoes. These vehicles bear the colorful logos of their sponsors - Arizona Diamondbacks, Fiesta Bowl Charities/BHHS Legacy Foundation and BHHS Legacy Foundation/Phoenix Rotary 100. In 2012 a grant from the Arizona Diamondbacks allowed the non-profit organization to start the program.

The buses visit several North Central schools in
please see SCHOOL BELL on page 4

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COMMUNITY

Hiking trails to close during excessive heat

Select hiking trails in the city of Phoenix will be closed when the National Weather Service issues an Excessive Heat Watch.

The Phoenix Parks and Recreation Board recently approved a pilot program through which certain trails will be closed in these situations through Sept. 30. The decision was made out of concerns for the public and first responders' safety.

Through Sept. 30 Camelback Mountain's Echo Canyon Trail and Cholla Trail and all trails associated with Piestewa Peak Trailhead in the Phoenix Mountains Preserve will be closed from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. on days when an Excessive Heat Watch is in place. Cholla Trail on Camelback Mountain was closed as of press time. These locations were selected based on the number of mountain rescues that take place there every year, as well as the difficulty rating of those trails and how that affects the complexity of rescues.

When the trail access is restricted parking lot gates will be closed and signage will be erected. Closure information also will be released through the Phoenix Parks and Recreation Department's website and social media accounts and to local hotels and resorts. Phoenix Park Rangers also will be visible at those spots to remind and teach trail users about the restrictions.

During the warm weather months, regardless of whether there is an Excessive Heat Watch in effect, trail users are urged to only hike during the early morning or evening hours when it is cooler and more shade is available.

To learn more, visit www.phoenix.gov/parks.

Lura Turner Homes to host golf tournament

Play golf and raise money to help people with special needs in a tournament next month.

Lura Turner Homes will host its 26th Annual Golf Tournament at 6 a.m. on Friday, Sept. 24 at Stone Creek Golf Course at 4435 E. Paradise Village Parkway South. The cost is \$125 per golfer. The event will raise money for special needs men and women who live



Phoenix will close certain hiking trails when the National Weather Service issues an Excessive Heat Watch for safety reasons (photo courtesy of city of Phoenix).

at Lura Turner Homes' facilities.

Lura Turner Homes' mission is to offer adults with disabilities a safe environment to ensure their health, happiness and security and their ability to reach their highest potential. The organization is based at 8640 N. 19th Ave.

To register, call 602-943-4789 or visit www.luraturnerhomes.org. The deadline to register is Sept. 20.



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COMMUNITY

SCHOOL BELL *continued from page 1*

the Osborn Elementary and Washington Elementary school districts. They also help students at Imagine Schools Camelback.

Because of the COVID-19 pandemic, Operation School Bell added safety measures that follow the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's recommended guidelines including putting hand sanitizer in the buses. Runyon said the need is great as many families have lost jobs and been displaced.

Stephanie Chastain, a member of the Assistance League of Phoenix, has been volunteering for 13 years with the non-profit and serving kids on the bus is her favorite project.

"They're all so sweet, they're so appreciative," Chastain said. "We've had tons of people that we dress that are now adults talk about what it meant to them to have nice, clean clothes."

The Assistance League of Phoenix also offers the Wee Help program, where layette gift bags with receiving blankets, clothes, diapers, disposable wipes and other supplies are given to struggling, new parents.

Children receive new books, thanks to the support of many partner organizations, businesses and churches, through the Book Gifts Program. This program's first priority is to serve whole grade levels of students in Title 1 schools, which have high percentages of students whose families qualify for free and reduced-price lunches. About 20,000 children a year receive the new books.

Children who are in crisis receive something warm and fuzzy – a teddy bear – through Assistance League of Phoenix's HUGS program. Through a partnership with the Phoenix Fire Department, it provides teddy bears to comfort children when they have lost a family member, lived through a home fire, illness and other emergencies.

Runyon said the HUGS program is close to her heart as her cousin, who lived in Sunnyslope, died about seven years ago, leaving a 7-year-old child behind, who received one of the teddy bears.

The Assistance League of Phoenix can always use volunteers. If you want to find out about volunteer opportunities, contact Michelle Peralta, volunteer program manager, at volunteer@alphx.org. To learn more about the Assistance League of Phoenix, visit www.alphx.org.

Police records, services reopen to walk-ins

The Phoenix Police Public Records and Services Unit (PRSU) at 1717 E. Grant St. is accepting walk-in customers after more than a year of being closed due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Walk-in customers can access the lobby from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. weekdays and there is no longer a limit on the number of customers that can visit.

The public can make requests for police public and traffic records in person or online through www.phoenix.gov/atyourservice. To schedule a phone or in-person appointment to make a records request call 602-262-1885 or email policerecords.appts@phoenix.gov. Those who do not have access to a computer or who need technical help with the web-based portal or have been told the records are available to pick up can call 602-534-1127 or visit 1717 E. Grant St., Suite 100.

For questions about vehicle impounds, call 602-495-2096. All required released documents must be turned in for review in person in order to obtain a release for a vehicle. Phoenix has towing contracts to facilitate the removal of vehicles from city streets. To learn more, visit www.phoenix.gov/police/resources-information/towing-information.

Customers can contact city employees with questions about false alarms issues by calling 602-534-0322. They also can ask questions about permits and payments by calling that same number. Alarm permit renewals can be paid over the phone or by mailing the payments to City of Phoenix Alarm Permit Renewals, P.O. Box 29117, Phoenix, AZ 85038-9117, or in person at 1717 E. Grant St., Ste. 100.

The False Alarm Prevention Program now is offered online. To find out if you are eligible to have a false alarm assessment waived by taking part in the online program, call 602-534-0322. You will need your permit number.

To contact city Loud Party employees about notices, invoices and payments related to loud parties, call 602-262-7803. Loud party hearings are scheduled and done telephonically in conjunction with the city of Phoenix Auditor's Office. To learn more, visit www.phoenix.gov/police/resources-information/loud-party-ordinance.

For more information, visit www.phoenix.gov/newsroom/police/1990.

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STRUGGLE continued from page 1

into a different profession altogether,” Chucuri said. “Some moved out of state or got a degree. Gratefully we’re starting to see that level out and that our workforce is getting stronger and stronger.”

Around Arizona, about 1,200 restaurants closed and eateries saw about \$2.75 billion dollars in lost sales last year, Chucuri said.

North Mountain Brewing Company at 522 E. Dunlap Ave. had to close temporarily and offer only drinks for a few months because of the pandemic. Candy Frogozo-Berkner, who co-owns the restaurant with her husband Robert Berkner, said her father died of COVID-19 and she caught the virus. Several of the employees the restaurant has hired have walked out, resigning without giving any notice, as they were overwhelmed by the huge numbers of customers, Frogozo-Berkner said.

“It’s been hard for us,” Frogozo-Berkner said. “There are nights that I cry and pray. I’m working 70 hours a week.”

She said she was planning to hire at least seven people, including servers, cooks and a manager, as of press time. North Mountain Brewing Company also decided to be closed on Tuesdays until the owners can hire more cooks. To learn more about North Mountain Brewing Company, visit www.northmountainbrewing.com. Anyone interested in applying for a job should visit the restaurant in person.

Justin Beckett, chef and co-owner of Beckett’s Table and Southern Rail restaurants said both eateries had to release several employees earlier in the pandemic, but some servers stayed to help deliver food to customers curbside. The restaurants had to reduce their hours as they deal with a staff shortage.

“We tried to offer people positions that wanted to stay but there weren’t enough positions for everyone,” Beckett said. “Right now we’re having a very large challenge finding industry-level employees to come back and run our restaurants.”

He said he is looking for line cooks, prep cooks, sous chefs and servers. Anyone interested in applying for positions can visit Beckett’s Table at 3717 E. Indian School Road or Southern Rail at 300 W. Camelback Road.

Carole Meyer Zookz, owner of ZOOKZ Sandwiches, had to close the downtown location of her restaurant



Michele Woods (left) and Tiffany Allison, managing partners at Aunt Chilada’s restaurant, were able to retain most of their employees despite the COVID-19 pandemic (photo by Colleen Sparks).

permanently due to decreased customers because of the pandemic. She temporarily closed the ZOOKZ eatery at Phoenix Sky Harbor International Airport but plans to reopen it. Meyer Zookz plans to open a new location at 32nd Street and Camelback Road in a few months and is looking for employees to work there. The location at 100 E. Camelback Road has stayed busy as she set up a window for customers to pick up orders.

“It’s very, very difficult,” Meyer Zookz said. “I think people just developed different habits during the pandemic. They’re used to working more flexible jobs.”

Anyone interested in applying for a job at ZOOKZ can visit www.zookzsandwiches.com.

The staffing situation is better at Aunt Chilada’s restaurant at 7330 N. Dreamy Draw Drive. This family-owned restaurant is fully staffed but will always consider good employees who apply for jobs. A few employees stayed on when the pandemic began and the rest of the workers were placed on furlough. The restaurant provided curbside pick-up food on Sundays, giving proceeds and tips to its employees. Most of the employees who were on furlough returned after business picked up again, said Tiffany Allison, who is a managing partner of the restaurant, along with her sister, Michele Woods.

Allison and Woods and their parents, Candice and Ken Nagel, who own the restaurant, work hard to retain employees, paying them above minimum wage and offering health insurance. Ken has loaned employees money for college tuition.

“Our dad truly, truly takes care of people,” Allison said. “We empower people.”

“Overall we’ve been really fortunate,” Woods added.

To learn more about Aunt Chilada’s, visit www.auntchiladas.com.

Real Estate Corner

Bobby Lieb

Your residential real estate specialist for North Central, Biltmore, the Camelback Corridor, and Paradise Valley

Happy Back To School Month!

Only five more shopping months until the big holidays are here. Where did the last seven months go? I hope all of you got away for a vacation and for some of us it seems like it has been forever.

I always appreciate my loyal clients, some are newer ones and some have been dealing with me for almost 30 years. We have sold 78 homes in 2021 ranging from \$239,000 to \$3.5 million, which includes 17 home sales over \$1 million. Thank you so much for your loyalty.

The Cromford Report is a local marketing company that offers us a daily real estate insight and compiles all kind of data from past years all the way to today's stats. I am going to give you some information from their latest report, which came out in mid-July.

There currently are 5,699 active listings compared to 8,788 at the same time last year, was which is down 35 percent but up 15.9 percent from last month. There are 7,294 pending listings, which is down 8.7 percent from last year at this time. Monthly sales were 10,204, which is up 5 percent from last year and 5.6 percent from June 2021.

The monthly average sales

price per square foot is \$252.04, which is up 37.9 percent from last year at this time and up 1.3 percent from last month. The current monthly median sales price is \$397,000 versus \$305,000 last year, which is up 30 percent from last year.

The Cromford Report expects sales rates to slow in the second half of 2021 and forecast prices will continue to rise but at a slower pace that the first 6 months of 2021.

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Bobby Lieb

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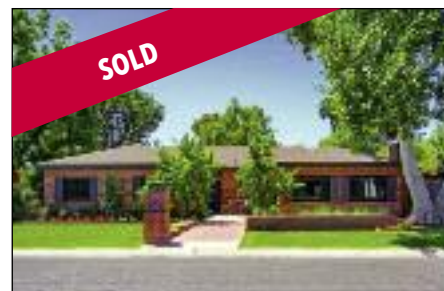
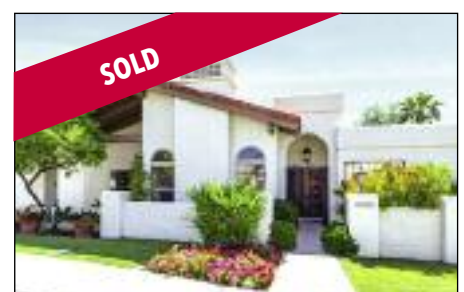
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COMMUNITY

Volunteers needed to help foster kids

While businesses are struggling to find employees, non-profit organizations also are seeking help this summer.

One of those non-profits is Arizona Helping Hands (AHH), which is the largest provider of essential needs to children in foster care in the state. Marketing and Communications Manager Lori Calhoun said AHH is in urgent need of volunteers as the number of people volunteering for the organization is down 50 percent from 2019, before the COVID-19 pandemic began. Volunteers are critical to the organization and they donated almost 13,000 hours of work in 2019. Arizona Helping Hands expects about 6,000 volunteer hours to be completed this year.

Volunteers for Arizona Helping Hands do everything from stuffing backpacks with school supplies for children to answering phones, assisting in the warehouse operations, helping at events and much more. They help the non-profit organization aid the more than 14,000 children in foster care in Arizona.



Arizona Helping Hands, which provides essential needs to children in foster care, is in dire need of volunteers to help this year. Two of its volunteers, pictured here are Cyndy Kapci, on left, and Anne Christensen (photo courtesy of Arizona Helping Hands).

Volunteers are the driving force behind Arizona Helping Hands' Birthday Dreams Program, through which gifts are wrapped and birthday packages are decorated to give to more than 300 children

every month. Not only do volunteers help the non-profit organization's core programs but they also help save Arizona Helping Hands nearly a quarter of a million dollars by donating their time.

Anne Christensen, who has been volunteering for Arizona Helping Hands for a little more than four years said the organization "fills a big need in the community." She added that she feels "needed and appreciated" and enjoys volunteering for the organization.

There are many volunteer opportunities for individuals and groups ages 16 and older from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Monday through Friday. To learn more, visit <https://azhelpinghands.org/volunteers>.

Duet seeks help for homebound adults

Duet: Partners In Health & Aging will have a volunteer orientation on Wednesday, Aug. 18, for those who want to help homebound adults in North Central and around the Valley.

The orientation will take place at 2 p.m. in the Mariposa Room with a HEPA air filtration system at the Duet

office at 10000 N. 31st Ave. Those who are fully vaccinated for COVID-19 do not have to wear face coverings but anyone who is not fully vaccinated must wear them.

There are 56 homebound adults who are waiting to be matched with compassionate volunteers, as of press time. Volunteers assist homebound adults, many of whom are senior citizens, with grocery shopping, by providing transportation to and from medical appointments, by offering friendly visits and delivering other support.

Wendy Cohen, senior director of volunteer services for Duet, said that in addition to providing needed transportation the volunteers also offer connection to isolated adults. Volunteers also can drive seniors to and from their COVID-19 vaccine appointments.

Volunteers set their own hours. Duet matches them with adults who live close to them and the volunteers can work a few hours a month during the day, evening or weekend.

Call 602-274-5022 or email volunteer@duetaz.org or visit <http://duetaz.org/volunteer> to register for orientation.



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Get your car washed, support child safety

You can help raise money for Phoenix Children's Hospital while getting your vehicle cleaned at Super Star Car Wash.

The car wash business is teaming up with Phoenix Children's Hospital to raise money and boost awareness for the hospital's Child Passenger Safety Program through the end of September. Customers can donate set amounts of money to Phoenix Children's while buying a car wash through Sept. 30. Also, anyone can purchase an express wash from Sunday, Aug. 1 to Thursday, Sept. 30 during the "Make a Difference at a Distance" wash, with part of the proceeds being donated to Phoenix Children's Hospital.

There are Super Star Car Wash operations in North Central at 6149 N. Seventh St. and at 2020 W. Northern Ave. This business is family owned and offers single washes and unlimited monthly plans for express washes, while its full-service locations also provide fluid changes and quick lube services, full-service washes and detailing. Phoenix Children's Child Passenger Safety Program teaches parents about the importance of and the correct use of car seats, restraints and booster seats.

To learn more, visit www.phoenix-childrens.org/center-family-health-safety/road-safety-programs. For more information about Super Star Car Wash visit www.superstarcarwashaz.com.

City centers reopen, activities resume

More activities will be available in city of Phoenix community and recreation centers as the rate of community transmission of COVID-19 has decreased in Maricopa County.

The city has altered capacity restrictions and increased the number of activities offered in the centers, as well as reopened all of its indoor centers. This policy change is in accordance with guidance that the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has offered. The change follows the city's announcement in June that masks or face coverings and physical distancing measures would no longer be required in city buildings for anyone who is fully vaccinated against COVID-19.

The Phoenix Parks and Recreation Department began a tiered reopening

of its centers on June 7 and 11 facilities have been providing youth summer camp activities for youths ages 6 to 12.

Capacity at those 11 centers was increased for the camps and the operation of those facilities' fitness rooms, spaces to reserve and other scheduled programs resumed at a limited capacity, as of late June. The 11 centers include Sunnyslope Community Center at 802 E. Vogel Ave. and Longview Neighborhood Recreation Center at 4040 N. 14th St. Phoenix's remaining 14 centers were scheduled to reopen on June 28 and to start offering youth summer camps, as well as other scheduled programs and activities with limits on the numbers of participants.

You also can swim at 12 city pools this summer and there are free swim lessons for youths ages 3 to 12. Anyone ages 17 and younger can take part in open swim free of charge. The Parks and Recreation Department also is providing virtual recreation and fitness options. To learn more, visit www.phoenix.gov/parks.

Red Cross sees major blood shortage

The American Red Cross is still experiencing a major blood shortage that is causing issues with blood product availability in Arizona and around the country.

Blood and platelet donors are needed to help ensure hospitals are stocked with the blood products they need. Donors of all blood types, especially type O, are encouraged to make appointments to give blood.

The Red Cross has been working around the clock to offer blood products to hospitals responding to an unusually high number of traumas and emergency room visits, as well as overdoses and resulting transplants. Because of the blood shortage, some hospitals are being forced to slow the pace of providing elective surgeries until the blood supply stabilizes. Summer is traditionally a time when blood donations decrease and this year is especially challenging as many Americans receive their vaccinations for COVID-19 and resume summer activities. Many people are taking vacations but the need for blood does not take a break as patients still depend on life-saving transfusions.

To schedule an appointment to give blood, visit www.redcrossblood.org.

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The State of Arizona is offering a one-time Return to Work Bonus! On unemployment prior to May 13? Ready to get back to work? Arizona is offering a one-time Return to Work Bonus of up to \$2K on a first come, first serve basis when you stop filing for unemployment and complete at least 10 weeks of work with an employer!

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Back-To-School Month

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COMMUNITY


Pet of the Month

Sweet rescue bunny is still a little shy

If you love a nice, summery “fruit” so to speak during the hot summer months, then Fuzzy Peach is your guy.

Fuzzy Peach is one of about a dozen rabbits that the Arizona Humane Society Cruelty Investigators rescued from hoard-like conditions in May. These rabbits were discovered living in a habitat that was not good for their health and safety. Once in the Arizona Humane Society’s Second Chance Animal Trauma Hospital, this one-year-old shorthair bunny was evaluated to make sure he was in good health. The Arizona Humane Society’s Behavior Team members also have worked with Fuzzy Peach because he can be a little shy due to not socializing enough in his previous home.

While staying at the Arizona Humane Society, Fuzzy Peach has become less scared and he will sniff his human friends, as well as eat from their hands. However, because this rabbit is still learning to develop his social skills



Fuzzy Peach is a sweet, one-year-old short-hair bunny who was rescued earlier this year. He needs a forever home with a family that is calm and settled (photo courtesy of the Arizona Humane Society).

he would benefit from a family that is calm and settled that has older children or with a family that has had a bunny previously. It also is important to do research before bringing a rabbit into your home as there are many specialized things they need. Rabbit owners need to ensure these animals have a habitat that is best for them, as well as an appropriate diet and that they are handled properly. If you adopt one of these animals you also will want to “bunny-proof” your home. A fun fact about Fuzzy Peach and other sweet bunnies is that you can train them to use a litter box.

The Arizona Humane Society’s Virtual Matchmaking Adoptions by appointment is available to place pets with forever families. Fuzzy Peach’s animal number is 664651. While Fuzzy Peach and other animals might have been adopted already by the time you make an appointment, there are many other adorable pets that need loving homes. You can see all available pets and schedule a matchmaking adoption appointment by visiting www.azhumane.org/adopt.

Pet food pantry helps feed animals

PACC911’s Chuck Waggin Pet Food Pantry provides low-income families and elderly residents with food for their pets so the animals can stay in their homes.

Through its referral network and food donation program, the organization helps families in crisis by offering pet food to those who might not be able to afford it. This program helps keep beloved pets home as opposed to having them being turned in to a shelter or rescue organization.

There are two drop-off locations,

COMMUNITY

where people can donate pet food. One is Doggy Daze Grooming at 5555 N. Seventh St., Suite 125. It is open from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. Mondays through Fridays, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Saturdays and 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Sundays. Contact this business ahead of time at 602-626-5006 to verify hours during this COVID-19 pandemic. The other location for drop-offs is McClintock Animal Care Center Vet Clinic at 1836 E. Elliot Road in Tempe. You can reach that clinic by calling 480-820-2822.

The Chuck Waggin Pet Food Pantry is in greatest need of dog and cat food, as well as kitty litter and bowls, leashes and toys for pets. You also can make a financial donation online. To learn more, visit <https://pacc911.org/chuck-waggin>.

AAWL seeks young professional volunteers

Young professionals who are passionate about helping furry friends can become part of the Arizona Animal Welfare League’s Young Professionals Council.

Those who are at least 21 years old

can raise money to rescue, rehabilitate and rehome homeless animals. This council also expands the Arizona Animal Welfare League’s footprint in the Valley by engaging the younger demographic as donors, advocates, volunteers and adopters. In return, the organization offers board training and experience for people who want to prepare for future board service in non-profit organizations.

The ideal candidates for the council are socially connected young professionals who care deeply about animal welfare and are eager to promote the organization’s mission. They are part of the “front line” of ambassadors in the community and have an impact over the Arizona Animal Welfare League’s events and initiatives.

Council members must agree to serve an initial term of two years. They must attend at least 80 percent of meetings each year. These members also must raise at least \$500 each term through fundraising or personal contributions and commit at least three to five hours a month to support events and ongoing programs, among other requirements.

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Beth Ami Temple resumes activities

Beth Ami Temple will welcome people back for in-person activities and services this fall.

Beth Ami will host a Wine & Cheese Open House at 6 p.m. on Thursday, Sept. 2, at 3535 E. Lincoln Drive, inside the Palo Cristi Presbyterian Church. The temple had to conduct services and social activities virtually for a year and a half due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The open house will give guests a chance to meet current temple members, Rabbi Allison Lawton and cantorial soloist Michael Robbins and to learn about the congregation's many activities and social groups.

The congregation's High Holiday Services will start on Monday, Sept. 6, Labor Day. It is free for temple members to attend the services and non-members can attend them for \$125 for a single ticket and \$250 for a family ticket. These ticket costs can be applied to membership fees. A single membership to the temple costs \$295 and a family membership costs \$590 a year.

Beth Ami Temple will hold its Rosh Hashanah Evening Service at 7:30 p.m. on Sept. 6 and the Rosh Hashanah Morning Service at 10 a.m. on Sept. 7. The Yom Kippur Evening service will take place at 7:30 p.m. on Sept. 15, the Yom Kippur Morning Service will be held at 10 a.m. on Sept. 16 and the Yom Kippur Afternoon Service will begin at 4 p.m. on Sept. 16.

To learn more, visit <https://bethamitemple.org>.

Toastmasters returns to in-person meetings

Valley Toastmasters is meeting in person again after gathering online earlier in the COVID-19 pandemic.

The group, which had been holding its meetings once a week through Zoom for the health and safety of members, meets from 6:15 to 7:30 a.m. Thursdays. The club, which has about 17 members, had previously been meeting at the Church of the Beatitudes on west Glendale Avenue but the rent on the space increased so it was seeking another venue, as of press time.

As long as there is interest, Valley Toastmasters will keep providing a hybrid-style meeting where some members meet in-person and others communicate through Zoom, said Aly Perkins,

vice president of public relations for Valley Toastmasters. A benefit of the virtual model is Toastmasters members from other states and countries have been able to participate in the meetings.

There is a \$20, one-time membership fee to join Valley Toastmasters, with the funds going to Toastmasters International. After joining, it costs Valley Toastmasters members \$69 twice a year or \$139 per year, with \$90 per year of that membership cost going to Toastmasters International. The dues were reduced earlier in the pandemic since the club did not have to pay a rental charge to use the church room.

To learn more, visit <https://valley-toastmasters.net>.

City looks at upgrades to 32nd Street corridor

The city of Phoenix is discussing making pedestrian and other safety upgrades to the North 32nd Street Corridor.

City officials recently held a virtual public meeting to talk about the proposed changes to north 32nd Street between east Shea Boulevard and east Cholla Street. A survey also was provided for residents to provide feedback on design options.

Construction of State Route 51 led to a decrease in traffic volume along this area of 32nd Street. That allows the city to study ways to enhance the safety of the road while providing a more vibrant community along north 32nd Street. Some constraints to possible road changes include overhead power lines on the western side, as well as existing water and sewer lines, high-pressure gas lines and other infrastructure.

The city is considering "right-sizing" the roadway for existing and anticipated traffic volumes, as well as widening sidewalks to provide pedestrian safety, reconfiguring dedicated bike lanes and increasing the landscape elements along the corridor. City officials when they refer to "right-sizing" mean they are proposing adding medians, sidewalks, bike lanes and trees that would make the corridor safer and more hospitable for recreation outdoors.

The city of Phoenix is in the early design phase and it plans to share concepts again in the near future. No construction schedule is in place yet as it is still in the design phase. To learn more, visit www.phoenix.gov/Streets/North32ndStreet.

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HAPPY HOUR WITH HERSCH

As the homelessness problem in The Valley continues to grow, I assume (which we know is dangerous) that most people who are not similarly challenged have similar inconsistent thoughts and actions to my own.

Sometimes I give them money and sometimes I do not. Sometimes I buy them food and drink and sometimes I do not. Sometimes I do not even notice them and sometimes their appearance irritates me. But most of the time I get a pit in my stomach thinking of the difficulty of their journey and that this is someone's daughter, son, mom, dad, friend, fill in the blank.

I have no answers on how to fix the problem and I presume the reasons for the increase are numerous and complicated. However, it sure seems this issue should be higher on our community priority list.

I expect any solution(s) will need to be a mixed partnership between the private and public sectors. What I do know is that I will no longer not notice them. That is not an option and it is not humane.

\$100 TRIVIA CONTEST

How many people (roughly) in a given night experience homelessness in Maricopa County per the Phoenix Rescue Mission?

The first person to guess correctly will receive a \$100 donation in their name to the Phoenix Rescue Mission.

ONLY 1 GUESS PER PERSON. First person to correctly answer the trivia question via email, text or phone call will get a \$100 donation in their name to the Phoenix Rescue Mission. 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 – TBD | Last Month's Answer – Walter Davis



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TAKING CARE OF BUSINESS

New toy store focuses on purposeful play

By Colleen Sparks

A new toy store in North Central will open up a world of exploration and play with an emphasis on learning for children of all ages and ability levels.

Wildlings Toy Boutique is expected to open on Saturday, Aug. 21, at 6031 N. 16th St. in the strip mall north of Bethany Home Road that also is home to Artichoke Basille's Pizza restaurant. Jenn Mawcinitt, a North Central resident, mother of two and former special education teacher, owns the store, along with her husband.

"Our focus is purposeful play, looking at toys that are open-ended with lots of play possibilities and toys that are heirloom quality, things that will last for more than one child," Mawcinitt said. "We think that there's toys in our shop to help kids with developmental delays and also for kids who are gifted and talented."



Jenn Mawcinitt of North Central plays with her daughter, Luna. Mawcinitt is opening Wildlings Toy Boutique, a store that will offer a variety of toys aimed at helping children of all abilities learn and have fun (photo by Hannah Shipman Photography).

The boutique will have many puzzles, games, books, wooden toys, robot-building sets, coding toys, as well as science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) kits, boxes of crafts, tummy time toys for babies and other items for

youths ages birth through high school. Many of the children's books address diversity in families, races, cultures and backgrounds.

Mawcinitt previously worked as a director of special education for Vista College Prep charter schools and prior to that worked as a special education teacher for several years in Arkansas and later in the Valley. She and her husband have a son, Easton, who is 3, and daughter, Luna, who is 1.

All the toys and other items in the store can be helpful for children with special needs, including many games that target social-emotional growth. Little Renegades products that aim to help children find stillness and wonder in the present moment are available in the store. Some of the Little Renegades items include Mindful Kids Activity Cards and Mindful Kids Journals.

Children can build their fine motor skills when they build with wooden blocks, as well as magnetic tiles and blocks the boutique carries.

Mawcinitt saw the need for a toy store in North Central.

"There's lots of great young families," Mawcinitt said. "There's also grandparents around. It's going to be really fun to be an option for families to pick out toys."

Wildlings Toy Boutique will likely be open from 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. daily. Mawcinitt is looking for a few more employees.

To learn more, call 602-882-5456 or visit <https://wildlingstoys.com>.

Business Briefs

Homeowners can get help with DIY projects

Wessel and Baker Contracting, LLC, has created a new division to help homeowners tackle DIY home renovation projects.

The construction company, which is owned by husband-and-wife-team Zach and Brandee Wessel and performs residential remodeling services, now offers "DIY With an Expert." Through this new endeavor, Wessel and Baker Contracting charges an hourly rate, which depends on the size of the project, to help answer questions about whether walls are load-bearing, if the homeowners need a permit to do their work and other important topics. DIY With an Expert also reviews projects, plans and permits before the homeowners begin their projects.

Home renovation projects have become popular during the COVID-19 pandemic, particularly kitchen, bathroom and outdoor living space home improvement work, Brandee said. She added that many people also are doing home refreshes including painting, adding new flooring and making other simple updates.

Often the homeowners become stuck and feel like they are in over their heads and they need help, Brandee said. Wessel and Baker's new endeavor aims to prevent homeowners from spending more money than they need to on doing their own home improvement work.

To learn more, call 480-216-2783.

Swim School offers classes for babies

It is never too early to help your child learn to swim and a local business offers a fun, safe environment to do just that.

Hubbard Family Swim School at 13832 N. 32nd St., Suite 100, offers lessons to children from eight weeks to 12 years old. Its free Baby Splash classes provide lessons to babies eight weeks to five months old. Parents must participate in the water with their little ones. The classes are provided Mondays through Thursdays and Saturdays and Sundays at various times and are free of charge but there is a one-time, \$30 fee

please see SWIM on page 18

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TAKING CARE OF BUSINESS

SWIM continued from page 16

to join. Parents must register their babies ahead of time.

Hubbard Family Swim Schools has three other locations in the Valley with instructors who teach basic water competency swim skills. One instructor, Ed McHale, recently celebrated 20 years working for the school and in 2018 won the prestigious “Educator of the Year” award from the United States Swim School Association. This honor is given to one swim instructor each year out of more than 400 member swim schools around the world.

To learn more, visit www.hubbardswim.com.

Arizona Oncology expands services, adds oncologists

Arizona Oncology is offering expanded services and levels of care, including adding new oncologists at its locations around the Valley.

The new oncologists include Dr. Amir Azadi, a specialist in neuro-oncology, at the Biltmore Cancer Center at 2222 E. Highland Ave. A neuro-oncologist

is a physician who is trained to diagnose and treat patients with brain and other types of tumors of the nervous system. Azadi, who has been practicing medicine since 2014, completed a neuro-oncology fellowship at the Barrow Neurological Institute and is board-certified in internal medicine and oncology.

To learn more, visit <https://arizonaoncology.com>.

My Sister’s Closet opens in Biltmore Fashion Park

Lovers of high-end, designer consigned clothes, shoes and accessories can shop in a new My Sister’s Closet location in North Central.

It has opened in the Biltmore Fashion Park at 2502 E. Camelback Road, Suite 175, across from Seasons 52 restaurant, after 30 years at a small, dated center. My Sister’s Closet offers clothes, purses, shoes, jewelry, scarves, sunglasses and other items from Louis Vuitton, St. John, Prada, Pucci, Chanel, Armani, Gucci, Hermès, Juicy and many other high-end labels. Merchandise is available at 60 to 95 percent below retail prices.

The store is open from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. Mondays through Saturdays and from noon to 5 p.m. Sundays. To learn more, visit www.mysisterscloset.com.

Hinkley’s Lighting to offer big sales ahead of move

The Hinkley’s Lighting store at 4620 N. Central Ave., which has been in operation for about 70 years, will close and move to a larger warehouse and showroom at 16049 N. Greenway Hayden Loop in Scottsdale. Michael Jackson, owner of Hinkley’s Lighting, said the last few years have been great for the business and it is ready to serve customers in a larger and more sophisticated location.

Shoppers can take advantage of 60 percent of the cost of all lighting fixtures all this month at the Central Avenue location. The savings will expand to 70 percent off lighting fixtures in September. Hinkley’s Lighting will donate 10 percent of all sales of in-stock merchandise from the Phoenix store to Phoenix Children’s Hospital. In its final days in the Central store, Hinkley’s Lighting will host a Black Tag Sale Party, with the Phoenix Children’s Hospital

receiving 100 percent of the proceeds.

To be added to the invite list for the Black Tag Sale Party, visit <http://hinkleyslighting.com>.

Radio host to be inducted into ASU Hall of Fame

Kim Komando, a national radio host and web entrepreneur based in North Central, will be inducted into the 2021 W.P. Carey School of Business Alumni Hall of Fame at Arizona State University.

The award recognizes business school alumni who have demonstrated achievement and leadership in their profession. For the past 20 years, Komando has provided technological advice to consumers with a focus on the various ways to use tech and digital products and services to enhance their lives. The Kim Komando Studios and Headquarters is located at 6135 N. Seventh St.

Komando earned a bachelor’s degree in computer information systems from ASU in 1985. The Hall of Fame induction ceremony will be held Oct. 28 on ASU’s Tempe campus.

To learn more about Komando, visit www.komando.com.

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7517 N 3rd Ave	Just Listed.....	3800SF	4BR/2.5BA	\$1,450,000
712 W Vogel Ave		4013SF	4BR/3BA	\$1,375,000
1364 E Victor Hugo Ave.....	In Escrow	4742SF	5BR/5.5BA	\$ 950,000
128 E Tuckey Ln	Just Listed.....	1982SF	3BR/2BA	\$ 825,000
10251 N Central Ave		2364SF	3BR/2BA	\$ 795,000
5125 N 34th Pl	In Escrow	2512SF	3BR/2.5BA	\$ 750,000
914 E Osborn Rd #205.....	Just Listed.....	2699SF	2BR/2BA	\$ 675,000
15 W Beryl Ave		1922SF	3BR/2BA	\$ 659,000
1117 E State Ave.....	Just Listed.....	1940SF	3BR/2BA	\$ 650,000
6830 N 4th Pl	In Escrow	2110SF	3BR/1.75BA	\$ 625,000
527 W San Juan Ave	In Escrow	1271SF	3BR/2BA	\$ 529,000
700 W Northern Ave		13240SF	2BR/1BA	\$ 510,000



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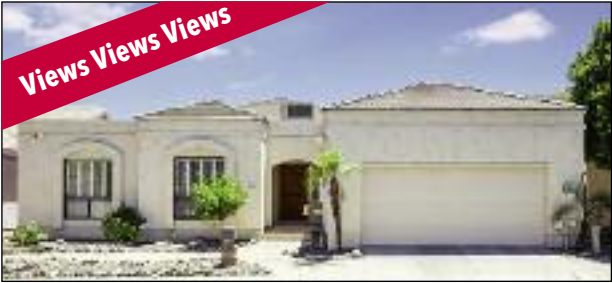
Featured Homes for August



5102 N 2nd St • \$840,000



10251 N Central Ave • \$795,000



15 W Beryl Ave • \$659,000



128 E Tuckey • \$825,000



914 E Osborn Rd #205 • \$675,000



527 W San Juan Ave • \$529,000



1124 W Myrtle Ave • \$825,000



1117 E State Ave • \$650,000



5125 N 34th Pl • \$750,000

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7234 N 3rd St	\$1,860,000
4501 E Calle Tuberia.....	\$1,800,000
777 E Circle Rd	\$1,650,000
115 E Rose Ln	\$1,530,000
17 W Sierra Vista Dr	\$1,350,000
6809 N 12th Ave	\$1,210,867
3183 E Rose Ln	\$1,000,000
3312 E Sells Dr	\$1,180,000
6 E Cactus Wren Dr	\$1,075,000
2015 E Glenn Dr	\$1,039,000
2685 E Canyon Pl.....	\$1,000,000
6246 E Helm Dr	\$ 938,000

6846 N 3rd Ave	\$ 925,000
5501 E Beryl Ave*.....	\$ 925,000
7140 N 9th St	\$ 901,000
5139 N 10th Pl.....	\$ 895,000
12733 E Cochise	\$ 875,000
6520 N Central Ave	\$ 850,000
5102 N 2nd St	\$ 840,000
1124 W Myrtle Ave.....	\$ 825,000
5428 E Cannon Dr	\$ 825,000
10261 N Central Ave	\$ 774,000
15504 E Chicory Dr	\$ 750,000
7838 N 4th Pl.....	\$ 710,000
8725 E Clarendon Ave.....	\$ 680,000
1309 W Linger Ln	\$ 670,000
340 E Osborn Rd #3	\$ 669,000
340 E Osborn Rd #4	\$ 669,000

8725 E Clarendon Ave.....	\$ 650,000
1 W Cheryl Dr	\$ 640,000
1555 E Ocotillo Rd #17	\$ 627,500
77 E Missouri Ave #72	\$ 625,000
1345 E Missouri Ave	\$ 609,000
1402 W Berridge Ln	\$ 599,000
907 E Berridge Ln.....	\$ 595,000
5107 E Blomfield Rd	\$ 575,000
5338 E Questa Tierra Dr.....	\$ 540,000
1807 E Winter Dr.....	\$ 520,000
4231 W Monte Cristo Ave..	\$ 520,000
15 W Cochise Dr.....	\$ 520,000
2040 W Trotter Trail.....	\$ 500,000
6301 N 14th Pl	\$ 495,000
6418 N 13th Ave	\$ 483,850
1326 E Stella Ln	\$ 475,000

117 W Oregon Ave.....	\$ 475,000
1414 E Earll Dr.....	\$ 425,000
3920 W Sandra Terrace	\$ 460,000
1026 E Wagon Wheel Dr	\$ 450,000
5 E Butler Dr	\$ 429,900
6522 N 5th Ave	\$ 425,000
1414 E Earll Dr.....	\$ 425,000
930 E Bethany Home Rd	\$ 420,000
1 E Butler Dr*	\$ 420,000
1132 E Orangewood Ave ...	\$ 419,000
1232 E Palacio Ln	\$ 395,000
100 W Maryland Ave L1	\$ 351,000
1536 E Mission Ln.....	\$ 349,900
2019 E Campbell Ave #115 \$	\$ 299,900
7557 N Dreamy Draw #139 \$	\$ 280,000

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Local woman to receive courage award

North Central resident Kathy Laurinaitis has been named the first winner of the Woman of Courage award by the Brain Injury Alliance of Arizona. Laurinaitis will receive the honor at the Alliance's inaugural "Brainiac Bash...a Soiree to Support Brain Health" on Jan. 14.

Laurinaitis underwent extensive surgery to remove a mass on her brain stem after a misdiagnosis of Bell's palsy. Laurinaitis and her family members faced a frightening situation last year as Laurinaitis endured months of neurological challenges and brain health problems without a clear diagnosis and plan to move forward. At the time, her twin daughters, Nicole Garcia-Colace and Brianna Danielson, stars of the E! reality series "Total Bellas" and former WWE wrestlers, were just weeks away from giving birth.

Laurinaitis decided to share her

health issues publicly on TV, where she has been "open about her cognitive challenges and the immense hard work of recovery," said Carrie Collins-Fadell, director of the non-profit Brain Injury Alliance of Arizona. Laurinaitis, a busy grandmother who owns JBN & Associates, an executive search firm, said she was honored to be selected for the Woman of Courage award. She said she wants to do what she can to help other families deal with their trauma.



Kathy Laurinaitis

According to the Alliance, this year thousands of Arizona residents will be treated in an emergency room for a brain injury. More than 5.3 million people in the country are living with a permanent brain injury-related disability, but brain injury is still misunderstood, misdiagnosed and rarely discussed. The Alliance aims to help improve the lives of adults and children with all types of brain injury through awareness, prevention, advocacy and education. It houses the Brain Health Resource Center, which is a collection of educational information and vetted resources.

The "Brainiac Bash...a Soiree to Support Brain Health" will be held from 6 to 10 p.m. on Friday, Jan. 14, at The Chateau Luxe, 1175 E. Lone Cactus Drive. There will be competitive dancers and local celebrities performing ballroom dance routines that will be judged by a panel that includes "Dancing with the Stars" Tony Dovolani.

To learn more about the event, visit <https://biaaz.org/event/brainiac>.

Health Briefs

Pregnant women should stay cool, hydrated

Women who are pregnant should take measures to stay safe during these hot summer months.

That is according to Arizona OBGYN Affiliates (AOA), which recommends pregnant women try to stay cool and hydrated. AOA urges pregnant women to drink water and Gatorade to stay hydrated as everyone



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HEALTHY LIVING

sweats out a huge portion of the liquids they absorb in the summer. Pregnant women in particular have a higher chance of sweating more liquids than they drink. AOA also suggests pregnant women put on sunblock frequently as it not only prevents burns but also assists with hydration.

Another tip for pregnant women is to use the pool in the morning or evening when the heat is bearable. The water will lower their body temperature and the buoyancy will help relieve some of the stress on the body, as well as help ease swelling.

AOA recommends that pregnant women lie down for an hour every day, putting their feet up and using a cold rag to keep their body temperatures low. Those who are expecting should wear shoes a half size larger than their normal size. AOA suggests wearing comfortable, supportive shoes that breathe.

Pregnant women should run errands in the early morning hours or in the evening and avoid direct sunlight during the hottest times of the day. AOA recommends wearing light, comfortable clothes.

Women who feel dizzy, light-headed or overheated at any time during their pregnancy should contact their physician immediately.

New moms can gain support, help online

New mothers can receive support and practical tips while also socializing with other moms in a virtual gathering provided by HonorHealth.

The next Moms on the Move Virtual Session will be held from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. on Tuesday, Aug. 24 through Webex. This is a space for new mothers, who have babies ages birth to 12 months old, to share experiences and obtain information to help them in parenting their children. The virtual session is free of charge but you must acquire an Eventbrite account before participating and you will need to download the Webex Meetings desktop app. To learn more, visit www.honorhealth.com/events.

Help is available to quit smoking, tobacco use

People who want to quit smoking or using tobacco in other ways can get help through the Arizona Smokers' Helpline, as well as other resources.

The ASHLine allows smokers and

other tobacco users to stay focused on their goals with assistance from a coach. Those who call the hotline will be matched with a "quit coach," who will take into account any specific circumstances everyone is contending with as they try to stop using tobacco. There also are programs to help woman who are pregnant and anyone who uses chewing tobacco.

The Quit Coaching program lasts six weeks with participants receiving support through the phone or via text.

Banner Health reports that when people stop smoking within 20 minutes their blood pressure returns to a normal level, their pulse rate goes back to normal and peripheral circulation increases, which returns the body temperature of the hands and feet to normal. The chances of having a heart attack decrease within 24 hours of quitting smoking, according to Banner Health.

Call the ASHLine 800-556-6222 or visit <https://ashline.org/about-quit-coaching>.

Try the Y for free week, choose membership option

Are you looking for a place to get in shape, socialize with others in the community and try different classes?

You can obtain a guest pass to visit any of the 13 Valley of the Sun YMCA fitness centers free-of-charge for a week. The Legacy Foundation Christ-Town YMCA is located at 5517 N. 17th Ave. With the guest pass you can participate in group fitness classes in person and virtually.

If you decide to join the Y, there are different membership options including one for a 12-month commitment that provides a further reduced, ongoing monthly rate and waives the joining fee. A six-month membership also offers a decreased, ongoing monthly rate and does not require a joining fee either. Youths ages 12 to 17 can register for a year membership for \$19.90 a month or six months for \$29 a month. Adults ages 28 and older can join the Y for a 12-month membership for \$39.90 a month and \$44.90 a month for six months.

Seniors ages 65 and older can become Y members for a one-year membership that costs \$35.90 a month or join for six months at a rate of \$39.90 a month. There also are special rates for military members, couples and families.

To learn more, visit <https://valleymca.org/guest-pass>.



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SCHOOL DAYS



Aranza, a student at Midtown Primary School, plays with slime. Fun activities are part of the PAX Good Behavior Game, a school-wide system that focuses on the intrinsic happiness that people can enjoy after doing a good job (photo courtesy of Midtown Primary School).

Program aims to make good behavior fun

When classes begin for the 2021-22 academic year, students at Midtown Primary School will be celebrating the successful implementation of an unusual program that aims to promote peace, happiness and health for people around the world.

Employees at the school have completed training in the PAX Good Behavior Game, a school-wide system that focuses on the intrinsic happiness that people can enjoy after doing a good job. Students enjoy playing games, singing songs and acting silly to mark their accomplishments.

The PAX game is an evidence-based practice recommended by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Service Administration (SAMHSA), the Washington Institute for Public Policy and the Institute of Medicine. Students at Midtown Primary and other schools can aim to “beat the timer” as they clean up areas, find ways to give their brains a break and do other fun activities. A certified Community PAX Trainer, Lindy Ross will be sharing tools with parents on using the PAX strategies this coming school year, which begins on Wednesday, Aug. 4. Parents will learn how to better communicate with their children to foster a better relationship with them.

To learn more about the PAX program, visit www.paxis.org.

School Briefs

GLENDALE UNION HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT Sunnyslope coach earns national honor

Sunnyslope High School’s boys basketball coach Ray Portela is on top of his game after being chosen as the 2021 National Coach of the Year.

Ballislife, a basketball apparel, media and event management company that highlights basketball players and coaches, chose Portela for this honor. Under Portela’s guidance, Sunnyslope High’s Vikings basketball team won the program’s first 6A state crown when it beat Phoenix Mountain Pointe High School in a 63-62 win. The Vikings had challenges, including a quarantine period before the season started and losing some players to injuries and transfers. Portela had guided the team to two other state crowns after winning titles two years in a row in Class 5A seasons.

Portela played for former coach Dan Mannix when he was a student at Sunnyslope High School. He credits Mannix, as well as his college coach and football coach, for instilling in him a strong work ethic, humility and sense of discipline.



Ray Portela



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SCHOOL DAYS

New scholarship honors Washington high teacher

Family members of a retired Washington High School teacher who passed away in April are keeping his legacy alive through The Craig Johnson Memorial Scholarship.

The award will go to students who have at least a 3.0 grade-point average and who will be first-generation college students. Eligible students must have been involved in community service. They also must submit a 500-word essay explaining why they want to attend college.

Johnson taught language arts and also coached swimming and girls basketball. He provided opportunities for students to participate in community service and supported English Language Learners and students who struggled in school.

To learn more about the scholarship, visit <https://az-glendaleunion-lite.intouchreceipting.com/CraigjohnsonScholarship>.

MADISON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL DISTRICT
Madison Virtual Academy offers online learning

The Madison Virtual Academy (MVA), which will provide a unique online experience with self-paced classes, will kick off on Tuesday, Aug. 10, for students in grades three through eight. MVA offers students the flexibility of online learning along with the chance to participate in school activities

ties in person. MVA uses the district's adopted curriculum, which includes math, science, English Language Arts and social studies. Students can take elementary mathematics, middle school mathematics, pre-algebra, algebra I, algebra 2, geometry and pre-calculus. The math classes are self-paced with a Madison teacher monitoring students' work. Students also will have the opportunity to earn high school credit by taking the classes. Those enrolled in MVA also will take national and state exams to monitor their progress. Madison teachers guide all online live instruction and self-pacing courses, as well as provide additional help when needed, to ensure students stay on track.

To register your child for MVA or to learn more about it, visit www.madisonaz.org/mva.

Podcast shares tips for parents

Parents can obtain tips to support their children's academic success as well as their social, emotional and physical wellness in the Madison Elementary School District's new podcast.

The Parenting Future-Focused Kids podcast will focus on a different topic in each episode. Topics will include early childhood education, social/emotional support and independent learning. The plan is to release a new podcast every month. Listen to the podcast at www.madisonaz.org/podcast or on Spotify at <https://open.spotify.com/show/0iiURaKpWLF58pkFmL8C3J>.



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SCHOOL DAYS

OSBORN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL DISTRICT Registration underway for diverse programs

Registration is underway for the 2021/22 academic year in the Osborn Elementary School District, with opportunities for students to enroll in a variety of programs.

Preschool is offered at Encanto, Longview and Solano elementary schools and Montecito Community School. The preschools have been Quality First rated. First Things First created Quality First to work with childcare and preschool providers across the state to improve the quality of their early learning settings. More than 1,000 early learning programs in communities around Arizona participate in Quality First. These programs go beyond regulatory requirements to help youths be ready for success in school and beyond.

The Osborn district also offers a Dual Language Program, through which students learn the whole grade-level curriculum in Spanish and English. Encanto, Clarendon, Longview and Solano elementary schools and Osborn Middle School provide this program.

PHOENIX UNION HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT Graduates prepare for life after high school

Members of the Phoenix Union High School District class of 2021 are embarking on promising futures at various universities and the military.

Among them is Karla Ramos Gonzalez, who was the valedictorian at North High School. She received the

Jack Kent Cooke Scholarship, valued at \$40,000, as well as the Elks Scholarship, which is worth \$2,000, and the PXU Black Alliance Scholarship, valued at \$2,000. Gonzalez will attend Yale University in the fall.

Many graduates from the district will enlist in the armed services. Among them are North High graduates Alexandria Goldman, who will serve in the Army; Jacob Kronlund, who will serve in the Marine Corps Reserve and Navy/Marine Corps JROTC at Arizona State University simultaneously; Alex Matalacuatzi, who joined the Marine Corps; and Daniel Calvillo, who will enlist in the Marine Corps.

Several Phoenix Union graduates have earned at least \$1 million in scholarships for colleges. One of the \$2 million scholars is Gabriel Santa Cruz, who graduated from North High School. The \$1 million scholars include Jaquelin Cantu Balmaceda, a North High graduate; Zuniga Yesenia, who graduated from North High; and Metro Tech High School graduates Lorena Calderon, Ashley Luna and Ariana Panduro.

North High offers I.B. program

When classes begin for the 2021-22 academic year, Phoenix Union High School District will welcome students to successful programs including the International Baccalaureate (I.B.) one at North High School.

The I.B. program aims for schools to develop students who have excellent breadth and depth of knowledge, who flourish intellectually, physically, emotionally and ethically. Schools are able to develop students who study at least two languages and excel in traditional



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SCHOOL DAYS

academic subjects. The program is for students ages 16 to 19.

Last school year, 39 students graduated from North High with I.B. diplomas.

To learn more, visit www.pxu.org/Domain/17.

WASHINGTON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL DISTRICT

Masks are encouraged, but not required

Steps will be taken to protect students and staff members during the COVID-19 pandemic when classes begin on Monday, Aug. 9, in the Washington Elementary School District.

A recently approved state budget includes a provision that prohibits schools, school districts, counties, cities and towns from requiring students and employees to wear face coverings during school hours and while on school property. While students and employees will no longer be required to wear masks in the Washington district, it is recommended they keep wearing face coverings per guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and

Prevention (CDC). The CDC's guidance reinforces those vaccinations are the leading strategy to prevent the spread of COVID-19. Vaccines are free and available to everyone 12 and older but most students in the Washington district were not eligible to receive them, as of press time.

For that reason the district will follow CDC recommendations to implement "layered prevention strategies," including maintaining at least three feet of social distancing when feasible, washing hands frequently, improved ventilation and cleaning of high-touch point areas.

Schools to receive produce to promote healthy eating

Healthy eating will be easier for many students in the Washington Elementary School District, as several campuses were chosen to participate in a program focused on fruits and vegetables.

Nineteen schools in the district were selected to take part in the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program

(FFVP) for the 2021-22 school year, which starts on Monday, Aug. 9. The district schools in North Central that will participate are Desert View Elementary School, Maryland School, Moon Mountain Elementary School, Orangewood School, Richard E. Miller Elementary School, Royal Palm Middle School, Shaw Butte Elementary School and Sunnyslope School.

Under this federally assisted program, fresh fruits and vegetables are provided free of charge to children at eligible elementary schools during the academic day. The goal is to introduce youths to fresh vegetables and fruits and to boost overall acceptance and consumption of fresh, unprocessed produce among kids. The program also encourages healthier school environments by promoting nutritional education.

To be eligible for the program, schools must run the National School Lunch Program, with a priority placed on campuses with the highest percentage of children who qualify for free and reduced-price meals. To learn more, visit www.fns.usda.gov/ffvp/fresh-fruit-and-vegetable-program.

PRIVATE AND CHARTER SCHOOLS

Brophy football team to play on new field

Brophy College Preparatory's varsity football team is going to kick-off the new academic year playing in a new home venue – Central High School's Ray Laing Field.

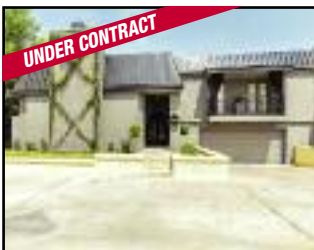
The private, all boys Catholic high school's team will play all its home games at the Central High location while the freshman and junior varsity football teams will continue to play at the Brophy Sports Campus.

There has been a partnership between Brophy and the Phoenix Union High School District for many years. Brophy provides the Phoenix Union district with the use of Brophy's Edward A. Reese, S.J. Aquatic Center for its swim teams at no charge. This new use of Central High's football field is the latest addition to the partnership.

Laing Field is named after Coach Laing, who led the Central Bobcats to state championships in 1969 and 1972

please see NEW FIELD on page 28

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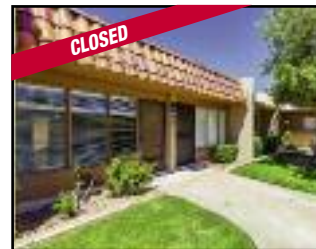
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Let me put my knowledge, professionalism, and experience to work for you.



SCHOOL DAYS

NEW FIELD continued from page 27

and coached Brophy for seven seasons starting in 2009.

Brophy’s football season kicks off on Friday, Sept. 3, with a home game against St. Mary’s.

Grads receive National Merit honors

Two recent Brophy College Preparatory graduates, John Cole Lomax and Henry Palmer, are off to a strong start academically after having received 2021 National Merit \$2,500 Scholarships.

Lomax, who had received the annual Academic Excellence Award from Brophy at graduation, will attend the University of California, Berkeley. He graduated in the top 5 percent of his class and also was active with the Brophy CubeSat project and in crew.

Palmer, a top scholar and athlete, swam with Brophy’s men’s team. Sports360AZ named him a 6A Premier Swim Academic All-Star. He was chosen as a United States Presidential Scholar candidate.



Nina Rawal, a junior at Xavier College Preparatory, recently held a bake sale with help of her classmates to raise money for local nursing homes. Nina and fellow students started a non-profit organization, Caring About Seniors, last school year, to help senior citizens feel more connected socially and receive other support (photo by Shelly Gandhok).

Xavier students help seniors, cancer survivors

Xavier College Preparatory students are on a roll helping bridge the gap between senior citizens and the community.

Nina Rawal, who is now a junior at Xavier, realized her grandparents were

feeling lonely as they were isolated earlier in the COVID-19 pandemic. So she and a few classmates started a non-profit organization, Caring About Seniors, which raised more than \$8,000 during a vendor fair for doctors recently, with the majority of the money going to Phoenix Cancer

Support Network. That non-profit organization provides shelter, transportation, house cleaning, in-home caregiving and many other services for cancer survivors and their caregivers. The rest of the money raised will go to Sunshine Service, another non-profit organization, which provides new wheelchairs and walkers to residents of Sun City.

Caring About Seniors students also held a bake sale last month that raised \$400 for nursing homes. More than 30 Xavier students baked goods for the event. The group also conducted a book and CD drive, collecting these items to give to residents in 10 nursing homes.

Another way Caring About Seniors helped the community was through a GoFundMe campaign to raise money to buy masks and other supplies. The students also sent hundreds of letters to seniors in the Valley through a penpal campaign.

Rawal said she wants to expand the outreach to help as many people as possible with larger events. To learn more, visit www.caringaboutseniors.com.

For More Information
Visit xcp.org

Xavier College Preparatory

is a Catholic community that strives to prepare young women of faith with the knowledge, skills, and integrity to meet the challenges of a changing global society in a positive and productive manner celebrating unity.

8th Grade Day

Oct. 29, 2021 | 9:30 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

Open House

Oct. 31, 2021 | 12:00 p.m. - 3:00 p.m.

All are welcome

Xavier Entrance Exam

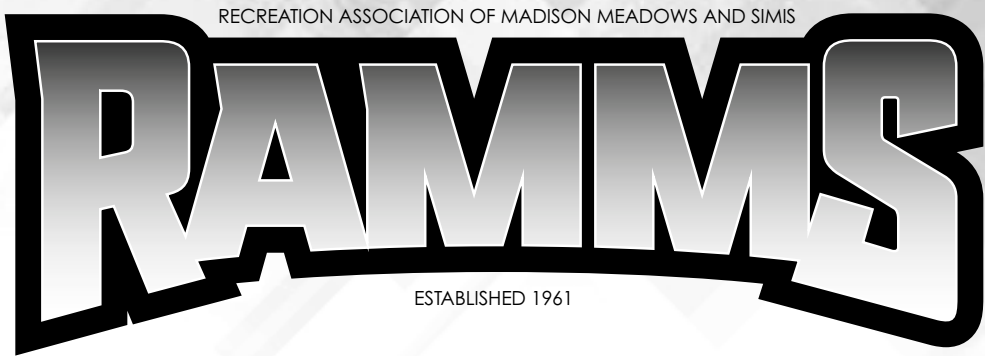
Saturday, Jan. 8, 2022 or Saturday, Jan. 22, 2022 at 7:30 a.m. Registration for exam and application information at xcp.org.

9th Grade applications are due

Monday, Jan. 24, 2022.

Affording a Xavier Education

Financial Aid Workshops available to interested parents during the Entrance Exam Testing, Jan. 8, 2022 and Jan. 22, 2022.



RAMMS is a parent run, volunteer organization founded in 1961 to provide recreational youth sports opportunities for children in and around North Central Phoenix.

We welcome all children regardless of skill level, school or previous experience and look forward to continuing to serve our community.

.....**2021-2022 SPORTS SCHEDULE**.....

FALL.....	WINTER.....	SPRING.....
FLAG FOOTBALL (GRADES 1-8) Registration Opens: 7/10/21 Evaluations: 8/14/21 Season Starts: 9/11/21 Playoffs End: 11/5/21	BOYS & GIRLS BASKETBALL (GRADES K-8) Registration Opens: 10/2/21 Evaluations: 11/6/21 Season Starts: 12/1/22 Playoffs End: 2/26/22	BASEBALL, SOFTBALL, FARM & T-BALL (GRADES PREK-8) Registration Opens: 1/1/22 Evaluations: 1/29/22 Season Starts: 3/5/22 Playoffs End: 5/21/22
VOLLEYBALL (Girls and Boys Leagues) (GRADES 3-8) Registration Opens: 7/10/21 Player's Clinic: 8/7/21 Evaluations: 8/14/21 Coach's Clinic: 8/21/21 Season Starts: 9/11/21 Playoffs End: 10/30/21		OPENING DAY CELEBRATION 3/5/22

Visit www.ramms.org for more information and to register.

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RAMMS is a non-profit, 501(c)(3) organization that relies on registration fees and sponsorship money to provide quality game venues, uniforms that the players are proud to wear, sports equipment to each team and capital improvements to local schools.

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Senior Living

ALLE Learning offers education for seniors

A North Central organization is making it easy for senior citizens to learn about new topics while interacting with others.

ALLE Learning, which is based at 7000 N. 16th St., offers lifelong learning classes that are delivered on-site or on campuses where seniors live or visit. Lifelong learning is the process of obtaining knowledge and learning new things.

Recently residents at a senior living community in Arizona finished a three-part class on the Works Progress Administration, which is a program that was developed during the Great Depression to create public works projects that gave jobs to millions of unemployed people. Another class explores the 19th century movement of explorers, settlers and pioneers into the American West that started with the

Louisiana Purchase.

Evidence-based research reveals the importance of people engaging every day in mental, spiritual and physical activities, according to ALLE Learning. To learn more, visit <https://alle-learning.com> or call 800-990-9806.

Seek help with shopping from Area Agency on Aging

Are you an older adult who needs help shopping?

The Area Agency on Aging, Region One offers elderSHOP, a program where personal shoppers will buy groceries, household cleaning supplies, personal products and stamps to anyone ages 60 and over in Maricopa County. The adults receiving the items must be able to pay for groceries. Vetted personal shoppers call ahead of time and obtain grocery store lists, shop for the items and deliver them to your door. The elderSHOP shoppers are not allowed to buy tobacco or alcohol products.

To ask for assistance from a personal shopper, call the 24-hour Senior HELP LINE at 602-264-4357. Learn more about Area Agency on Aging, Region One by visiting www.aaaphx.org.

In-person entertainment returns to The Palazzo

The Jewish Family & Children's Service (JFCS) Center for Senior Enrichment is open again for in-person classes.

This center, which is located at The Palazzo at 6250 N. 19th Ave., returned to the in-person offerings last month after having switched to all online/virtual classes earlier in the COVID-19 pandemic. However, it still will provide classes through the video chat system Zoom for those who prefer to take them remotely.

Seniors ages 60 and older can take a live "tour" of the Musical Instrument Museum, with a focus on country music at 11 a.m. on Tuesday, Aug. 10 in the Palazzo cinema room. There will

be a special emphasis on Johnny Cash and June Carter. Participants can visit the cinema room to watch the program on a screen or watch it from home. Once they register, they will be sent a link to attend the program, which will last about an hour. To register to watch the virtual program online, visit <https://zoom.us/join/join?j0tAodO6grjktHdHwjkbxncRhHOccggAOMrvt>.

Seniors ages 60 and older also can watch T.A. Burrows of Act Two Productions sing songs in the "Retro Radio The 50s" performance of tunes from the 1950s at 1:30 p.m. Aug. 10. They can expect to hear "Blue Suede Shoes" by Carl Perkins, "Diana" by Paul Anka, "That'll Be the Day" by Buddy Holly, "Bye Bye Love" by The Everly Brothers and many other hits from that era. Complimentary ice cream will be served at 2:30 p.m. that day.

Seniors who want to attend these events should RSVP to Janet Rees at 480-599-7198 or janet.rees@jfcsaz.org.



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GENERATIONS

Kids & Families

Youths can learn to create digital art, video games

Your children can express themselves through digital art in free programs through the Phoenix Public Library system.

“Art is Whatever: Art through Digital Media” is held biweekly from 5:30 to 7 p.m. on Tuesdays online through Webex. Youths ages 9 and older can explore digital comic coloring Aug. 10 and Aug. 24. They will learn how to draw, write, doodle, digitize, scan, code and complete other digital art forms. They will draw and scan a comic to prepare it for coloring on Aug. 10 and then digitally add color and texture to their comics on Aug. 24.

Before taking the class, participants must create a Photopea account by visiting www.photopea.com. The program uses free, web-based programs and could require students to create an account to save their work.

Older kids can learn how to create their own video games in the Video Game Design with Twine class through the city every week, with the next one from 4 to 5 p.m. on Wednesday, Aug. 11, online. Kids ages 12 to 18 can learn the basics of game creation using Twine 2.0. There is no coding or creative writing experience required.

This virtual event also will be held on Webex. No registration is required but sessions are limited to 15 participants on a first-come, first-served basis. To learn more about the city’s online

classes, visit www.phoenixpubliclibrary.org/services/online-programs.

Museum cooks up kitchen, garden classes for kids

If you want to plant the seeds for learning about gardening and healthy cooking in your kids, new programs at the Children’s Museum of Phoenix can help you do just that.

The museum’s Children’s Garden and KIDchen programs will offer nutrition and healthy food education to children from an early age through activities that teach them how to grow and cook fresh produce. The museum will offer projects, exhibits and programs for young children and their families while teaching parents and caregivers about child development and parenting techniques.

In the 15 to 20-minute classes in the garden, children will learn about various fruits, vegetables and plants, the life cycles of a seed, the process of maintaining a garden, what plants need to grow and how foods go from farms to tables. Children can take part in guided play through the classes or experiment in the garden independently. The garden program will start when the weather cools off, possibly in October.

Produce that is harvested in the garden will be used in the KIDchen, where guided nutrition and cooking classes will teach youths to make healthy choices as they explore new foods and preparation methods. During 20 to 60-minute classes, children will learn how to follow recipes, use various kitchen

tools, clean, chop, prepare vegetables and make healthy, tasty snacks. The KIDchen classes will start sometime after Labor Day, Sept. 6.

To learn more, visit <https://childrensmuseumofphoenix.org>.

‘Travel’ under the sea with Arizona Science Center film

Travel underwater to get up close to unusual creatures, at least through the magic of cinematography, through a film at the Arizona Science Center.

“Cephalopods: Aliens of the Deep” is being shown through Monday, Jan. 3, at the science center at 600 E. Washington St. The film, which was shot over three years around the world, features underwater, up-close views of the Cephalopods, which are ocean-dwelling invertebrates that have either arms or tentacles. An octopus is the most well-known Cephalopod while other examples of them include the giant squid and cuttlefish. Learn about Cephalopods’ unique physiology, as well as what makes them survive against the odds in this film. It is available to see all day when the center is open.

Other museum attractions include “The Art & Science of Arachnids,” which boasts three themed cubes that hold 100 live arachnids through Jan. 2. Children and adults can walk through a giant, cardboard castle to explore a world of imagination and engineering skills in the “Build It” exhibit. It features a LEGO building zone, jumbo building blocks, a bulldozer, a dump truck simulator and more hands-on ele-

ments that will be available through Jan. 17.

To learn more, visit www.azscience.org.

Ballet Theatre of Phoenix fall classes starting soon

Ballet Theatre of Phoenix will host an open house from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. on Sunday, Aug. 8, at 6201 N. Seventh St. Tour the studio, meet the instructors and participate in free dance classes. Attendees can win prizes and gift cards.

The studio provides a wide range of ballet and contemporary dance classes for people of all ages. Preschoolers can learn through play in the creative movement sessions. Students who want to pursue a career in dance can participate in an extensive classical ballet program. The dance studio produces “The Nutcracker” ballet every year, as well as an annual spring recital, with students performing on stage at local venues.

Fall classes for youths at Ballet Theatre of Phoenix will start on Monday, Aug. 16. A full schedule of classes in ballet, contemporary fusing modern, jazz and hip hop, as well as Contemporary Breaking, which experiments in street dance, will be offered this fall. Rehearsals for “The Nutcracker” will start on Monday, Sept. 27. The studio’s adult, open classes are year-round excepting during a few holidays.

To register for classes and learn more, visit www.ballettheatreofphx.org.

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COMING TO THE MADISON



Conductor takes on new role with chorale

By Colleen Sparks

A North Central resident who was previously director of music for a local church and school for 30 years is taking on a new role at the Arizona Masterworks Chorale.

Scott Youngs was recently appointed as music director for the chorale, which was founded in 1979 and performs around the United States and Europe. Previously Youngs served as director of music for All Saints' Episcopal Church. Instructing children in choral music, as well as conducting adults in the different choirs at the church on north Central Avenue was a great experience, Youngs said.

"The church had a fabulous music program," he said. "They were very well-known for their chorale program. We got to do tremendous literature. The kids were like sponges; they learned so rapidly. They had such a good time. They ended up being miniature professionals."

Youngs, who also is music director for the Arizona Bach Festival, is eager to branch out to conduct secular music in his new role. He has been familiar with the Arizona Masterworks Chorale and its founder and previous director Mary Ann Dutton, who died in 2016. Karen Parthun led the chorale during the 2018-19 and 2019-20 seasons. A thorough vetting process was done to select Youngs for the position.

"When I left All Saints it made perfect sense to have a new opportunity," he said.

The Arizona Masterworks Chorale hosted two workshops – one for current members and one for the public – last month. Singers must audition to remain in the chorale and if they want to be considered as future members. They vary in age from teenagers to older adults. This choir has 36 members but Youngs said he expects to grow it to about 60 singers. The group rehearses in Scottsdale but will perform at a North Central church, among other venues.

As a choral conductor, Youngs has toured frequently, recorded many CDs and conducted for MidAmerica Productions at Carnegie Hall in New York City. As a highly respected organ-



Scott Youngs was recently appointed as the music director for the Arizona Masterworks Chorale (submitted photo).

ist and pianist, he has taught and performed around the country, as well as in Europe and South America.

For his first season with the chorale, Youngs plans a series of concerts called "American Beauty," which will focus on American music, including songs about coming home and family, as well as a performance of seasonal tunes around Christmas and pieces about love over Valentine's Day weekend.

A baritone, Youngs said he likes a "very well-blended" sound in a choir and his goal is for singers to learn how to control their vocal production. He loves teaching and does not expect perfection from singers but wants them to have a good work ethic and be adaptable.

"It is a community choir," Youngs said. "You have to enjoy it. My job is to make sure they have a common goal and can be better as a group than they are individually."

To learn more about the chorale, visit www.arizonamasterworks.com.

Opera costume shop holds virtual classes

If you like expressing yourself through clothes and jewelry, you might want to enroll in classes this month that the Arizona Opera's Marlu Allan and Scott Stallard Costume Artisan Workshop team is offering.

The team will deliver the Tailoring Your Own Clothes class from noon to 2 p.m. on Wednesday, Aug. 11, and the Intro to Jewelry class from noon to 3 p.m. on Wednesday, Aug. 25. Both



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ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

classes will be provided online. Arizona Opera's costume shop manager Kathleen Trott and master stitcher Becky Giblin will show students the process of fitting, pinning and altering clothes during the two-hour class. Attendees also will be eligible for a 20-minute wardrobe consultation with Trott and Giblin at a later date.

Participants will learn the process of stringing and joining beads and gems together to form vintage-style jewelry in a three-hour Intro to Jewelry class, which Trott will teach. She also will introduce methods for antiquing jewelry.

Both classes are appropriate for anyone ages 13 and older. The Tailoring Your Own Clothes class costs \$59 for the class and the kit of supplies to be shipped to you. If you pick up the supplies, then the cost for the class and kit is \$50. The deadline to place an order of supplies to be shipped to you is Aug. 4 and the deadline to order them to collect them in person is Aug. 9.

The cost of the Intro to Jewelry class is \$35, not including the price of supplies needed. You can purchase the class and the kit of supplies for \$75 if you will pick the kit up in person or \$84 for the class and to have the kit sent to you.

To learn more, visit <https://azopera.org>.

Furry Friends returning to Shemer

There is good news for those who love animals and artwork.

Furry Friends Fine Arts Festival is returning to Shemer Art Center from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. on Saturday, Sept. 25, at 5005 E. Camelback Road. Expect to see pieces that more than 20 juried artists have created incorporating an animal theme. Drawings, photography,

ceramics and other artwork will be on display. Bring your furry companions for paw readings, find a pet to adopt, listen to live music and enter a raffle for a chance to win prizes.

The festival costs \$5 per person or \$10 per family while furry friends can attend free of charge. To learn more, visit <https://shemerartcenter.org/programming/events>.

Catch 'Animaniacs' at The Madison

"Animaniacs In Concert" will come to the stage at 7 p.m. on Saturday, Aug. 28, at The Madison Center for the Arts, 5601 N. 16th St. There also will be a live, on-stage performance with Emmy Award-winning composers Randy Rogel and Rob Paulsen.

Steven Spielberg created "The Animaniacs," which made its debut in 1993. Expect toe-tapping, catchy songs with Rogel on piano and Paulsen, a singer and voice actor, performing in a stand-up role as they go through the history of "The Animaniacs" and their roles in developing it.

Paulsen has attracted audiences with his roles as Pinky in the "Pinky and the Brain" TV series, Donatello in the 2012 animated TV series "Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles," and "The Mask" in the animated TV series based on the film of the same name. Rogel, who also is a writer, producer, singer and songwriter, was a writer for "Batman: The Animated Series." He also wrote songs and scripts for the animated movies "Peter Pan – Return to Never Land," "Cinderella II," "Cinderella III," "101 Dalmations II" and many other animated movies.

For tickets and information, visit www.themadison.org.

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Valentine restaurant owners Blaise Faber, left, and Chadwick Price, and in the background, chef Donald Hawk, left, with Brenton Cassey and Michael Swift, serve up Arizona-infused creations including a little gem salad, tagliarini with elote and ribeye steak with tepary beans, along with a negroni cocktail with yellow Hopi watermelon (photo by Marjorie Rice).

Café Chat

Menu rooted in Arizona's cultivation, culinary history

By Marjorie Rice

As its name implies, the menu at Valentine, an understated mix of comfy cocktail lounge, innovative restaurant and urban hip bar located near the Melrose Curve, is something of a love letter – this one to the culinary roots that run deep in the Arizona soil.

It's also a reference to Arizona's birthday as a state, which was on Valentine's Day in 1914. In fact, owners Blaise Faber and Chadwick Price, both native Arizonans, originally thought about calling it 1914.

The building houses an intriguing blend of retail and restaurant under one roof. Patrons of the Modern Manor furniture store in the back have to traverse the lounge area to enter. Modern Manor's owners began renovating the 60-year-old dry cleaner's store in 2017 and opened the furniture store a year later. It took another two years to finish Valentine.

Price and Faber worked more than two decades at various Valley and California restaurants before striking out on their own.

"Originally we thought we'd just use part of the space, as a bar," Price said, "but we decided to take the plunge and take it all."

On a recent midweek afternoon, several patrons were scattered about, some peering into laptops and sipping cappuccinos as others dawdled over drinks and chatted with friends. It's that kind of place – made for lingering.

"We wanted to have it fit the neighborhood," Price said, "a place where people can hang out and relax."

It's also a place where Price and Faber can indulge their passion for creating a dining and drinks menu that reflects their fascination with the state's cultural, culinary and cultivation history.

Cocktails and an extensive wine and spirits list (14 agave tequilas alone) have pride of place, especially in The Vault, a second bar housed behind a thick steel door in the original storage vault for furs owned by the luxe ladies of Phoenix. The Vault is open only on Friday and Saturday nights. The drinks menu includes libations based on the 5 C's of Arizona's economy that every schoolchild learned back in the day: citrus, copper, cattle, climate and cotton (pistachio, Oloroso sherry, lemon and egg white in the latter cocktail); and the state's six ecosystems: desert, chaparral, forest, tundra, woodland and grassland. The mixtures blend spirits with Arizona-grown flavorings – think negroni made with gin and a base of Hopi yellow watermelon and you get the picture.

But don't miss a chance to dine

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

from a menu that constantly changes with the seasons and the owners’ latest discoveries. Chef Donald Hawk leads a team that is encouraged to express themselves and create new offerings, with help from Price and Faber. The result could be called Modern Southwest, including indigenous ingredients that were cultivated here centuries ago, some of them happily coming back after nearly disappearing.

“Look how special tepary beans and Hopi watermelon are, when they were essentially bred out several years ago,” Faber said. “They have so much more character and flavor and sense of place.”

Price said the Southwest is a “gastrophysical empire.”

“We had the first cultivated crops in North America,” he said.

Arizona’s diverse combination of climate and soils has inspired unending possibilities for experimentation.

The fare stretches from coffees and pastries starting at 7 a.m.; to a brunch and dinner menu with such Arizona-infused dishes as a standout house-made tagliarini tossed with butter,

elote, pecorino, crispy charred corn and flaked chile arbol.

Recently, the offerings included a Valentine take on good old steak and ranch beans: Niman Ranch ribeye with tepary beans simmered with house-cured pork belly, served with flour tortillas and a compound butter with huitlacoche. The latter, pronounced weeta-la-coh-cheh, is a fungus that grows on corn and also is called corn smut, or, more appetizingly, Mexican truffle. It adds a wonderful mushroomy/umami flavor and richness.

Amid all these delectable forays are more familiar favorites such as burgers and roast chicken, “but done on our terms,” Price said. For instance, it’s a three-day process to get the chicken from butcher to plate. The little gem salad is a customer favorite, a simple blend of heritage greens, sunflower dressing, crisp sunchokes and cotija cheese.

They also make many of their own tinctures and extracts for the cocktails, Faber said, and jars of the multicolored concoctions are on display in the restaurant.

“For summer we’re working on cold

drinks for the coffee menu and serving summer drinks like that Hopi yellow watermelon cocktail,” Faber said.

Valentine opened the day after Thanksgiving last year, smack in the middle of the COVID-19 pandemic, but Price and Faber and their team soldiered on, obtaining permission from the city to put tables in the spacious drive-through area in front of the restaurant. It won’t be a surprise if outdoor dining there reappears as a permanent fixture.

Valentine is open from 7 a.m. to 10 p.m. Sundays, Wednesdays and Thursdays and from 7 a.m. to 1 a.m. Fridays and Saturdays at 4130 N. Seventh Ave. To learn more, call 602-612-2961 or visit www.valentinephx.com.

Dining Briefs
Belly Kitchen and Bar
draws rave reviews

A North Central restaurant that opened in 2020 is already drawing great reviews.
Belly Kitchen and Bar at 4971 N.

Seventh Ave. was recently listed on Thrillist.com in an article with the headline “Where to eat in Phoenix Right Now.” The restaurant, which offers diverse handmade Asian foods, also was named in the *Phoenix New Times*’ list of the seven best new restaurants in 2020 in the Valley. Belly Kitchen and Bar makes “simple food sing,” according to the *Phoenix New Times* article. The restaurant’s claypot-cooked chicken has dark thigh chunks, as well as “sinewy-looking strips uncommonly succulent,” enhanced with turmeric and a “measured zap of fish sauce,” according to the *Phoenix New Times*.

Thrillist.com said the “Southeast Asian-inspired” restaurant provides contemporary versions of classics including scratch-made spring rolls and “slurpable claypot dishes.” It described the food as “equal parts funky and fresh,” with housemade cha lau pork fried rice, as well as crispy white fish and pan mi handheld sammies with lemongrass braised jackfruit, spicy “veganise,” hoisin and other ingredi-
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FOOD FOR THOUGHT

REVIEWS continued from page 35

ents on a soft baguette.

Belly Kitchen and Bar also offers a variety of snacks including chilled and marinated green beans with soy sauce, black Chinese vinegar, sesame oil, sesame seed and garlic, as well as Mam Kho Quet, a sauce and vegetable dish with chilled steamed vegetables, aromatic dipping sauce and shrimp.

Belly Kitchen and Bar is open 5 p.m. to midnight seven days a week. To learn more, visit www.bellyphx.com.

Bike-friendly Spoke & Wheel closes

The popular Spoke & Wheel Tavern in North Central is closed after several years of serving customers with diverse dishes in a bicycle-friendly setting.

Spoke & Wheel Tavern at 8525 N. Central Ave. closed on July 3 but not because of the COVID-19 pandemic, said Heinrich Stasiuk, CEO of Wild Thyme Restaurant Group, which owned the local restaurant. Stasiuk said the “local clientele have been super supportive throughout the pandemic and our sales numbers have been up compared to previous years.” However, Stasiuk sold the land and building as the Wild Thyme Restaurant Group has grown to 24 restaurant locations and is no longer focusing on the Phoenix market. The company owns restaurants in Sedona, as well as Las Vegas, southern California, Utah and Colorado.

You can find a Spoke & Wheel – Tavern and two other restaurants that Wild Thyme Restaurant Group owns in Sedona, with two more expected to open there in September. To learn more about Wild Thyme Restaurant Group, visit <https://wildthymegroup.com>.

Enjoy root beer float to help Phoenix Children’s

Cool off and help Phoenix Children’s Hospital when you order a root beer float at Angry Crab Shack.

The restaurant donates \$1 from the sale of every root beer float purchased anytime to Phoenix Children’s Hospital. This money is used for anything the hospital needs at the time of the donation. So far this year the Angry Crab Shack root beer float sales have helped pay for holiday meal vouchers for patients’ families, hospital digital or eSignage and Kidzpace Educational

Gaming Systems that offer entertainment to youths.

Angry Crab Shack has contributed more than \$367,000 through its give-back initiatives to Phoenix Children’s Hospital since 2017. It has 12 locations in the state with more expected to open this year around Arizona. Angry Crab Shack’s North Central location is at 2808 E. Indian School Road.

To learn more, visit www.angrycrabshack.com.

Habit Burger Grill offers limited-time salad

If you are looking for something fresh and light for lunch or dinner, The Habit Burger Grill is offering a new, limited time salad.

The Balsamic Grilled Chicken and Asparagus Salad for \$9.29 will be available through Tuesday, Aug. 10. It is made with marinated, balsamic chicken and fresh asparagus, both of which are chargrilled over an open flame. Hand-cut garden greens, tri-colored quinoa, pickled red onions, pepperoncini and Parmesan add more flavors to the salad. It comes tossed in a tangy house-made white balsamic vinaigrette.

The Habit Burger Grill has a location in North Central at 745 E. Glendale Ave. and in many other areas of the Valley. To learn more, visit www.habitburger.com.

Order cook-at-home steaks from The Capital Grille

The Capital Grille makes it easy to prepare for a hearty cookout.

The restaurant, which has a location in the Biltmore Fashion Park at 2502 E. Camelback Road, allows customers to order premium steaks that its in-house butcher cuts to take home. They are dry-aged for 18 to 24 months and it is recommended you eat them within 48 hours of picking them up. Steak grille boxes feature four steaks and Signature Steak Sauce. The cost is \$140 for the Dry Aged Bone-In New York Strip box with enough 18-ounce steaks to feed four people, as well as proprietary steak seasoning.

The Capital Grille’s Bone-In Prime Ribeye for \$160 offers 22-ounce steaks for four customers with the proprietary steak seasoning. Try the Dry Aged Bone-In New York Strip and Prime Ribeye steak grille box for \$150. This box contains two, 18-ounce dry aged

bone-in New York Strip steaks, as well as two bone-in prime ribeye steaks and the proprietary steak seasoning.

If you want to select four or more steaks you can order custom grille boxes. You also can order individual steaks and burgers to cook at home. An individual, 18-ounce dry aged bone-in New York Strip costs \$35, while an eight or 10-ounce filet mignon is \$25 and \$30 respectively. Another option is the 22-ounce, bone-in prime ribeye for \$40. Order six, eight-ounce burgers for \$50. The Capital Grille also provides Sam’s Mashed Potatoes, creamed spinach, grilled asparagus and lobster mac ‘n’ cheese accompaniments that are ready to heat at home. Each of those side dishes serves four to six people.

To learn more, visit www.thecapitalgrille.com/home.

Starbucks makes navigation easier for visually impaired

It is easier than ever for people who have challenges to order drinks and food from Starbucks stores in North Central and around the country.

The coffee retailer recently began offering a service called Aira for free in all its stores in the United States in partnership with Aira Tech Corp. Aira connects blind and low-vision people to trained visual interpreters who provide instant access to visual information via a third-party smartphone app. This service allows customers to ask remote agents to describe Starbucks stores’ layouts so they can navigate to the line to order their drinks and food, as well as to point-of-sale. Agents read the menu and describe pastries and ready-to-eat and drink cases and on the counters to users.

Starbucks first began testing Aira service in seven cities earlier this year. Aira has been helpful for customers dealing with the protocols and physical changes implemented in Starbucks stores during this COVID-19 pandemic. This new offering is part of Starbucks’ ongoing dedication to inclusion, diversity and equity, as well as its attempts to boost accessibility of the Starbucks Experience for its employees and customers.

There are several Starbucks locations in North Central and around the Valley, including one at 730 W. Camelback Road. To learn more, visit www.starbucks.com.

Distillery master offers five-course dinner

Enjoy an exclusive, five-course pairing dinner hosted by Garrison Brothers Distillery Master Distiller Donnis Todd at Phoenix City Grille next month. The Garrison Guadalupe dinner will feature the distillery’s top-tier selections, starting at 6 p.m. on Friday, Sept. 17, at the restaurant at 5816 N. 16th St.

This special dinner will start with a welcome cocktail, Do the Dew Old Fashion, which incorporates small-batch bourbon, honeydew, Garrison bitters-flavored cotton candy, Luxardo cherry and local citrus. The first course will feature Pitch Please Single Barrel from Pitch Scottsdale. The second course will be paired with an exclusive specialty pour that will be announced during the dinner. The dinner will pair subsequent courses with other pours from Garrison Brothers, including a new, experimental bourbon concocted in the Garrison Brothers stillhouse that will be served with dessert.

The cost for the five-course meal is \$120 per person, not including tax and a 20-percent gratuity. Make reservations by calling 602-266-3001.

Dunkin’ adds summer treats to its menu

Cool off this summer with new treats at Dunkin’, which recently added Dunkin’ Lemonade Refreshers, Dunkin’s Berry Powdered Donuts and MUNCHKINS donut hole treats to its menu. The refreshers are made with lemonade, flavored fruit concentrate and B vitamins. They come in three flavors: strawberry, peach and blueberry. Customers also can quench their thirst with Dunkin’s new lemonade on its own.

Dunkin’s Berry Powdered Donuts and MUNCHKINS donut hole treats feature the restaurant’s signature Old-Fashioned cake ring and MUNCHKINS, tossed in a new berry powder that produces a shade of pink and tasty berry flavor.

The Berry Powdered Donuts and MUNCHKINS donut holes and the Dunkin’ Lemonade Refreshers will be available through the middle of this month.

Find the new treats at one of several North Central Dunkin’ locations.

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